

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to meetings of political subdivisions
 3 during declared emergencies; amending s. 252.38, F.S.;
 4 authorizing political subdivisions to hold public
 5 meetings via telephone, real-time videoconferencing,
 6 or similar real-time electronic or video communication
 7 during a declared state of emergency; suspending
 8 certain quorum and physical presence requirements for
 9 a specified period of time unless extended by
 10 executive order of the Governor; providing notice
 11 requirements; providing construction; providing an
 12 effective date.

13
 14 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

15
 16 Section 1. Subsection (4) is added to section 252.38,
 17 Florida Statutes, to read:

18 252.38 Emergency management powers of political
 19 subdivisions.—Safeguarding the life and property of its citizens
 20 is an innate responsibility of the governing body of each
 21 political subdivision of the state.

22 (4) PUBLIC MEETINGS DURING DECLARED EMERGENCY.—During a
 23 declared state of emergency, meetings of any board or commission
 24 of any agency or authority of any county, municipal corporation,
 25 or political subdivision subject to s. 286.011(1) may be held

HB 1217

2021

26 | via telephone, real-time videoconferencing, or similar real-time
27 | electronic or video communication. Any law requiring a quorum to
28 | be present in person or requiring a local governmental body to
29 | meet at a specific public place shall be suspended during the
30 | declared state of emergency for a period not to exceed 6 months
31 | from the date the state of emergency is declared, unless
32 | extended by the Governor pursuant to an executive order. If a
33 | public meeting, hearing, or workshop will be held via telephone,
34 | real-time videoconferencing, or similar real-time electronic or
35 | video communication, or if attendance will be provided by such
36 | means, the meeting notice must include such information. The
37 | notice for public meetings, hearings, and workshops via
38 | telephone, real-time videoconferencing, or similar real-time
39 | electronic or video communication must state how persons
40 | interested in attending may do so and must name locations, if
41 | any, where facilities necessary for attendance will be
42 | available. This subsection does not diminish the right to
43 | inspect public records under chapter 119.

44 | Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.