

2016 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 333

BY SENATOR COLOMB

PUBLIC MEETINGS. Allows video conferencing of committee meetings and sessions of the legislature and authorizes voting in absentia. (gov sig)

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 24:7 and to enact R.S. 24:7.1, relative to the legislature; to  
3 provide relative to committee meetings and chamber sessions; to allow committee  
4 meetings and chamber sessions to be conducted by video conference; to allow each  
5 house of the legislature to adopt rules to facilitate meetings and sessions by video  
6 conference; to authorize voting in absentia; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 24:7 is hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 24:7.1 is hereby  
9 enacted to read as follows:

10 §7. ~~Committee meetings between sessions; video~~ **Video** conferencing **of committee**  
11 **meetings and sessions of the legislature**

12 ~~A legislative committee meeting that is held between sessions of the~~  
13 ~~legislature and during which no vote on any matter having the effect of law is to be~~  
14 ~~taken may be conducted by video conference.~~ **A. Committee meetings and**  
15 **chamber sessions of either or both houses of the legislature may be conducted**  
16 **by video conferencing pursuant to rules adopted by the respective house,**  
17 **individually or jointly.**

1           **B.** Each house of the legislature may, individually or jointly, adopt rules of  
2 procedure to provide for and accommodate committee meetings and chamber  
3 sessions by video conference, including but not limited to rules governing attendance  
4 and participation of members of the legislature in and quorums of committees for  
5 such meetings and sessions. Such rules shall provide for public participation in such  
6 meetings in accordance with R.S. 42:11 et seq. For the purposes of this Section and  
7 any rules adopted by either house of the legislature pursuant to this Section, "video  
8 conference" shall mean a method of communication which enables persons in  
9 different locations to participate in a meeting or chamber session and to see, hear,  
10 and otherwise communicate with each other. No committee meeting or chamber  
11 session shall be held pursuant to this Section unless a quorum of the committee or  
12 body is present, in person, at the location at which the meeting or session was  
13 ~~advertised~~ noticed to take place.

14           **§7.1. Members voting in absentia**

15           **A. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, when a member**  
16 **of either house cannot attend a committee meeting or Chamber session as a**  
17 **member thereof, due to illness or injury, that member may cast a record vote,**  
18 **in absentia, with a personalized Vote-ID Card electronically over the Internet.**

19           **B. Each house of the legislature may adopt rules of procedure to provide**  
20 **for the creation and application of the Vote-ID Card which may be used for**  
21 **voting in absentia.**

22           Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not  
23 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature  
24 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If  
25 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become  
26 effective on the day following such approval.

