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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 229

Offered January 13, 2021

*Amending and readopting Rule 4 of the Rules of the House of Delegates, pertaining to bill introduction limits during a disaster or other emergency.*

Patron--Herring

The Speaker will have a general direction of the House Chamber with power, in case of disturbance or disorderly conduct in such part thereof as may be appropriated to spectators, to have the same cleared. Representatives of news media, wishing to report the proceedings of the House, may be admitted by the Speaker, who will assign them to such places in the House Chamber as shall not interfere with the convenience of the members.

In the event of a disaster, natural or otherwise, or other emergency circumstance, the Speaker may convene the House in a location other than the House Chamber, or direct that a session of the House be conducted by electronic communication means. In addition, if a motion to reconvene to a session date and time to be conducted by electronic communication means is adopted by the House, such session of the House shall be conducted by electronic communication means. "Electronic communication means" means the use of technology having electrical, digital, magnetic, wireless, optical, telephonic, electromagnetic, or similar capabilities to transmit or receive information.

During the pendency of such disaster or other emergency circumstance, a session of the House may be conducted by electronic communication means without any requirement that a quorum be physically assembled in a single location.

A member participating in a session of the House conducted by electronic communication means shall be deemed to be in attendance for purposes of the quorum requirements under Article IV, Section 8 of the Constitution of Virginia or any other provision of the Constitution, regardless of where the member is physically located. A member participating in a session of the House conducted by electronic communication means shall be deemed to be present for any voting requirement under the Constitution of Virginia and may vote on any matter taken up by the House, regardless of where the member is physically located. A member participating by electronic communication means shall not be required to open her physical location to the public or the media.

The Clerk, at the direction of the Speaker, shall determine the methods of electronic communication for any session of the House conducted by electronic communication means, provided that such methods are designed to enable each member participating by electronic communication means to participate as the proceedings are occurring.

Sessions of the House conducted by electronic communication means shall be made digitally available to the public.

To protect the public health and safety during such disaster or other emergency circumstance, the Speaker and Clerk may limit access to the physical location from which the Speaker is presiding to members of the General Assembly and such other persons they deem essential for the proceedings.

Notwithstanding Rule 18(e) or any other Rule, during the pendency of such disaster or other emergency circumstance, the chairman of any standing committee, subcommittee, joint subcommittee, interim study committee, or other legislative branch public body may conduct a meeting by electronic communication means under the same conditions and requirements and with the same powers enumerated above, and without any requirement that a quorum be physically assembled in a single location. Any member of such standing committee, subcommittee, joint subcommittee, interim study committee, or other legislative branch public body participating in the meeting by electronic communication means shall be deemed to be in attendance for purposes of any quorum requirement and may vote on any matter taken up at the meeting.

Notwithstanding Rule 37, during the pendency of such disaster or other emergency circumstance, the Speaker may establish a limit on the number of bills that may be introduced by each member during any Regular Session, with such limit not less than five bills.

Whenever a session of the House or any meeting of a standing committee, subcommittee, joint subcommittee, interim study committee, or other legislative branch public body is conducted by electronic communication means, voting viva voce by response to the call of names shall not be required.

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