

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2021

Legislative Document

No. 1578

S.P. 451

In Senate, April 27, 2021

An Act To Permit Remote Access for Public Proceedings

Reference to the Committee on Judiciary suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator SANBORN of Cumberland.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 1 MRSA §403-B** is enacted to read:

3 **§403-B. Public proceedings of the Legislature and municipal agencies through remote**
4 **access**

5 **1. Remote access.** Notwithstanding any provision of law or municipal charter
6 provision or ordinance to the contrary, the Legislature and any board, commission, agency
7 or authority of a municipality subject to this subchapter may conduct a public proceeding
8 through telephonic, video, electronic or other similar means of remote participation under
9 the following conditions:

10 A. The Legislature or board, commission, agency or authority of a municipality
11 determines that participation by the public may be through telephonic, video, electronic
12 or other similar means of remote participation;

13 B. Notice of the public proceeding has been given in accordance with section 406 and
14 includes the method by which the public may attend in accordance with paragraph A;

15 C. Each member of the Legislature or board, commission, agency or authority of a
16 municipality who is participating in the public proceeding is able to see, hear and speak
17 to all the other members during the public proceeding, and members of the public
18 attending the public proceeding in the location identified in the notice given pursuant
19 to paragraph A are able to hear all members participating at other locations; and

20 D. All votes taken during the public proceeding are taken by roll call vote.

21 **2. Application to other proceedings.** This section does not apply to town meetings
22 held pursuant to Title 30-A, section 2524 or regional school unit budget meetings held
23 pursuant to Title 20-A, section 1482-A.

24 **SUMMARY**

25 This bill establishes in law the authorization for the Legislature and boards,
26 commissions, agencies and authorities of municipalities to conduct public proceedings
27 remotely.