



Senate Fiscal Agency
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BILL ANALYSIS



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Senate Bill 129 (as reported without amendment)
Sponsor: Senator Sean McCann
Committee: Civil Rights, Judiciary, and Public Safety

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Open Meetings Act to allow an appointed member of a public body who had a disability to fully participate in a meeting remotely upon request.

"Disability" would mean a determinable physical or mental characteristic of an individual, which may result from disease, injury, congenital condition of birth, or functional disorder, if the characteristic substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of that individual. "Participate" and "participation" would include, but would not be limited to, discussing, debating, or voting on a motion, proposal, recommendation, resolution, order, ordinance, bill, or any other measure on which a vote by members of the public body is required and by which the public body effectuates or formulates public policy.

The bill would not apply to a member of a public body that was elected directly by electors to serve on the public body. It also would not apply to a meeting of a State legislative body at which a formal vote was taken

MCL 15.263a

BRIEF RATIONALE

Generally, meetings subject to the Act must be open to the public, held in a place available to the public, and members must be present to participate, except for remote participation accommodating members absent due to active military duty. According to testimony before the Senate Committee on Civil Rights, Judiciary, and Public Safety, individuals with disabilities often face barriers to participation, including the need to arrange transportation and lack of accessibility to certain specialized tools that cannot be transported to meetings. It has been suggested to accommodate remote attendance for individuals with disabilities to better allow opportunities to participate in public bodies.

PREVIOUS LEGISLATION

(This section does not provide a comprehensive account of previous legislative efforts on this subject matter.)

The bill is a reintroduction of Senate Bill 870 of the 2023-2024 Legislative Session. Senate Bill 870 passed the Senate and was reported by the House Committee on Government Operations but received no further action.

Legislative Analyst: Eleni Lionas

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Date Completed: 3-18-25

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Bill Analysis @ www.senate.michigan.gov/sfa

This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.