

Oregon Legislators, I urge you to support HB 2560 to facilitate transparency and participation in the democratic process by the people at the local and statewide level.

The use of technology to give the people a virtual opportunity to attend and submit testimony in the public sessions in a *technically live* manner has multiple supportive points.

Accessibility in Real-Time: Both local and state governing presentations and discussions can be difficult for participation by most people. Transportation to meeting locales, limited time availability, accessibility issues, inclement weather and the timing of the public meetings can all contribute to sparse public participation. Subsequently most topics are devoid of public input before and during the law-planning and decision-making sessions. Technology is for all-- allowing people to attend meetings in a virtual manner serves all members of the community, including the elderly and disabled that would never be able to personally attend a live governmental meeting.

Clarity in Transparency: The use of technology to broadcast governmental presentations and discussions in a LIVE manner allows real-time clear and concise factual evidence to the people to counter post-session editorializing by governmental reporting, meeting attendees and the media.

Clarity in Review: Technology allows video and audio to be presented Live and to be recorded for review. This is helpful for citizens to participate in real-time and to review discussion that needs further scrutiny, clarity and understanding.

The Silver lining to “social distancing:” The public may have been separated from the public discourse process by health concerns, but the resourceful use of technology has proven to be a stellar way to continue to include the people at the most important stages of the governing and the legislative processes – Live in real-time with Video and Audio access has kept us social distant, but provides us a front row seat and an opportunity to be a witness to the legislative process.

Supporting HB2560 will provide a baseline for greater public participation in public governmental meetings through Live Video and Audio transmission with subsequent access to the recorded meetings. And although there are those who could provide technical best practices for the technology itself, establishing that public meetings at least be available via Live Video and Audio transmission will be a baseline for greater public participation and transparency in government.

*The most crucial element of the democratic process is oversight of the governing by the governed.* Utilizing technology to facilitate additional ways the people can participate in public meetings will serve the greater good for all communities and our State-- passing HB 2560 will be a step towards more transparency and greater citizen involvement.

Thank you.