

Dear Chair Warner, and committee members.

My name is Greg Malinowski, I am a former 2 term Washington County Commissioner. I have also served on my local Community Participation Organization, for 40 years. In that time I have worked with people on County issues at all stages of the circle of life. As we get older, or busier, we tend to move in and out of the degree of Participation we can manage, I have driven elderly folks to meetings and back home afterward. I have located materials for them. And soon I may be the one on the passenger seat. With the arrival of Covid, we have seen a drop in Participation in public policy discussions from folks who don't drive at all, can't drive after dark, wheelchair bound, home bound, on chemo, have sick children to take care, are caretakers for home bound life partners and spouses, have children to put to bed, and folks who want to be heard, but who can't see driving an hour each way for a 45 minute meeting. Folks who were leaders in the community, and have lived there decades. It would be a shame if after the 'emergency' we just 'unplug' these folks. We are seeing new folks who never had a chance to participate, as well as old friends who just could not manage the logistics any more. Please let those folks continue to share their knowledge and thoughts with us, by continuing to use this technology. Thank you for your time.

Greg Malinowski