

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to Monroe County; providing  
 3           definitions; providing an exception to general law;  
 4           authorizing the School Board of Monroe County or the  
 5           Board of County Commissioners of Monroe County, or any  
 6           political subdivision thereof, to conduct public  
 7           meetings, hearings, and workshops by means of  
 8           communications media technology; authorizing the  
 9           adoption of rules; providing for notices of public  
 10          meetings, hearings, and workshops conducted by means  
 11          of communications media technology; providing  
 12          applicability and construction; providing an effective  
 13          date.

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 15   Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 17           Section 1. (1) As used in this act, the term  
 18           "communications media technology" has the same meaning as  
 19           provided in s. 120.54(5)(b)2., Florida Statutes.

20           (2) Notwithstanding s. 286.011, Florida Statutes, the  
 21           School Board of Monroe County or the Board of County  
 22           Commissioners of Monroe County, or any political subdivision  
 23           thereof, may authorize public meetings, hearings, and workshops  
 24           to be conducted by means of communications media technology if  
 25           the board adopts uniform rules authorizing the use of

26 | communications media technology and no final action is taken at  
27 | such meeting. The rules must provide procedures for conducting  
28 | public meetings, hearings, and workshops, and for taking  
29 | evidence, testimony, and argument at such public meetings,  
30 | hearings, and workshops, in person and by means of  
31 | communications media technology. The rules must provide that all  
32 | evidence, testimony, and argument presented shall be afforded  
33 | equal consideration, regardless of the method of communication.

34 | (3) If a public meeting, hearing, or workshop is to be  
35 | conducted by means of communications media technology, or if  
36 | attendance may be provided by such means, the notice shall so  
37 | state. The notice for public meetings, hearings, and workshops  
38 | using communications media technology shall state how persons  
39 | interested in attending may do so and shall name locations, if  
40 | any, where communications media technology facilities will be  
41 | available.

42 | (4) This act does not limit a person's right to inspect  
43 | public records under chapter 119, Florida Statutes. Limiting  
44 | points of access to public meetings, hearings, and workshops  
45 | subject to s. 286.011, Florida Statutes, to places not normally  
46 | open to the public is presumed to violate the right of access of  
47 | the public, and any official action taken under such  
48 | circumstances is void. Other laws relating to public meetings,  
49 | hearings, and workshops, including penal and remedial  
50 | provisions, apply to public meetings, hearings, and workshops

HB 1295

2017

51 | conducted by means of communications media technology, and shall  
52 | be liberally construed in their application to such public  
53 | meetings, hearings, and workshops.

54 |       Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.