

By Senator Taddeo

40-00098-21

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to legislative procedures in certain
3 emergencies; creating s. 11.137, F.S.; requiring each
4 house of the Legislature to provide by rule procedures
5 authorizing the use of remote technology systems for
6 remote participation in committee meetings and floor
7 proceedings by members; specifying requirements and
8 limitations for the use of remote technology systems;
9 specifying that a member's use of a remote technology
10 system is subject to approval by the presiding officer
11 of the applicable house; authorizing the Legislature
12 to provide procedures by joint rule governing the use
13 of remote technology systems in certain bicameral
14 meetings; providing an effective date.

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

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18 Section 1. Section 11.137, Florida Statutes, is created to
19 read:

20 11.137 Use of remote technology systems in committee
21 meetings and floor proceedings during certain emergencies.-

22 (1) Each house of the Legislature shall provide by rule
23 procedures authorizing the use of remote technology systems in
24 committee meetings and floor proceedings during a declared state
25 of emergency or public health emergency which allow for members
26 of the Legislature to remotely participate, attend, vote, or
27 take any other action throughout the meeting or proceeding.

28 (2) Any remote technology system approved for use by the
29 President of the Senate or the Speaker of the House of

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30 Representatives must sufficiently allow members of the public to
31 hear or observe any members of the Legislature using the system
32 in order to maintain compliance with the requirements of s. 4(b)
33 or (e), Art. III of the State Constitution, as applicable. While
34 participating or voting remotely, the member may only be in the
35 presence of one other person, who must be a legislative
36 employee. The presence of any such employee must be announced by
37 the member.

38 (3) Any member of the Legislature participating remotely
39 through an approved remote technology system shall be considered
40 present and in attendance for the meeting or proceeding;
41 however, the chair of the committee or the presiding officer,
42 and a majority of the membership of the committee or the house,
43 must be physically present at the meeting or proceeding in order
44 to constitute a quorum.

45 (4) A member of the Legislature wishing to exercise his or
46 her option to participate remotely in a committee meeting or a
47 floor proceeding must receive approval for such accommodation
48 from the presiding officer of his or her house of the
49 Legislature. The written request for accommodation must specify
50 the day for which the accommodation is requested, and must be
51 resubmitted at least weekly.

52 (5) By joint rule, both houses of the Legislature may
53 provide for procedures governing the use of remote technology
54 systems for remote participation by members of the Legislature
55 in meetings of joint committees and conference committees or the
56 Legislative Budget Commission.

57 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.