



# Legislative Council Staff

## Research Note

Version: Senate Final  
Date: 3/10/2016

### Bill Number

House Bill 16-1139

### Sponsors

*Representatives Willett & Arndt  
Senator Scott*

### Short Title

*Allow Electronic Committee  
Participation During Interim*

### Research Analyst

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### Status

This research note reflects the final version of the bill. The bill was lost on second reading in the Senate on March 9, 2016.

### Summary

Under current rules, legislators are not allowed to participate in any interim committee or committee of reference meeting through telephone or electronic connection. The bill permits the Executive Committee of the Legislative Council to establish policies allowing members of the General Assembly to participate electronically in committee meetings occurring during the legislative interim. Members who participate electronically must be counted for purposes of establishing a committee's quorum, but only members attending meetings in person are permitted to vote. A majority of committee members must be attending the meeting in person in order for the committee to vote on any matter. Members who participate electronically may receive per diem or other compensation they are otherwise entitled to claim for attendance at the meeting, but may not be reimbursed for any expenses.

### Background

**Remote testimony for committee hearings.** House Bill 14-1303 authorized the Executive Committee of the Legislative Council to establish policies allowing legislative committees to take remote testimony at one or more centralized sites around the state. In 2016, remote testimony is available at five locations in the state: Colorado Mesa University in Grand Junction, Otero Junior College in La Junta, Fort Lewis College in Durango, Trinidad Junior College in Trinidad, and Adams State College in Alamosa. Five committee rooms in the Capitol and Legislative Services Building have been outfitted with the necessary equipment to facilitate remote testimony.

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**Legislative rules regarding electronic participation.** Joint Rule 24A (d) (7) prohibits legislators from participating in any interim committee meeting through telephone or electronic connection. House Rule 25A and Senate Rule 22B contain this same prohibition for meetings of committees of reference.

## House Action

**House Local Government Committee (February 3, 2016).** At the hearing, a representative of the Colorado Competitive Council and a private citizen testified in support of the bill. The committee referred the bill, unamended, to the House Committee of the Whole.

**House second reading (February 8, 2016).** The House adopted Amendment No.1 and passed the bill on second reading, as amended. Amendment No. 1 clarified that a majority of the members of a committee must be attending a meeting in person in order for the committee to vote on any matter.

**House third reading (February 9, 2016).** The House passed the bill on third reading with no amendments.

## Senate Action

**Senate State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee (February 23, 2016).** At the hearing, the Director of Research for the Legislative Council Staff responded to questions regarding the bill. The committee adopted amendments L.005 and L.007 and an amendment to L.007, and referred the bill to the Senate Legislative Council Committee. Amendment L.005 clarified that electronic participation of members in interim committees must be via video and is limited to meetings occurring at the Capitol Building. Amendment L.007 required the Director of Research for the Legislative Council Staff to submit a study to General Assembly by July 1, 2018, providing information regarding the electronic participation by members in interim committees. The amendment adopted to amendment L.007 specified that the report must include information regarding the quality and efficiency of committee discussions at interim committee meetings in which members participate electronically.

**Senate Legislative Council Committee (March 4, 2016).** At the hearing, the Director of Research for the Legislative Council Staff responded to questions regarding the bill. The committee adopted amendment L.009 and referred the bill, as amended, to the Senate Committee of the Whole. Amendment L.009 struck the State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee report and specified that nothing in the bill requires the Executive Committee to allow members to participate remotely in meetings occurring during the legislative interim.

**Senate second reading (March 9, 2016).** The bill was lost on second reading.