

RESOLUTION NO. 14 OF 2022

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

A RESOLUTION URGING AND REQUESTING THE LOUISIANA LEGISLATURE TO MODIFY LA R.S. 42:17.1 TO ALLOW UNLIMITED AGENDA ITEMS DURING MEETINGS OF PUBLIC BODIES HELD VIA ELECTRONIC MEANS, AND TO OTHERWISE PROVIDE WITH RESPECT THERETO

WHEREAS, La.R.S. 42:17.1 (A)(1) and (2) provide that public bodies in Louisiana can hold public meetings via electronic means when the following conditions are met:

(1) The governor has declared a state of emergency or disaster involving a geographic area within the jurisdiction of the public body and the nature of the emergency or disaster would cause a meeting of the public body conducted pursuant to the other provisions of this Chapter to be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of the public.

(2) The presiding officer of the public body certifies on the notice of the meeting that the agenda of the meeting is limited to one or more of the following:

(a) Matters that are directly related to the public body's response to the disaster or emergency and are critical to the health, safety, or welfare of the public.

(b) Matters that if they are delayed will cause curtailment of vital public services or severe economic dislocation and hardship.

(c) Matters that are critical to continuation of the business of the public body and that are not able to be postponed to a meeting held in accordance with the other provisions of this Chapter due to a legal requirement or other deadline that cannot be postponed or delayed by the public body.

(d) Other matters that are critical or time-sensitive and that in the determination of the presiding officer should not be delayed; however, such matters shall not be considered at the meeting unless the members of the body present at the meeting approve the consideration of the matters by a two-thirds vote.

and;

WHEREAS the gubernatorially declared emergency regarding the COVID 19 Pandemic has been ongoing for almost two years, with several spikes in cases rendering it unsafe for public bodies to meet in person during those spikes; and

WHEREAS, the limited agenda items allowed during meetings held via electronic means are not sufficient to cover all items to be addressed by a public body; and

WHEREAS, electronic meetings with limited agendas cause undue delay of important matters that need to be addressed, when they do not they fall in one of the statutory categories; and

WHEREAS, electronic meetings with limited agendas cause exceedingly long agendas during in-person meetings, which result in an inefficient use of citizen participants' and public officials' time.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, legal and regular session convened that the Caddo Parish Commission hereby urges and requests the Louisiana Legislature to remove all agenda restrictions on electronic meetings held during gubernatorially declared disasters or emergencies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution is effective immediately upon its passage.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution will be forwarded to the President of the Louisiana Senate, Speaker of the Louisiana House, and the Caddo Parish legislative delegation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all resolutions or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

Approved as to legal form:

Parish Attorney

Date