

## H.R. 2

House resolution authorizing remote debate and voting in the House and House committees.

Offered by Representatives Krowinski of Burlington, Bartholomew of Hartland, Donahue of Northfield, LaClair of Barre Town, Long of Newfane, and McCoy of Poultney

Whereas Governor Philip B. Scott declared a state of emergency with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic until January 15, 2021; and

Whereas the House of Representatives declared a State of Emergency through March 9, 2021, and

Whereas the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has issued guidelines including people maintain a safe social distance of six feet and minimize gatherings to reduce the infection rates of COVID-19, and

Whereas the House of Representatives and the standing committees of the House of Representatives must meet in order to confront the threat of COVID-19 to the State of Vermont, and

Whereas in recognition of the declared state of emergency and CDC guidelines, the House must complete its business in the safest manner possible to protect Vermonters, and

Whereas to allow access to the proceedings of the House of Representatives and the committees of the House of Representatives, members of the public and press shall have access to live streaming of these remote proceedings, and

Whereas to properly conduct the business of the House of Representatives in an open and accessible manner, the House of Representatives amends the Rules and Orders of the House of Representatives to allow for remote participation during House's declared state of emergency; therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives:

That while the State of Vermont is subject to the House Declaration of a State of Emergency, the House of Representatives adds Temporary Rule 9a of The Rules and Orders of the House of Representatives to read:

9a. (a) The House of Representatives shall allow remote participation while the House's Declaration of a State of Emergency is in effect. Remote participation shall consist of members being permitted to vote remotely and engage in debate remotely. Members allowed to participate remotely shall validate they are the person connected remotely. Votes conducted remotely shall be compiled by the Clerk of the House. A quorum will be calculated as those members present in the chamber of the House of Representatives and those members who are connected remotely and voting remotely.

(b) This Rule shall expire at the earlier of the (1) the convening of the 2023 biennial session; or (2) the expiration of the House's Declaration of a State of Emergency in response to COVID-19 and any extension of this declaration by a Joint Resolution or a House Resolution.; and be it further

Resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the House of Representatives adds Temporary Rule 29a of The Rules and Orders of the House of Representatives to read:

29a. (a) The standing committees of the House of Representatives shall be permitted to vote remotely while the House's Declaration of a State of Emergency is in effect.

(b) All other rules regarding a quorum and other rules of the committees remain in effect.

(c) This Rule shall expire at the earlier of the (1) the convening of the 2023 biennial session; or (2) the expiration of the House's Declaration of a State of Emergency in response to COVID-19 and any extension of this declaration by a Joint Resolution or a House Resolution.