

**RALPH DLG. TORRES**  
Governor



**ARNOLD I. PALACIOS**  
Lieutenant Governor

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

**20 AUG 2021**

The Honorable Jude U. Hofschneider  
President of the Senate  
Twenty-Second Northern Marianas  
Commonwealth Legislature  
Saipan, MP 96950

The Honorable Edmund S. Villagomez  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Twenty-Second Northern Marianas  
Commonwealth Legislature  
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Speaker:

This is to inform you that I have signed into law **Senate Bill No. 22-29, HD1** entitled, "To authorize government agencies, boards, and commissions to promulgate regulations to utilize electronic means to participate in official meetings.," which was passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Twenty-Second Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

This bill becomes **Public Law No. 22-05**. Copies bearing my signature are forwarded for your reference.

Sincerely,



**RALPH DLG. TORRES**  
Governor

cc: Lt. Governor; Press Secretary; Attorney General; Law Revision Commission; Public Auditor; Special Assistant for Administration; Special Assistant for Programs and Legislative Review



THE SENATE  
Twenty-Second Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature  
P. O. Box 500129  
Saipan, MP 96950

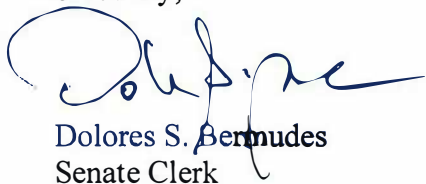
July 15, 2021

The Honorable Ralph DLG. Torres  
Governor  
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands  
Capital Hill  
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Governor Torres:

I have the honor of transmitting herewith for your action Senate Bill No. 22-29, HD1, entitled: "To authorize government agencies, boards, and commissions to promulgate regulations to utilize electronic means to participate in official meetings," which was passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Twenty-Second Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Sincerely,



Dolores S. Bermudes  
Senate Clerk

Attachments

PROGRAMS & LEGISLATIVE REVIEW  
RECEIVED BY: SAPLR  
DATE & TIME: 7/15/2021 2:50



**THE SENATE**  
**TWENTY-SECOND NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 22-29, HD1**

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**AN ACT**

To authorize government agencies, boards, and commissions to promulgate regulations to utilize electronic means to participate in official meetings.

***SENATE ACTION***

**Offered by Senator(s):** Vinnie F. Sablan

**Date:** February 25, 2021

**Referred to:** Judiciary, Government Law & Federal Relations Committee

**Standing Committee Report No.:** None

**Final Reading:** July 08, 2021, Accepted HD1

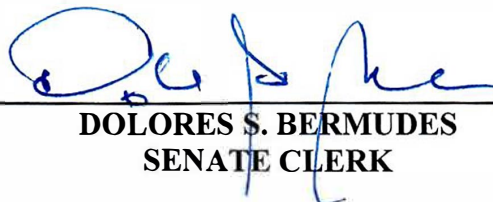
***HOUSE ACTION***

**Referred to:** Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee

**Standing Committee Report No.:** 22-8 Adopted on 05/28/21

**First and Final Reading:** May 28, 2021

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**DOLORES S. BERMUDES**  
**SENATE CLERK**



THE SENATE  
TWENTY-SECOND NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION, 2021

S. B. NO. 22-29, HD1

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AN ACT

To authorize government agencies, boards, and commissions to promulgate regulations to utilize electronic means to participate in official meetings.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE TWENTY-SECOND NORTHERN MARIANAS  
COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:**

1           **Section 1. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that the complications  
2 brought by the effects of the coronavirus pandemic have made business as usual pertaining  
3 to meeting quorum a struggle for government agencies, boards, and commissions. The  
4 Legislature further finds that due to the directives regarding social distancing and the  
5 limited availability of inter-island flights, government entities need to allow meeting  
6 appearances by electronic means, such as online videoconferencing or teleconferencing.  
7 Through this Act, the Legislature intends that electronic appearances in government  
8 meetings shall be allowed only when a member or members of a board, agency, or  
9 commission are physically present in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands  
10 (CNMI), but are unable to attend a meeting in person at the meeting place.

11           Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to authorize government agencies, boards, and  
12 commissions to promulgate regulations to allow members to participate in meetings by  
13 electronic means when said members are present in the CNMI.

14           **Section 2. Amendment.** Title 1, Division 2, Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 2901, of the  
15 Commonwealth Code is amended by adding a new subsection (i) to read:

16           “(i) Boards, agencies, and commissions shall adopt regulations to provide  
17 for meeting appearances via internet or online video conferencing,  
18 teleconferencing, or other electronic means of communication, in the event that a

SENATE BILL NO. 22-29, HD1

1 member is in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands but unable to  
2 attend a meeting in person at the meeting place.”

3 **Section 3. Severability.** If any provisions of this Act or the application of any such  
4 provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent  
5 jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to persons or  
6 circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

7 **Section 4. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be  
8 construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes  
9 repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers  
10 contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior  
11 law. The enactment of the Act shall not have the effect of terminating, or in any way  
12 modifying, any liability, civil or criminal, which shall already be in existence on the date  
13 this Act becomes effective.

14 **Section 5. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the  
15 Governor, or its becoming law without such approval.

CERTIFIED BY:

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JUDE U. HOFSCHEIDER  
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ATTESTED BY:

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VICTOR B. HOCOG  
SENATE LEGISLATIVE SECRETARY

Approved 20<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2021

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RALPH DLG. TORRES  
Governor

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands