



RALPH DLG. TORRES
Governor

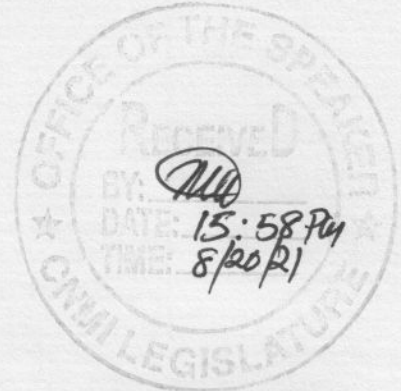
ARNOLD I. PALACIOS
Lieutenant Governor

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



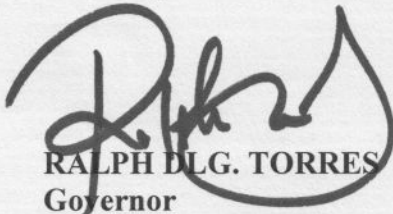
Ⓢ 8/20/21

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

HOUSE CLERK'S OFC
RECEIVED BY [Signature]
DATE 8/22/2021 TIME 10:02a



THE SENATE
TWENTY-SECOND NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

SENATE BILL NO. 22-29, HD1

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

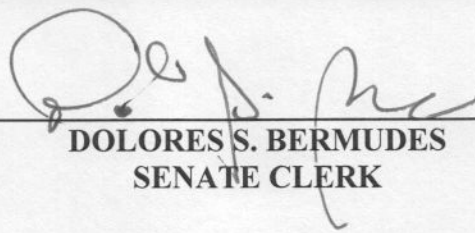
Final Reading: July 08, 2021, Accepted HD1

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



DOLORES S. BERMUDES
SENATE CLERK



THE SENATE
TWENTY-SECOND NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION, 2021

S. B. NO. 22-29, HD1

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

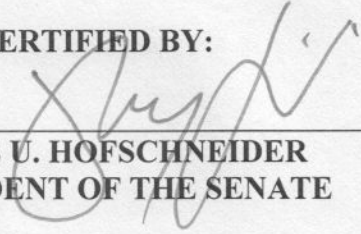
1 member is in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands but unable to
2 attend a meeting in person at the meeting place.”

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.

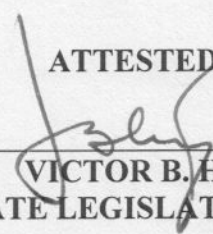
14 **Section 5. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the
15 Governor, or its becoming law without such approval.

CERTIFIED BY:



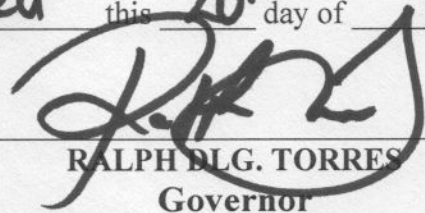
JUDE U. HOFSCHEIDER
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ATTESTED BY:



VICTOR B. HOCO
SENATE LEGISLATIVE SECRETARY

Approved this 20th day of August, 2021



RALPH DLG. TORRES
Governor

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands