



April 20, 2023

The Honorable Cecilia M. Aguiar-Curry  
Chair, Assembly Local Government Committee  
1020 N Street, Room 157  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 557 (Hart) – Support [As Introduced]**  
Hearing Date: April 26, 2023 – *Assembly Local Government Committee*

Dear Assembly Member Aguiar-Curry:

The undersigned organizations are pleased to express our support for Assembly Bill 557 (Hart), related to emergency remote meeting procedures under the Ralph M. Brown Act.

The changes made to California Government Code section 54953 by Assembly Bill 361 (R. Rivas, 2021) were of vital importance to local agencies looking to meet during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to continue to conduct the people's business. These changes were necessary in order to permit local agencies to meet during a time that it would have otherwise been impossible to meet in-person safely. Important safeguards were included to ensure transparency and accountability, including the fact that the emergency provisions were only applicable in instances where the California Governor had declared a state of emergency.

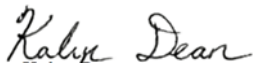
While California seeks to transition to a post-COVID era, the threat of additional emergencies remains, as has been made abundantly clear by recent flooding and wildfires. Absent any legislative intervention, the processes established by AB 361 to provide remote meeting flexibility to local agencies in emergency circumstances will expire at the end of this year. To remain best equipped to address future emergencies and allow local agencies to effectively react and respond, AB 557 would eliminate the sunset on the emergency remote meeting procedures added to California Government Code section 54953. Additionally, AB 557 would adjust the timeframe for the resolutions passed to renew an agency's temporary transition to emergency remote meetings to 45 days, up from the previous number of 30 days.

This legislation will preserve an effective tool for local agencies facing emergencies that would otherwise prevent them from conducting the people’s business when faced with an emergency. For these reasons, the undersigned organizations are pleased to support Assembly Bill 557 (Hart).

Sincerely,



Marcus Detwiler  
Legislative Representative  
California Special Districts  
Association



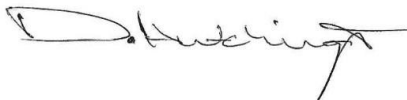
Kalyn Dean  
Legislative Advocate  
California State Association of  
Counties



Johnnie Piña  
Legislative Affairs Lobbyist  
League of California Cities



Sarah Bridge  
Senior Legislative Advocate  
Association of California  
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Dane Hutchings  
Managing Director  
Renne Public Policy Group  
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City Clerks Association of California



Rena Masten Leddy  
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California Downtown Association



Danielle Blacet-Hyden  
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Carlos Machado  
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California School Boards Association



Martha Alvarez  
Chief of Legislative Affairs and  
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Los Angeles Unified School District



Sarah Dukett  
Policy Advocate  
Rural County Representatives of California



Jean Hurst  
Legislative Advocate  
Urban Counties of California

CC: The Honorable Gregg Hart  
Members, Assembly Local Government Committee  
Angela Mapp, Chief Consultant, Assembly Local Government Committee  
William Weber, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus