



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

Board of Supervisors

DARCIE ANTLE
CLERK OF THE BOARD

501 Low Gap Rd. Room 1010
Ukiah, CA 95482

Email: bos@mendocinocounty.gov
Website: www.mendocinocounty.gov

Office: (707) 463-4221
Fax: (707) 463-5649

March 10, 2025

The Honorable Jesse Arreguín
California State Senate, District 07
1021 O Street, Suite 6710
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 239 (Arreguín) Open meetings: teleconferencing: subsidiary body.
SUPPORT - As Introduced January 30, 2025

Dear Senator Arreguín,

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors is writing to express strong support of your bill, Senate Bill 239, which would remove barriers to entry for appointed and elected office by allowing members of non-decision-making legislative bodies to participate in two-way virtual teleconferencing without posting their remote meeting location.

Local governments statewide are struggling to recruit and retain members for advisory bodies governed by the Brown Act. Challenges such as time commitments, meeting schedules and locations, and issues like physical limitations, childcare conflicts, and work obligations contribute to these difficulties.

In Mendocino County, our advisory boards and commissions are essential for shaping local policies. As California's 15th largest county, covering 3,878 square miles, our rural geography creates significant accessibility issues. Many residents must travel long distances to attend meetings, which discourages participation and limits community representation. Weather conditions and unreliable transportation further exacerbate these challenges.

Senate Bill 239 (SB 239) addresses these barriers by allowing non-decision-making legislative bodies to engage in two-way virtual teleconferencing without the need to publicly post their remote locations. This change promotes greater civic engagement, enabling those who cannot attend in person to contribute their perspectives.

Participation in local advisory bodies often leads to opportunities in elected offices and leadership positions. However, the in-person attendance requirement disproportionately affects individuals with physical or economic limitations, including seniors, individuals with disabilities, single parents, and residents of rural areas.

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

MADELINE CLINE
First District

MAUREEN MULHEREN
Second District

JOHN HASCHAK
Third District

BERNIE NORVELL
Fourth District

TED WILLIAMS
Fifth District

SB 239 would provide an exemption under the Ralph M. Brown Act for non-decision-making advisory bodies, enhancing community engagement and modernizing open meeting practices. Ultimately, SB 239 aims to ensure that advisory bodies represent the diverse voices within our communities.

Sincerely,



John Haschak, Chair
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Mike McGuire, Member of the California State Senate
The Honorable Chris Rogers, Member of the California State Assembly