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Testimony on HB331 (Virtual Meetings)

by Alex Hekimian

I am a resident of Columbia, and want to state that I am very much in favor of HB331. As the times we live in change, our laws should adapt to those changes. And, as common ownership communities adjust the way they operate, the State laws that govern those communities should be adjusted as well to protect their residents.

In the case of HB331, this bill accounts for the shift toward virtual meetings of the governing bodies. This shift began during the COVID pandemic, but it could very well continue into the future.

I'm glad that this bill also includes a provision that helps control meetings of governing bodies that are held via email. Since all residents are not invited to such meetings, it makes sense to allow them only if what is being discussed qualifies as a topic for closed meetings under state laws.

This bill contains some common sense provisions that help ensure that the rights of residents will be respected and that their voices will still be heard, even if they are not physically present at governing body meetings.

So, I close by urging a favorable report of HB331.