

HB 1032 Testimony - 1/21/2026

Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

As a member of the Dover School Board, I support HB 1032 in its endeavor to make public service more accessible to those who are serving in locally elected positions across our state. I have had the opportunity to participate remotely in several Dover School Board meetings over the 4 years I have served in my role, and my experience leads me to conclude that remote participation does not impede an elected official from fully taking part in the flow, conversation and purpose of the meeting.

As fellow local officials, you understand the reality that life sometimes competes with your duty to commute to your meetings and hearings. You also understand the work we do is a *joy and a privilege*. This bill seeks to make this high calling of public service more accessible for family members who, due to disability, cannot attend a meeting in person. As the parent of a son with disabilities, I understand sometimes the needs of a child (or of one's own disability) may prevent in-person attendance. This reality should not stand in the way of that elected official being counted as an attending member of the meeting when remote access opportunities are so simple and readily available these days.

When we create common-sense, accommodating pathways for elected officials to take part in the roles for which they've been elected, we open the doors for a more robust and participatory local governance process. This is good for our communities and our dedicated leaders.

I urge you to support and pass HB 1032 as written.

Micaela Demeter
Dover School Board member, 2021-2027