



## TOWN OF WESTFORD SELECT BOARD

TOWN HALL  
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WESTFORD, MA 01886  
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July 11, 2023

To:

The Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
William J. Driscoll, Jr., Massachusetts State Representative, 7<sup>th</sup> Norfolk District  
James Arciero, Massachusetts State Representative, 2<sup>nd</sup> Middlesex District,  
John J. Cronin, Massachusetts State Senator Worcester and Middlesex District

### **Request for Support of House Bill No. 3025, an Act relative to remote access for public bodies and town meetings**

Over the past year, the Town of Westford, Massachusetts, through its Remote Participation Group of the Access to Town Meeting Committee, has been conducting research on how to increase attendance at our Annual Open Town Meeting and Special Town Meetings, by providing remote electronic access to Westford registered voters. Our historical data shows that on average, our annual open town meetings draw fewer than 400 registered voters, or approximately 2.2% of the town's 18,000 registered voters. We believe that providing voters with the ability to participate in Town meetings remotely and to vote electronically would greatly increase attendance and participation.

Our research has identified several significant roadblocks to being able to offer remote access to our voters, including current restrictions under Massachusetts law and the prohibitive time and costs necessary to develop the software and procedures needed to permit remote electronic participation.

Therefore, the Town of Westford's Select Board strongly supports House Bill No. 3025 as it relates to amending Section 2, Chapter 30A of the General Laws, to allow for remote and hybrid participation, including, but not limited to, by means of a video or telephone conferencing platform, or the use of personal cell phones and other necessary equipment to fully participate in the open town meeting process that includes debating, making amendments, and voting on warrant articles.

Further, we request that the State of Massachusetts consider helping to develop the software necessary to allow towns to conduct open town meetings on a remote/hybrid basis.

Honorable Senate and House of Representatives  
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Respectfully Submitted,

Town of Westford, Select Board



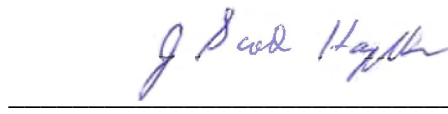
G. Thomas Clay (Chair)



John H. Cunningham (Clerk)



Andrea Peraner-Sweet



J. Scott Hazelton (Vice Chair)



Chris Barrett