

Those persons wishing to speak on any item, whether or not it is included on the agenda, are requested to fill out and submit to the Clerk of the Board a "Request to Speak" form. Thank you.

It is the intention of the Chino Valley Independent Fire District to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in all respects. If, as an attendee or a participant at this meeting, you will need special assistance beyond what is normally provided, the Chino Valley Independent Fire District will attempt to accommodate you in every reasonable manner. Please contact the Administration Office (909) 902-5260 at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting to inform us of your particular needs and to determine if accommodation is feasible. Please advise us at that time if you will need accommodations to attend or participate in meetings on a regular basis.

Any public record, relating to an open session agenda item, that is distributed within 72 hours prior to the meeting is available for public inspection at the District's Administrative Headquarters, 14011 City Center Drive, Chino Hills, CA 91709.

CHINO VALLEY INDEPENDENT FIRE DISTRICT
Special Meeting - Standing Committee Meeting
Legislative Committee

Administrative Headquarters
14011 City Center Drive
Chino Hills, CA 91709

Monday, April 10, 2023

8:00 a.m. - Open Session

AGENDA

ROLL CALL

FLAG SALUTE

INVOCATION

Chaplain Henry Aguilar

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

This is the time and place for the general public to address the Committee about subjects that do not appear elsewhere on the agenda. The public may address items on the agenda at the time addressed by the Committee.

Due to Board policy and Brown Act requirements, action may not be taken on any issue on the agenda. When you address the Committee, please state your name and address (optional) prior to making your remarks. Please limit your comments to 3 minutes.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

1. DISCUSSION OF AB 557 (HART) – EMERGENCY REMOTE MEETINGS

Purpose is for the Legislative Committee to discuss California Special District's request for support of Assembly Bill 557 related to emergency remote meeting procedures under the Ralph M. Brown Act and consider a letter of support.

ADJOURNMENT

I, Angela Robles, Clerk of the Board, on behalf of the Board of Directors, do hereby certify that a copy of this agenda has been posted by 6:00 p.m., on Friday, April 7, 2023.

Angela Robles

Angela Robles, Clerk of the Board

**CHINO VALLEY INDEPENDENT FIRE DISTRICT
STAFF REPORT**

DATE: APRIL 10, 2023

TO: LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

FROM: DAVE WILLIAMS, FIRE CHIEF

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF AB 557 (HART) – EMERGENCY REMOTE MEETINGS

PURPOSE:

Purpose is for the Legislative Committee to discuss California Special District's request for support of Assembly Bill 557 related to emergency remote meeting procedures under the Ralph M. Brown Act and consider a letter of support.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Legislative Committee discuss California Special District's request for support of Assembly Bill 557 related to emergency remote meeting procedures under the Ralph M. Brown Act and consider a letter of support.

ATTACHMENTS:

AB557 FACT SHEET

AB557 LETTER OF SUPPORT



ASSEMBLY BILL 557

EMERGENCY BROWN ACT MEETING PROCEDURES

SUMMARY

AB 557 eliminates the January 1, 2024 sunset on the provisions of the Brown Act that provided additional flexibility for local agencies looking to meet remotely during an emergency while still maintaining public access and transparency. This legislation will provide a narrow but important emergency authority, allowing local governing bodies to safely meet and take action during applicable states of emergency declared by the Governor.

BACKGROUND

AB 361 (Rivas, 2021) codified, until Jan 1, 2024, numerous provisions of Governor Newsom's Executive Orders pertaining to the Brown Act in 2020. The provisions only apply in the event that an emergency situation or public health orders prevent a local agency board from meeting in-person. If the meeting could still be held in-person without endangering local agency board members or personnel, then the local agency would not be permitted to rely on the provisions added to California Government Code section 54953 by AB 361. Local agencies needing to meet remotely pursuant to those provisions are only permitted to do so in concert with an emergency declared by the Governor of California.

PROBLEM

While the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic appears to have subsided, the need to be prepared for future emergencies remains. Recent events in California, including disastrous flooding and devastating wildfires, underscore this point.

AB 361 was extensively used by local agencies to meet during the pandemic and was designed to address all emergency situations where it would be unsafe, or even impossible, to meet in-person.

The flexibility these provisions provide will remain a critical tool for use in other emergencies declared by the Governor even after the COVID-19 state of emergency expires.

In cases where a state of emergency persists, AB 361 required local agencies to renew their emergency remote meeting resolution within 30-days. However, many agencies regularly meet once-per-month (e.g. every third-Tuesday), which is sometimes a span of just over 30 days. This forced agencies to unnecessarily move meetings to days and times less accustomed to the public or to expend unnecessary time and expense to conduct an additional meeting

SOLUTION

By removing the sunset, AB 557 preserves the critical flexibility for local agencies needing to meet remotely to continue providing the public with essential services during a Governor-declared emergency. By adjusting the renewal period for resolutions to 45 days (up from 30 days), AB 557 would provide accommodation for those agencies regularly meeting on a fixed date every month.

SUPPORT

CA Special Districts Association (Co-Sponsor)
League of California Cities (Co-Sponsor)
CA State Association of Counties (Co-Sponsor)



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Vice President

Tom Haughey

Mike Kreeger

Sarah Ramos-Evinger

Fire Chief

Dave Williams

April 10, 2023

The Honorable Gregg Hart
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 6230
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 557 (Hart) – Support [As Introduced]

Dear Assembly Member Hart:

The Chino Valley Fire District is pleased to inform you of our support for Assembly Bill 557, 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, Chino Valley Fire District is pleased to support Assembly Bill 557. Please feel free to contact Fire Chief Dave Williams at dwilliams@chofire.org or Clerk of the Board Angela Robles at arobles@chofire.org if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

John DeMonaco
President

Mike Kreeger
Director

CC: Marcus Detwiler, Legislative Representative, California Special Districts Association

Special Districts Leadership Foundation - District of Distinction Since 2008