A BILL

To enact section 121.221 of the Revised Code to authorize public bodies to meet via teleconference and video conference during a public health state of emergency as declared by the Governor, and to declare an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 121.221 of the Revised Code be enacted to read as follows:

Sec. 121.221. (A) As used in this section, "public body" has the meaning defined in section 121.22 of the Revised Code.

(B) During any period for which there has been an official declaration by the governor that a public health state of emergency exists, members of a public body may attend meetings by means of teleconference or video conference. Notwithstanding division (C) of section 121.22 of the Revised Code, members of a public body who attend meetings by means of teleconference or video conference shall be considered present in person at the meeting, shall be permitted to vote, and shall be counted for purposes of determining whether a quorum is present at the meeting.
The public body shall make provisions for public attendance at a location involved in the teleconference or video conference.

Section 2. This act is hereby declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety. The reason for such necessity is to minimize the impact to Ohio citizens from the COVID-19 disease outbreak, and to establish a public body open meetings policy for future public health emergencies. Therefore, this act shall go into immediate effect.