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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**SOLANO
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April 4, 2025

The Honorable Maria Elena Durazo
Chairwoman, Senate Local Government Committee
1021 O Street, Ste. 7530
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SUPPORT – SB 239 (Arreguin), Open Meetings, Teleconferencing, Subsidiary Body

Dear Chairwoman Durazo,

On behalf of the Solano County Board of Supervisors, I write in support of SB 239, which would allow committees, commissions, and Boards to hold meetings virtually under updated requirements that enhance flexibility and maintain transparency and public accessibility.

Local governments across the state have faced ongoing challenges in recruiting and retaining members of the public to serve on advisory bodies subject to the Brown Act. Challenges associated with recruitment have been attributed to participation time commitments; time and location of meetings; physical limitation, conflicts with childcare, and work obligations.

The current in-person requirement to participate in local governance bodies presents a disproportionate challenge for those with physical or economic limitations, including seniors, persons with disability, single parents, caretakers, the economically marginalized, and those who live in rural areas with prohibitive driving distances; this is problematic as diversification in civic participation at all levels is essential to ensure the decisions made by advisory bodies are effective, inclusive, fair and represent the County's interests as a whole.

In Solano County, this has been a particularly important matter for several of our commissions and committees, including, and not limited to:

- The Alcohol and Drug Advisory Board
- The California Medical Facility Advisory Board
- The In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority Advisory Committee
- The Library Advisory Council
- The Measure L Library Sales Tax Measure Advisory Committee
- The Mental Health Board Advisory Committee
- The Nut Tree Airport Advisory Committee
- The Solano Commission for Women and Girls
- The Solano Childcare Planning Council

SB 239 would help address these issues by providing a narrow exemption under the Ralph M. Brown Act for non-decision-making advisory bodies that do not take final action on any legislation, regulations, contracts, licenses, permits, or other entitlements.

The Honorable Maria Elena Durazo
SB 239 / Solano County Board of Supervisors

This bill would improve community engagement and participation for both advisory body members and members of the public alike and provide much-needed modernization for open meetings. Therefore, Solano County supports SB 239 because the bill ensures that public accessibility and transparency is maintained while flexibility for its legislative and advisory participants is achieved.

For these reasons, Solano County is pleased to support SB 239 and respectfully requests your "Aye" vote on this measure.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mitch N. Mashburn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mitch" and last name "Mashburn" clearly legible.

Mitch Mashburn, Chair
Solano County Board of Supervisors

CC:

Members of the Senate Local Government Committee
The Honorable Jesse Arreguin, California State Senator
The Honorable Christopher Cabaldon, California State Senator
The Honorable Lori Wilson, California State Assemblymember
The Honorable Solano County Board of Supervisors
Paragon Government Relations
Karen Lange, SYASL Partners, Inc.