1-6   COMMITTEE VOTE

1-7		Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-8	Hancock	X			
1-9	Creighton	X			
1-10	Campbell	X			
1-11	Estes	X			
1-12	Nichols			X	
1-13	Schwertner	X			
1-14	Taylor of Galveston	X			
1-15	Whitmire	X			
1-16	Zaffirini	X			

1-17   A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
1-18   AN ACT

1-19 relating to the meeting of a governmental body held by
1-20 videoconference call.
1-21   BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:
1-22   SECTION 1.   Section 551.127, Government Code, as amended by
1-23 Chapters 159 (S.B. 984) and 685 (H.B. 2414), Acts of the 83rd
1-24 Legislature, Regular Session, 2013, is reenacted and amended to
1-25 read as follows:
1-26   Sec. 551.127. VIDEOCONFERENCE CALL.   (a)   Except as
1-27 otherwise provided by this section, this chapter does not prohibit
1-28 a governmental body from holding an open or closed meeting by
1-29 videoconference call.
1-30   (a-1) A member or employee of a governmental body may
1-31 participate remotely in a meeting of the governmental body by means
1-32 of a videoconference call if the video and audio feed of the
1-33 member's or employee's participation, as applicable, is broadcast
1-34 live at the meeting and complies with the provisions of this
1-35 section.
1-36   (a-2) A member of a governmental body who participates in a
1-37 meeting as provided by Subsection (a-1) shall be counted as present
1-38 at the meeting for all purposes.
1-39   (a-3) A member of a governmental body who participates in a
1-40 meeting by videoconference call shall be considered absent from any
1-41 portion of the meeting during which audio or video communication
1-42 with the member is lost or disconnected. The governmental body may
1-43 continue the meeting only if a quorum of the body remains present at
1-44 the meeting location or, if applicable, continues to participate in
1-45 a meeting conducted under Subsection (c).
1-46   (b) A meeting may be held by videoconference call only if a
1-47 quorum of the governmental body is physically present at one
1-48 location of the meeting, except as provided by Subsection (c).
1-49   (c) A meeting of a state governmental body or a governmental
1-50 body that extends into three or more counties may be held by
1-51 videoconference call only if the member of the governmental body
1-52 presiding over the meeting is physically present at one location of
1-53 the meeting that is open to the public during the open portions of
1-54 the meeting.
1-55   (d) A meeting held by videoconference call is subject to the
1-56 notice requirements applicable to other meetings in addition to the
1-57 notice requirements prescribed by this section.
1-58   (e) The notice of a meeting to be held by videoconference
1-59 call must specify as a location of the meeting the location where a
1-60 quorum of the governmental body will be physically present and
1-61 specify the intent to have a quorum present at that location, except

2-1 that the notice of a meeting to be held by videoconference call
2-2 under Subsection (c) must specify as a location of the meeting the
2-3 location where the member of the governmental body presiding over
2-4 the meeting will be physically present and specify the intent to
2-5 have the member of the governmental body presiding over the meeting
2-6 present at that location. The location where the member of the
2-7 governmental body presiding over the meeting is physically present
2-8 shall be open to the public during the open portions of the meeting.
2-9   (f) Each portion of a meeting held by videoconference call
2-10 that is required to be open to the public shall be visible and
2-11 audible to the public at the location specified under Subsection
2-12 (e). If a problem occurs that causes a meeting to no longer be
2-13 visible and audible to the public at that location, the meeting must
2-14 be recessed until the problem is resolved. If the problem is not
2-15 resolved in six hours or less, the meeting must be adjourned.
2-16   (g) The governmental body shall make at least an audio
2-17 recording of the meeting. The recording shall be made available to
2-18 the public.
2-19   (h) The location specified under Subsection (e), and each
2-20 remote location from which a member of the governmental body
2-21 participates, shall have two-way audio and video communication with
2-22 each other location during the entire meeting. The face of each
2-23 participant in the videoconference call, while that participant is
2-24 speaking, shall be clearly visible, and the voice audible, to each
2-25 other participant and, during the open portion of the meeting, to
2-26 the members of the public in attendance at the physical location
2-27 described by Subsection (e) and at any other location of the meeting
2-28 that is open to the public.
2-29   (i) The Department of Information Resources by rule shall
2-30 specify minimum standards for audio and video signals at a meeting
2-31 held by videoconference call. The quality of the audio and video
2-32 signals perceptible at each location of the meeting must meet or
2-33 exceed those standards.
2-34   (j) The audio and video signals perceptible by members of
2-35 the public at each location of the meeting described by Subsection
2-36 (h) must be of sufficient quality so that members of the public at
2-37 each location can observe the demeanor and hear the voice of each
2-38 participant in the open portion of the meeting.
2-39   (k) Without regard to whether a member of the governmental
2-40 body is participating in a meeting from a remote location by
2-41 videoconference call, a governmental body may allow a member of the
2-42 public to testify at a meeting from a remote location by
2-43 videoconference call.
2-44   SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2017.

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