

2022 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 299

BY REPRESENTATIVE AMEDEE

PUBLIC MEETINGS: Provides for an exception to the Open Meetings Law to allow the receipt of information regarding natural disasters and declared emergencies

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 42:17(E), relative to meetings of public bodies; to provide for an exception to  
3 requirements regarding meetings of public bodies; to authorize the receipt of certain  
4 information regarding natural disasters and declared emergencies by public bodies  
5 outside of an open meeting; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 42:17(E) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

8 §17. Exceptions to open meetings

9 \* \* \*

10 E. The provisions of this Chapter shall not apply to the receipt of information  
11 regarding preparations for and response and recovery efforts directly relating to a  
12 natural disaster or declared emergency by members of a public body if no vote or  
13 other action, including formal or informal polling of members or discussion of future  
14 action by the public body, occurs.

15 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not  
16 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature  
17 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If  
18 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become  
19 effective on the day following such approval.

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**DIGEST**

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HB 299 Engrossed

2022 Regular Session

Amedee

**Abstract:** Exempts receipt of information by members of a public body regarding natural disasters and declared emergencies from requirements of the Open Meetings Law under certain circumstances.

Present law requires that all meetings of public bodies to be open to the public except in cases provided by law. Provides relative to public notice of open meetings, public comment and voting during meetings, and publication of minutes of open meetings.

Present law defines "meeting" as the convening of a quorum of a public body to receive information, deliberate, or act on a matter over which the public body has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

Present law excepts certain meetings from the requirements of present law.

Proposed law adds an exception for the receipt of information regarding preparations for and response and recovery efforts directly relating to a natural disaster or declared emergency by members of a public body if no vote or other action, including formal or informal polling of members or discussion of future action by the public body, occurs.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 42:17(E))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs to the original bill:

1. Remove specific references to "meeting at which a quorum is present" and remove references to conversations via telecommunications media and to presentations that include security sensitive information.
2. Change the exception to allow members of a public body to receive information regarding preparations for and response and recovery efforts directly relating to a natural disaster or declared emergency if no vote or other action, including formal or informal polling of members or discussion of future action by the public body, occurs.