

2019 HOUSE GOVERNMENT AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

HB 1401

2019 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Government and Veterans Affairs Committee Fort Union Room, State Capitol

HB 1401
2/1/2019
32017

- Subcommittee
 Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Carmen Hart by Marjorie Conley

Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

To provide for a legislative management study of the use of technology to enable remote attendance at interim legislative committee meetings

Minutes:

Attachment 1

Chairman Kasper: opened the hearing on HB 1401

Rep. Alisa Mitskog, appeared in support. Attachment 1(1:00-3:16)

Rep. Laning: Might require quite a bit of training and it might get expensive in some cases.

Rep. Mitskog: In the business world IT people walk you through it. It is pretty simple. I came through the era with no computer training. I think everyone can learn.

Rep. Karls: So when you are sitting in a committee room and someone is on the conference phone, is the person on the conference phone reimbursed per diem?

Rep. Mitskog: Those are some of the questions that could be explored during the study, but certainly if you are spending the time then you would be reimbursed for your time.

Rep. Louser: Would you be open to amending the study to include the requirement of whatever studies this to do one remote meeting? Video in particular.

Rep. Mitskog: Yes, I am open to anything? I have talked to enough representatives and senators that are open to see this topic explored. I am open to an amendment.

Rep. Schauer: Why do we have to study it? Why can't the chairperson say whoever is out of town, we are going to do this skype or whatever? Why does this have to be studied? This technology is available now.

Rep. Mitskog: I think it would be worthy of a study. What types of committees and who and what types of meeting formats would be available. I think that there are some

questions that need to be answered.

Rep. Schauer: At \$7,000 a meeting, I think the study is already done.

Rep. Rohr: Did you already talk to IT about this and possibly just a policy change and maybe leave it to the discretion of the chair of the committee? If they want to do something electronic.

Rep. Mitskog: After that employee benefit meeting there was some discussion I think that ensued after that regarding the possibilities of remote meetings. There was a follow up meeting.

Rep. Rohr: I sit on the board of the State Hospital in Jamestown, the weather was terrible out and they conferenced me in, so they have been using that for a long time. They have policies already set up that we could use and mimic in other departments.

Scott Rising, North Dakota Soybean Growers Association: You will get better information as you make your decisions. This is a great idea.

Rep. Karls: When you envision these remote committee meetings are the witnesses also going to be on a beach in Florida and give their testimony?

Mr. Rising: I can't think of a reason why not? If they are giving good credible evidence and if you find that is not the case, people are singing to just sing.

Rep. Mitskog: A number of states that allow for remote testimony. People that cannot take time out to testify, will be able to be heard.

Chairman Kasper: Anyone else in support of HB 1401? Opposed? Neutral?

Kyle Forster, IT manager for legislative council, appeared in a neutral position. It is not really a technology thing as a policy and procedure thing. There was some discussion on remote testimony. Some states do that. Some states have dedicated areas across the state where someone that wants to give testimony could go to and they would sign up to give that testimony which is something that is not done in North Dakota. Some states you have to register to testify and if we are going to do something remote we probably have to implement something like that. That way you would know who is trying to testify. Another part is location. We have the capability to be on the video network since we are in the capitol and we have 2 polycom units and they are portable and we have used those in a few interim meetings. We have those available, but basically we have one camera and one monitor. So there are some limitations there.

Rep. Laning: Is there a way of chaining the laptops together so that we could view somebody in another location on their laptop?

Mr. Forster: Technically that is possible.

Rep. Rohr: What would it take to implement this without having a study?

Mr. Foster: Right now it is a leadership decision. Difficult to have a meeting without at least one person there. Cost satisfied with audio or video. The cost is what would have to be researched. Audio is easy.

Rep. P. Anderson: I am only the member on the PERS board from Fargo. The rest are in Bismarck, so I video in, I can see everybody and they can see me. Frankly it saves a lot of money, time, and it works. I think this is a great idea.

Vice Chair Steiner: Are the appropriations rooms Roughrider and Harvest already set up for live video for the public to view?

Mr. Foster: At this time no. We let the licensing go as there was no initiative from leadership to proceed with that. Right now we are not licensed to do that. The hardware is technically there, but it is not implemented.

Rep. Rohr: The only downside would be technology downtime. How frequently does that happen?

Mr. Foster: Downtime does happen. Look at it from the perspective of the legislator's home.

Rep. P. Anderson: Do you envision having locations around the state so that we can do this?

Mr. Foster: Yes, we do have 2 polycom units. The state runs a video network that uses polycom equipment. We do have 2 of those units that we can hook into Harvest, Roughrider and a couple of the other rooms. We haven't put the video network connection in all the rooms. What the legislature would have to do then during the interim is identify where some of these rooms are, and can we get access to utilize the facilities is really going to be the hard part.

Closed the hearing on HB 1401

Chairman Kasper: This requires a big policy study. My concern is security.

Rep. Laning: Made motion for Do Pass on HB 1401.

Rep. Steiner: Seconded motion for Do Pass on HB 1401.

Roll Call Yes 11 No 2 Absent 1

Rep. P. Anderson is the **Carrier**.

Date: 2-1-19
 Roll Call Vote #: 1

**2019 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE
 ROLL CALL VOTES
 BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1401**

House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee

Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: _____

Recommendation: Adopt Amendment
 Do Pass Do Not Pass Without Committee Recommendation
 As Amended Rerefer to Appropriations
 Place on Consent Calendar
 Other Actions: Reconsider _____

Motion Made By Rep. Laning Seconded By Rep. Steiner

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Jim Kasper	X		Rep. Pamela Anderson	X	
Vice Chair Vicky Steiner	X		Rep. Mary Schneider	X	
Rep. Jeff Hoverson	X				
Rep. Craig Johnson	X				
Rep. Daniel Johnston		X			
Rep. Karen Karls	X				
Rep. Ben Koppelman		X			
Rep. Vernon Laning	X				
Rep. Scott Louser	X				
Rep. Karen Rohr	X				
Rep. Austen Schauer	X				
Rep. Steve Vetter	A				

Total (Yes) 11 No 2

Absent 1

Floor Assignment Rep. Anderson

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1401: Government and Veterans Affairs Committee (Rep. Kasper, Chairman)
recommends **DO PASS** (11 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING).
HB 1401 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

2019 SENATE GOVERNMENT AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

HB 1401

2019 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Government and Veterans Affairs Committee Sheyenne River Room, State Capitol

HB1401
3/22/2019
#34161

- Subcommittee
 Conference Committee

Committee Clerk: Pam Dever

Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

To provide for a legislative management study of the use of technology to enable remote attendance at interim legislative committee meetings.

Minutes:

Att. # 1 – Rep Mitskog; Att # 2 – Blake Crosby

Chairman Davison: Let's open the hearing on HB1401.

Rep. Mitskog, Dist. 25, Wahpeton: (see att # 1) (0.18-3.56) I served on four interim committees. When one meeting was only 45 minutes, I felt there must be another way for those who have to travel a long distance. I have talked to many legislators about remote call-in options. Many think this has merit and should be studied. This bill would do that. In 2013, there were upgrades in committee rooms for interim committees. Please support this bill.

Sen. Erin Oban: Did this start as a study or implementation of using technology?

Rep. Mitskog: I am suggesting that this start as a study. This past winter is a reminder of what can happen in N.D., and what we deal with in winter and travel. I think it is very relevant considering the winter we just had. The chair of legislative management does have the authority to allow for a call in meeting.

Vice Chair Meyer: I remember having a 40-minute meeting and I have a 4-hour drive. This has merit. (4.26)

Sen. Kristin Roers: In my daily job, 90% of my meetings are now over skype. (4.39) The one challenge, though, is that it is easy to get distracted because you are on your laptop.

Chairman Davison: More in support?

Blake Crosby, N.D. Ex. Dir. League of Cities: I am here in support. (see att # 2) (6.02-8.20). DOT already does this sort of communication technology. The League of Cities is looking at an AV conference capability. It is fast, cheap, and is convenient. We can have more meetings, they will be shorter, and we will get more done.

Kyle Forester, IT manager for legislative branch: (8.52) The technology is available today. It has to be decided when and how it could be used.

Chairman Davison: We have the ability right now, and you can decide to do it? Or can each interim committee chair person decide if that is available?

Kyle: Legislative management would have to decide, but it is still up to the chair if they want to allow it. There has been remote testimony used before as a video call. All committee room have dialer that is hooked in to the sound systems in the rooms. The Harvest and Roughrider rooms have cameras installed 6-7 years ago. They thought they would live streaming interim meeting in those two rooms. That never got approval. Last session, we let the licensing expire for the archive and streaming to save money. TO do the 15 committee rooms, it cost \$285,000 for licensing, achieve, do videos, and live stream. Plus, there is a \$225,000 onetime fee. We would have to rewired with new wiring for a data center. (11.27)

Chairman Davison: Thanks for the information. Any opposition? Hearing is closed.

Sen. Erin Oban: I move a DO PASS on HB1401. **Vice Chair Meyer:** I second.

Chairman Davison: Discussion?

Sen. Richard Marcellais: I would like to see how much cost savings there would be in this.

Chairman Davison: That is what the study will do. Roll: **YES -- 7 NO -- 0 -0-absent.**

HB1401 PASSED. Sen. Shawn Vedaa will carry the bill.

Done (12.44)

3-22-19

Date:
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2019 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE
ROLL CALL VOTES *HB 1401*
BILL/RESOLUTION NO.

Senate Government and Veterans Affairs Committee

Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: _____

Recommendation: Adopt Amendment
 Do Pass Do Not Pass Without Committee Recommendation
 As Amended Rerefer to Appropriations
 Place on Consent Calendar
Other Actions: Reconsider _____

Motion Made By Sen. Oban Seconded By Sen. Meyer

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Chair Davison	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Sen. Oban	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Vice Chair Meyer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Sen. Marcellais	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sen. Elkin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Sen. K. Roers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Sen. Vedaa	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

Total (Yes) 7 No 0

Absent -0-

Floor Assignment Sen. Vedaa

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1401: Government and Veterans Affairs Committee (Sen. Davison, Chairman)
recommends **DO PASS** (7 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING).
HB 1401 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.

2019 TESTIMONY

HB 1401

HB 1401 Testimony

February 1, 2019

House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee

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page 1

Chairman Kasper and Committee Members:

My name is Alisa Mitskog, I represent District 25 which is located from Hickson/Kindred to the South Dakota Border. During the interim, I had the honor to serve on 4 committees. I attended meetings varying in length from 2 days to under one hour. It was after one short committee meeting that was approximately 45 minutes in duration, the idea of a remote call in option was discussed. I have spoken with many legislators about this idea and many thought the idea had merit and should be studied.

HB 1401 would do just that. It would provide for a study of using technology to enable remote attendance at interim legislative committee meetings as a cost-saving measure.

I believe the shorter meetings are something that should be considered for remote attendance. There were 40 meetings that met for 3 hours or less. During the 2017-2019 biennium, the budget for interim committees was 1.4 million, which equates to approximately \$7,000 per meeting. The legislature has invested in equipping legislators with both a laptop and I Pad. Also, in 2013, upgrades in technology were made to the main meeting rooms for interim committees, the Roughrider and Harvest Rooms. Two polycom units are available for videoconferencing. Other options for remote attendance would be Skype for business or Go to Meeting. I certainly recognize that the idea of remote call in meetings would not work for the majority of meetings but having the option to use technology for remote attendance or for testimony for the shorter meetings is something that I would encourage the legislative management to study in the interim. I might also add that in recent weeks, I have heard from a few individuals that would like to see live streaming of interim committee meetings and legislative floor sessions.

In closing, with the evolution of technology and constrained budgets, I think it's time for us to explore innovative options for our interim meetings. I would ask for your support of HB 1401.

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2017-2019 BIENNIAL INTERIM LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT MEETING SUMMARY
APRIL 28, 2017 TO NOVEMBER 15, 2018

E	Meeting Hours	1st			2nd			M	
		Members Present	LM Members Present	Members Present	Members Present	LM Members Present			
ive Rules	18								
ive Devlin)	2.83	13	93%	0	2.33	16	89%	0	
ive D. Johnson)	11	4.75	10	91%	1	3.50	10	91%	1
on	42								
ive Bellew)	1.42	30	71%	0	2.83	35	83%	0	
unding	13								
halble)	4.43	11	85%	1	4.88	12	92%	1	
olicy	15								
ian)	5.50	14	93%	2	5.75	15	100%	0	
enefits Programs	13								
ive Lefor)	2.00	11	85%	0	3.33	9	69%	0	
elopment and	12								
n									
ardner)	4.25	11	92%	0	11.42	9	75%	2	
t Administration	11								
ive Louser)	5.33	11	100%	2	4.08	8	73%	0	
t Finance	18								
rvaag)	3.93	15	83%	3	4.00	17	94%	0	
Reform Review	16								
ive Keiser)	5.17	13	81%	0	6.33	14	88%	0	
ices	14								
ee)	5.25	14	100%	1	7.25	12	86%	3	
ation	18								
ive Sanford)	7.50	18	100%	0	7.33	16	89%	2	
ices	17								
ive Hogan)	6.25	16	94%	2	5.58	15	88%	1	
Technology	11								
ive Mock)	5.42	8	73%	0	4.00	8	73%	0	
d Referred	6								
udy Commission									
dge Neumann)	4.00	5	83%	0	4.08	5	83%	0	
gue)	14								
vestment	15								
rstrong)	4.75	14	93%	1	4.87	9	60%	0	
Budget	4								
n Fund									
ive Kempenich)	0.75	4	100%	0	1.67	4	100%	0	
Audit and	14								
w									
ain)	5.75	12	86%	0	3.00	13	93%	0	
Management	17								
imberg)	3.00	16	94%	0	2.67	16	94%	0	
Procedure	11								
ements									
ive Carlson)	0.25	11	100%	0	1.17	11	100%	1	
Revenue Advisory	8								
imberg)	5.33	6	75%	1	1.08	7	88%	1	
ources	14								
ive Selbel)	2.83	12	86%	0	4.17	10	71%	0	
ruh)	20								
2.50	15	75%	0	4.83	14	70%	1		
ion Issues	6								
Burgum)	5.70	5	83%	0	6.00	6	100%	0	
CS Overview	17								
ive Schmidt)	5.00	15	88%	2	6.25	16	94%	2	
ompensation	6								
isper)	3.00	6	100%	0	5.00	6	100%	0	
14.11	4.14	12.19	89%	0.59	4.52	11.96	86%	0.63	

Meeting Hours	3rd			4th			5th			6th					
	Members Present	LM Members Present	Members Present	Members Present	LM Members Present	Meeting Hours	Members Present	LM Members Present	Meeting Hours	Members Present	LM Members Present				
5.00	16	89%	1	8.50	18	100%	0	5.25	15	83%	0	2.83	14	78%	0
4.75	9	82%	0	1.50	7	64%	0								
2.00	32	76%	0	4.25	34	81%	0	2.17	36	86%	2	3.00	34	81%	0
4.38	12	92%	1	3.47	13	100%	0	4.95	11	85%	2	4.33	11	85%	0
5.50	14	93%	0	6.75	14	93%	0	5.50	14	93%	0				
1.75	5	38%	0	0.83	10	77%	0	0.17	9	69%	0	6.75	12	92%	0
5.92	10	83%	1	11.83	7	58%	1	13.00	10	83%	1	5.83	10	83%	0
5.67	9	82%	0	3.08	9	82%	1								
3.88	17	94%	2	4.58	17	94%	1	2.92	16	89%	0				
6.42	10	63%	0	5.92	10	63%	0	6.58	12	75%	0	6.42	12	75%	0
7.00	13	93%	1	7.25	12	86%	2	7.25	13	93%	1	6.00	13	93%	2
7.00	15	83%	1	7.50	15	83%	0	8.50	17	94%	1	7.58	14	78%	0
5.08	14	82%	0	7.00	15	88%	1	5.83	17	100%	0	4.83	14	82%	1
5.83	10	91%	0	7.25	7	64%	2	5.00	8	73%	0				
4.00	5	83%	0	4.75	6	100%	2	5.50	5	83%	1				
5.00	11	79%	1	3.67	11	79%	1								
5.25	14	93%	1	3.00	11	73%	1								
2.00	4	100%	1	3.50	4	100%	0								
6.75	11	79%	0	2.25	11	79%	1								
1.08	13	76%	0	1.93	16	94%	0	0.28	17	100%	0	0.75	14	82%	0
2.12	8	73%	0	2.17	10	91%	0	2.83	10	91%	0				
5.25	8	66%	0	1.17	8	100%	2								
3.17	11	79%	1	4.17	10	71%	2								
5.00	17	85%	2	3.25	16	80%	0	6.42	17	85%	1	6.17	15	75%	1
4.08	5	83%	0												
5.25	15	88%	1	5.25	16	94%	2	4.00	14	82%	1	5.75	16	94%	1
5.42	5	83%	0												
4.61	11.59	82%	0.52	4.59	12.28	84%	0.76	5.07	14.18	86%	0.59	5.02	14.92	83%	0.42
14.11	4.14	12.19	89%	0.59	4.52	11.96	86%	0.63							

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7th			8th			9th			10th			Total Meetings	Average Hours	Total Hours	Average Members Present		Total LM Members Present	Average LM Members Present				
Meeting Hours	Members Present	LM Members Present	Meeting Hours	Members Present	LM Members Present	Meeting Hours	Members Present	LM Members Present	Meeting Hours	Members Present	LM Members Present											
													6	4.46	26.74	15.33	85%	1	0.17			
													4	3.63	14.50	9.00	82%	2	0.50			
													6	2.61	15.67	33.50	80%	2	0.33			
2.87	13	100%	2										7	4.19	29.31	11.86	91%	7	1.00			
													5	5.80	29.00	14.20	95%	2	0.40			
													6	2.47	14.83	9.33	72%	0	0.00			
5.75	11	92%	0	7.25	9	75%	1	6.33	9	75%	1	3.00	11	92%	0	10	7.46	74.58	9.70	81%	7	0.70
													4	4.54	18.16	9.25	84%	3	0.75			
													5	3.86	19.31	16.40	91%	6	1.20			
5.83	11	69%	0	5.00	14	88%	0						8	5.96	47.67	12.00	75%	0	0.00			
													6	6.67	40.00	12.83	92%	10	1.67			
													6	7.57	45.41	15.83	88%	4	0.67			
													6	5.76	34.57	15.17	89%	5	0.83			
													5	5.50	27.50	8.20	75%	2	0.40			
													5	4.47	22.33	5.20	87%	3	0.60			
													4	4.59	18.34	11.25	80%	4	1.00			
													4	4.47	17.87	12.00	80%	3	0.75			
													4	1.98	7.92	4.00	100%	1	0.25			
													4	4.44	17.75	11.75	84%	1	0.25			
1.92	15	88%	0	9.35	14	82%	0						8	2.62	20.98	15.13	89%	0	0.00			
													5	1.71	8.54	10.00	91%	1	0.20			
													4	3.21	12.83	7.25	91%	4	1.00			
													4	3.59	14.34	10.75	77%	3	0.75			
4.08	17	85%	1	2.75	16	80%	0						8	4.38	35.00	15.88	79%	6	0.75			
													3	5.26	15.78	5.33	89%	0	0.00			
													6	5.25	31.50	15.33	90%	9	1.50			
													3	4.47	13.42	5.67	94%	0	0.00			
4.09	13.40	87%	0.60	6.09	13.25	81%	0.25	6.33	9.00	75%	1.00	3.00	11.00	92%	0.00	5.41	4.48	24.96	11.93	86%	3.19	0.58
20.45	67		3	24.35	53		1	6.33	9		1	3.00	11		0	146	120.88	673.85	322.14		86	15.67

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HB 1401

3-22-19

att #1

pg 1

HB 1401 Testimony

March 22, 2019

Senate Government and Veterans Affairs Committee

Senator Davison, Chairman

Chairman Davison and Committee Members:

My name is Alisa Mitskog, I represent District 25, which is located from Hickson/Kindred to the South Dakota Border. During the interim, I had the privilege to serve on 4 committees. I attended meetings varying in length from 2 days to under one hour.

It was after one short committee meeting that was approximately 45 minutes in duration, the idea of a remote call in option was discussed. I have spoken with many legislators about this idea and many thought the idea had merit and should be studied.

HB 1401 would do just that. It would provide for a study of using technology to enable remote attendance at interim legislative committee meetings as a cost-saving measure. I believe the shorter meetings are something that should be considered for remote attendance. There were 40 meetings that met for 3 hours or less. During the 2017-2019 biennium, the budget for interim committees was 1.4 million, which equates to approximately \$7,000 per meeting. The legislature has invested in equipping legislators with both a laptop and I Pad. Also, in 2013, upgrades in technology were made to the main meeting rooms for interim committees, the Roughrider and Harvest Rooms. Two polycom units are available for videoconferencing. Other options for remote attendance would be Skype for business or Go to Meeting. I certainly recognize that the idea of remote call in meetings would not work for most meetings but having the option to use technology for remote attendance or for testimony for the shorter meetings is something that I would encourage the legislative management to study in the interim. I might also ad that in recent weeks, I have heard from a few individuals that would like to see live streaming of interim committee meetings and legislative floor sessions.

In closing, with the evolution of technology and constrained budgets, I think it is time for us to explore innovative options for our interim meetings.

I would ask for your support of HB 1401.

original

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3-22-19
Att #2
pg 1

March 22, 2019
HB 1401
Senate Government and Veterans Affairs Committee
Senator Davison, Chairman

Chairman Davison and members of the Committee...for the record, Blake Crosby, Executive Director of the North Dakota League of Cities. I am here in support of HB 1401.

As I am sure all of you are aware, there are no full-time mayors, city council or commissioners in any of the 357 incorporated cities in North Dakota. With the exception of those officials that may be retired, they all have jobs that require their presence. If they elect to come before the legislature to testify on a bill, they need to take a vacation day which takes time away from family, personal or business activities.

The technology to allow remote interaction is already available in the current environment...Skype®, Facetime® and ZOOM® are three that come to mind. And there are a number of proprietary networks also in the marketplace so the technology is here and now. On the State level, NDDOT is able to connect their satellite offices for audio and video. I have been a participant in a number of those conferences, and it works very well.

Enhancing the ability of my elected officials to participate in a hearing without having to take a day, would provide for better and more comprehensive legislation with less concern of unintended consequences.

I respectfully ask for a DO-PASS on HB 1401 and will try to answer any questions.

original