

**Testimony from Jordan Day, Associate Director**  
**H 5184 – Relating to State Affairs and Government – Open Meetings**  
**House Committee on State Government & Elections – February 7, 2023**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for the opportunity to submit testimony with our thoughts on H 5184.

Over the last three years, municipal governments have found meaningful ways to continue engaging the public during a pandemic and beyond. This legislation was before the committee during the last two sessions, and we shared concerns regarding potential unintended consequences. Our members recognize the value of having public participation at their meetings, especially regarding finance or policy matters. However well-meaning this legislation is, it appears to grant a right to public comment at all public meetings though we do not believe that is the intent. The League and its members are certain that this legislation will have adverse impacts impacting the ability of public bodies to operate meetings effectively due to the language which cites items that were “previously posted.” This phrase is ambiguous in nature and has no boundaries which could allow topics to be discussed in perpetuity rather than during the timeliness of the agenda items.

Given our concerns, we ask that the committee hold this bill for further study until we can improve upon the language so that it is understandable and enforceable. Thank you for your consideration of our views.