



**City of Blaine**

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*Gov. Dps.*

*2-7-2019*

February 7, 2019

Members of the Government Operations Committee:

As an elected official representing Ward 3 residents in Blaine I am writing to express support for HF 281 (Koegel, Her, Nash) Open Meeting Law; Interactive Television Attendance Requirements Modified.

In September 2017 I was deployed to serve as Minnesota Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer and assist with recovery efforts in San Juan after Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico. While I was able to make arrangements in San Juan to participate in the regularly scheduled Blaine City Council meeting via interactive television (Skype) as allowed by Statute, I was unable to participate because I was stationed at a secured facility and could not leave to relocate to a public setting. While technology has provided the means to continue to serve our constituents when situations like mine occur, Statute requires each location be open and accessible to the public. Because my deployment was to a secured facility that was not open and accessible to the public I unfortunately could not participate in the Council meeting, discussion, or actions that occurred that evening. Adoption of this Bill would allow elected officials the opportunity to serve under specific exceptions such as deployment.

Thank you for your consideration of this Bill and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions at [agarvais@blainemn.gov](mailto:agarvais@blainemn.gov) or 612-229-8890.

Sincerely,

Andrew Garvais  
Blaine City Councilmember – Ward 3