

DRAFT Sample of Policies and Procedures for Remote Testimony

Prepared for Legislative Council

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These policies and procedures are based primarily from the Colorado Legislative Council procedures adopted for the 2015 session and updated on February 11, 2015.

Allotment of Remote Testimony Hours and Selection of Bills for Remote Testimony

- The House of Representatives and the Senate will each be allotted 250 hours of remote testimony during the session. In each house, the minority and majority caucuses will each be allotted 125 hours for remote testimony.
- The leadership of each caucus (President/Speaker/Minority, or another legislative member designated by the Leader) will determine which bills will be available for remote testimony. Any request of a legislative member to allow public testimony on a bill must be approved by the leadership of the member's caucus before the bill may be publicized as being available for remote testimony. The member of leadership who approves the request must provide written authorization of the approval to Legislative Services Division Staff within the time frames specified in Table I (see page 2).
- Legislative Services Division Staff will track the number of hours that are used for remote testimony throughout the session, and will regularly update leadership on the hours that have been used. Once a caucus has used its allotment of hours for remote testimony, the caucus will no longer be able to choose bills for remote testimony for the remainder of the legislative session.
- The entirety of the bill hearing will be broadcast to the remote testimony sites. Thus, the entirety of the bill hearing, not just the portion allotted for public testimony, will count towards the total number of hours available for remote testimony. If a hearing is delayed for any reason, the number of remote testimony hours for the bill will be counted based on when the hearing was scheduled to start in the House or Senate calendar.

Notice and Timing of Remote Testimony Bills

- Witnesses who wish to testify remotely must register through the Legislative website.
- Bills available for remote testimony will be listed on the registration website. The House and Senate calendars will also contain a notification when a bill is available for remote testimony.
- In order for a remote testimony site to be open for remote testimony, at least one witness must be registered to testify at the location 24 hours prior to the hearing. For hearings that occur on a Monday, at least one witness must be registered to testify at the location by the Friday prior to the hearing.
- If no witnesses have registered to testify by the 24-hour deadline to notify a remote site that it must be opened to receive testimony, the bill will be removed from the registration website and the remote testimony designation will be removed from the House or Senate calendar.

- However, if at least one witness is registered by the 24-hour deadline, online sign-up will be available until one hour before the scheduled hearing time. Walk-in testimony at remote locations will be allowed only if there is capacity in the hearing room after all witnesses who have signed up in advance are present.
- In order to allow a sufficient period of time for the public to register to testify remotely and to notify a remote testimony location that it must be open, Table I shows the minimum notice required for scheduling a remote testimony bill. More notice is preferred
- Due to the notice requirements outlined in the above schedule, it is unlikely that many bills will be made available for remote testimony late in the legislative session.

Table I: Schedule for Publicizing Remote Testimony Bills

| Day of Committee Hearing for Remote Testimony Bill | Day by Which At Least One Witness Must Be Registered for a Remote Testimony Site to be Opened | Day by Which a Remote Testimony Bill Must Appear on the Calendar/Website | Day and Time by Which a Remote Testimony Authorization Letter from Leadership must be provided to Legislative Services Division Staff |
|--|---|--|---|
| Monday | Previous Friday | Previous Thursday | Previous Wednesday at Noon |
| Tuesday | Monday | Previous Friday | Previous Thursday at Noon |
| Wednesday | Tuesday | Monday | Previous Friday at Noon |
| Thursday | Wednesday | Tuesday | Monday at Noon |
| Friday | Thursday | Wednesday | Tuesday at Noon |

Committee Procedures

- To the extent possible, committee chairs should put bills on which remote testimony will be taken as the first bills on the committee's calendar for a hearing, in order to maximize the number of hours available for remote testimony.
- Remote witnesses will be treated in all respects the same as witnesses who are present at the Capitol to testify. Remote witnesses must be recognized by the chair in order to testify, and the chair can require such witnesses to limit their testimony. There is no guarantee that all witnesses, including remote witnesses, will be permitted to testify on a bill, or that remote witnesses will be able to testify at a specific time.
- In the future, remote testimony will only be available in two committee rooms -- Room 405 (Senate), and Room 472 (House). A committee that is hearing a bill on which remote testimony will be taken that does not meet in one of these rooms must arrange to move the bill hearing to a room that will accommodate remote testimony. For a pilot project, we may be able to request equipment from ITSD for the portion of session that the pilot is being tested, i.e. Joint Subcommittee on Long-Range Planning for certain bills and hearing days.

VIDEO CONFERENCE CHECKLIST

Committee _____

Date & Time _____

Please follow the checklist below in preparation for your video conference. Follow these steps at the beginning of your video conference for the best possible experience for all those in attendance. It's important to cover all these steps as the first order of business.

1. Once roll has been called for your committee, call "roll" at each remote site as well. Do this by calling the location of each site and asking how many individuals at each site want to testify. The sites for this video conference are as follows:
 - a. (please list sites as indicated on request form)
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
2. Explain the planned order of the meeting for the benefit of individuals at remote sites, who may not be familiar with the order of business.
3. Explain that the cameras need about 5 to 7 seconds when a speaker begins talking to switch between sites or speaker. Try to slow down that pace of speakers to allow the cameras to switch.
4. Ask speakers to state their name, location, and the organization they represent to allow time for the cameras to switch. Clearly state the name of the committee member you recognize into the microphone, so individuals at various sites know which legislator is speaking.
5. Emphasize that all microphones must be turned off before recognizing another speaker and to remind speakers to turn their microphone on. This prevents the camera from moving to site where a participant is not speaking.
6. Explain that the participants will not see a large view of their own site on the screen when they are speaking and the last site to speak will display the most prominently until another speaker begins.