WHEREAS, The outbreak of the 2019 novel coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, and the governor’s March 10, 2020 declaration of a state of emergency require the Senate to convene to take legislative action to ensure the welfare of the commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, In light of the guidance of medical professionals, the governor and other governmental officials and in order to provide for the public safety, including the safety of members and staff, additional methods of voting are necessary; and

WHEREAS, The Senate, pursuant to Article VII of Section II of Chapter I of Part the Second of the Constitution of the Commonwealth, has the power to determine its own rules of proceedings; now, therefore be it

ORDERED, That the Senate declares that a state of emergency exists within the Senate as a result of the outbreak of COVID-19; and be it further

ORDERED, That the following provisions shall apply to the debate on enactment on H.4677:
Section 1. (a) Notwithstanding Senate Rule 55, Senate Rule 57 or any other rule to the contrary, a member may designate another member to act as a proxy to announce the member’s vote or record the member’s presence in the Senate.

(b) A member may designate a proxy by submitting a signed letter to the Clerk specifying the member who is being designated to be the proxy; provided, however, that a member may alter or revoke a proxy designation by submitting a signed letter to the Clerk; provided further, that if a member who has designated a proxy casts the member’s own vote or records the member’s own presence, the member shall be considered to have revoked the designation of the proxy.

Upon receipt of a member’s letter designating, altering or revoking a proxy, the Clerk shall notify the senate president, the minority leader and the other member involved in the designation, alteration or revocation. The Clerk shall maintain an updated list of the designations, alterations and revocations submitted or in effect under this order and shall make the list publicly available in electronic form and available during any vote subject to this order.

(c) A member who announces a vote or records a presence for another member as a proxy shall indicate that the vote or recordation is “by proxy” when responding to a roll call; provided, however, that the member announcing the vote or recording the presence of another member as a proxy shall cast the vote or record the presence in accordance with the other member’s exact instruction.

(d) A signed letter under this section may be submitted to the Clerk electronically.

Section 2. Notwithstanding Senate Rule 57 or any other rule to the contrary, a member present in the State House may be excused from voting personally in the Senate Chamber at the member’s assigned seat by the President due to the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and a court officer shall answer the roll call on behalf of the member.

Section 3. A member whose vote is cast or whose presence is recorded by a proxy under section 1 or for whom a roll call is being answered by a court officer pursuant to section 2 shall be counted for the purpose of establishing a quorum as required pursuant to Senate Rule 64 and Article XXXIII of the Amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth.