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 and participation 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 continues to exist within the Senate as a result of the outbreak of COVID-19; and be it further

ORDERED, That the following provisions may apply for the Massachusetts Senate for actions taken in formal sessions:

Section 1. (a) Notwithstanding Senate Rule 55, Senate Rule 57 or any other rule to the contrary, a member may authorize the presiding officer to announce the member’s vote or record the member’s presence in the Senate.
(b) A member may authorize the presiding officer by submitting a letter to the Clerk that
specifies the member’s exact instruction to the presiding officer on how to answer the question
for which the roll call is ordered and states that the presiding officer is authorized to announce
the member’s vote or record the member’s presence; provided, however, that a member may
alter or revoke this authorization by submitting a letter to the Clerk; provided further, that if a
member who has so authorized the presiding officer casts the member’s own vote or records the
member’s own presence, the member shall be considered to have revoked the authorization to
announce the member’s vote or record the member’s presence in the Senate.

Upon receipt of a member’s letter authorizing the presiding officer or altering or revoking
the authorization of the presiding officer, the Clerk shall notify the President and the minority
leader of the authorization, alteration or revocation. The Clerk shall maintain an updated list of
the authorizations, 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) The presiding officer shall answer the roll call on behalf of each member who has
authorized the presiding officer to announce the vote or record the presence of the member;
provided, however, that the presiding officer shall announce the vote or record the presence in
accordance with the member’s exact instruction.

(d) A 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
not having been recorded under section 1 on the question for which a roll call has been ordered
and who has not recorded their own presence in the chamber may be excused from voting
personally in the Senate Chamber due to the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and a court officer
shall ascertain and announce the roll call on behalf of the member.

Section 3. A member whose vote is announced or whose presence is recorded by the
presiding officer 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.

Section 4. This order shall expire 30 days after its passage.