

Massachusetts House of Representatives

Bill Summary

Bill #:	H.5660
Title:	An Act authorizing remote participation at town meetings and special town meetings in the town of Belmont
Sponsor:	Rep. David Rogers and Sen. William Brownsberger
Committee:	Municipalities and Regional Government
Hearing Date:	9/21/26 to 9/28/26 written testimony only
Current Law:	Chapter 39 of MGL concerns municipal government. This chapter deals with matters such as annual meetings, other meetings, adjournments, warrants, moderators, and quorums. Section 10 contains the procedure for issuance of town meeting warrants to hold such meetings in specified physical locations, notice of which shall be given at least seven days before the annual meeting or an annual or special election and at least fourteen days before any special town meeting. The Town of Belmont has an elected, representative town meeting form of government established by Chapter 302 of the Acts of 1926. There are 288 members. The special act has been amended several times, most recently by Chapter 345 of 2012.
Summary:	Section 1 exempts the town of Belmont from contrary laws to facilitate conducting town meetings and special town meetings in-person, remotely, or through use of a hybrid remote/in-person format. Section 2 provides for town meetings that are held remotely or in hybrid form to be recorded, and for the recording to be made available for public viewing on the town website or another video platform. Such recordings must be available for at least 30 days after the meeting, and shall be a public record subject to disclosure upon request. Section 3 ensures that all actions taken at a remote or hybrid town meeting shall have the same legal force and validity as if the meeting had been conducted entirely in person. Section 4 states that the act will take effect immediately.
Notes:	The language in this legislation was approved as Article 15 at the May 4, 2026 Annual Town Meeting by a roll call vote of 243 Yes and 6 No.