

RESOLUTION NO. RS2020-173

A Resolution requesting the Metropolitan ITS Department to assist the Council in creating a plan to implement an online messaging system for Councilmembers consistent with the Tennessee Open Meetings Act.

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Open Meetings Act (TOMA) prohibits Councilmembers from deliberating matters outside of a publicly noticed meeting; and

WHEREAS, this limitation can be challenging and often results in long meetings, especially for a large body such as the Metropolitan Council; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee Code Annotated § 8-44-109 allows for a governing body, such as the Metropolitan Council, to communicate through a forum over the Internet under certain conditions; and

WHEREAS, such forum would allow Councilmembers to communicate outside of meetings and would be accessible by the public at all times other than during technical maintenance or due to unforeseen technical limitations, in accordance with the state law; and

WHEREAS, before a governing body can use such a forum to communicate electronically, TOMA requires adequate public notice of the intended use of an electronic communication forum and the filing of a plan with the Tennessee Office of Open Records Counsel for review and approval; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council desires the assistance of the Metro ITS Department in creation of this plan, including what options would be available for electronic communication and how such a forum would be hosted by Metro; and

WHEREAS, this electronic forum would not be used as a substitute for decision making by the governing body in a meeting, but could serve to assist Councilmembers in asking questions and receiving information between meetings; and

WHEREAS, this resolution would be the first step in the creation of an electronic forum to assist Councilmembers to communicate within the bounds of the Tennessee Open Meetings Act and would increase transparency with the public.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That the Metropolitan Council hereby goes on record as requesting the Metropolitan ITS Department to assist the Council in creating a plan to implement an online messaging system for Councilmembers consistent with the Tennessee Open Meetings Act.

Section 2. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.

SPONSORED BY:

Zulfat Suara
Member of Council

Electronic Signature Page

(Attach to Legislation Pursuant to Rule 8 of the Council Rules of Procedure)

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive 'Z' followed by a horizontal line that extends to the right and then loops back down to the left.

Zulfat Suara
Council Member At-Large