



MICHIGAN
ASSOCIATION of
CONSERVATION
DISTRICTS

**LATE RESOLUTION 2021-2 TO THE MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF
CONSERVATION DISTRICTS: REQUEST TO UPDATE THE MICHIGAN OPEN
MEETINGS ACT**

Submitted by the Dickinson Conservation District

Whereas, the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts is an established association of the 75 conservation districts in the State of Michigan, and

Whereas, conservation districts are local units of State government, and their Boards of Directors conduct the business meetings of the districts in accordance with the State of Michigan Open Meetings Act, and

Whereas, the COVID pandemic commencing in early 2020 caused the curtailment of conservation district Boards meeting face to face, and

Whereas, the State authorized Declarations of Emergency by counties across the state permitting conservation district Boards to meet using virtual methods such as Zoom, and

Whereas, such virtual meetings have helped minimize possible exposure to COVID by Board members, staff, and citizens calling in by telephone or video to observe or be a part of Board meetings as required by the Open Meetings Act, and

Whereas, the continued impact of the pandemic has been very irregular around the State, causing many counties to rescind their Declarations of Emergency, and

Whereas, conservation district Boards in impacted areas of the State where the Declarations of Emergency have been rescinded have had to hold meetings outdoors and well spaced to maintain personal safety of Board members, staff, and others in accordance with public health recommendations, and

Whereas, the Open Meetings Act does not address any circumstance approaching the situation created by the ongoing pandemic, therefore be it

Resolved, that the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts does hereby urge the Legislature of the State of Michigan to consider adjusting the language of the Open Meetings Act to allow for language permitting such virtual meeting needs as have been experienced since 2020 while maintaining transparency of such proceedings to public access, participation, and scrutiny.

Passed unanimously during MACD Annual Assembly on 12/13/21.