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Vice Chair
Education, Health, and
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Joint Audit Committee
Joint Committee on Federal Relations

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SB0035: Meeting Transparency- State Ethics Commission

Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

Thursday, January 26, 2023 3pm

Transparency is an essential element of good government.

In 2019, we enacted transparency legislation for State Board of Elections open meetings ([SB184/HB71](#)). In 2020, we passed [SB363/HB421](#) to expand the Open Meetings Act to cover five additional state agencies and expand transparency requirements. In 2022, we enacted the Maryland State Agency Transparency Act of 2022 ([SB269/HB375](#)), to expand the list of agencies again. Each of those bills passed unanimously.

In 2023, [SB035](#) would simply add the State Ethics Commission to the list of state agencies with required transparency practices for the public portion of state agency meetings.

The Open Meetings Act requires state agencies to:

- Post the agenda and all materials on the agency's website at least 48 hours prior to an open meeting;
- Indicate on the agenda, to the degree possible, whether and when the group expects to go into a closed session;
- Live-stream the public portion of meetings;
- Review the prior meeting's minutes in a timely manner and post the minutes not more than 2 business days after the minutes are approved;
- Maintain on its website the meeting minutes for a minimum of 5 years;
- Post on its website the unedited video recording of a live-streamed meeting for a minimum of 1 year.

The Open Meetings Compliance Board is authorized to enforce these requirements.

There are two modest amendments to this bill. One would add the State Ethics Commission to the list of state agencies that would get IT support from the Department of Information Technology to live-stream the meetings. And we suggest changing the effective date from October 1 to July 1, 2023.

I urge a favorable report on SB035.