

116TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. RES. 548

Amending the Standing Rules of the Senate to enable the participation of absent Senators during a national crisis.

---

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 19, 2020

Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration

---

## RESOLUTION

Amending the Standing Rules of the Senate to enable the participation of absent Senators during a national crisis.

1       *Resolved*, That

2       **SECTION 1. PARTICIPATION OF ABSENT SENATORS DUR-**  
3                               **ING A NATIONAL CRISIS.**

4       Rule XII of the Standing Rules of the Senate is  
5 amended by adding at the end the following:

6               “5. Senators may use technology that has been  
7 approved by the Secretary of the Senate and Ser-  
8 geant at Arms and Director of the Doorkeepers as  
9 reliable and secure to cast their votes from outside  
10 of the Senate Chamber if the majority leader or his

1 or her designee and the minority leader or his or her  
2 designee determine that an extraordinary crisis of  
3 national extent exists in which it would be infeasible  
4 for Senators to cast their votes in person. Senators  
5 in such circumstance may then cast votes under this  
6 paragraph only during the 30-day period beginning  
7 on the date on which such determination is made  
8 unless such period is renewed by an affirmative vote  
9 of three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and  
10 sworn. During such period, Senators participating  
11 remotely and using approved technology to cast their  
12 votes under this paragraph shall be deemed present  
13 for quorum purposes. The determination made  
14 under this paragraph shall not rely on any decision  
15 of any other branch of the United States Govern-  
16 ment. The majority leader or his or her designee and  
17 the minority leader or his or her designee shall sub-  
18 mit at the beginning of the first session of each Con-  
19 gress an order for designees of each caucus in the  
20 case of such a crisis.”.

○