

February 28, 1963.

Passed on File.

Counsel & Co. ord of State Dor. 3/11

House File 478

By STANLEY.

Passed House, Date.....

Passed Senate, Date.....

Vote: Ayes..... Nays.....

Vote: Ayes..... Nays.....

Approved.....

A BILL FOR

An Act requiring meetings of governmental bodies to be open to the public.

Be It Enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:

1 Section 1. All meetings of any board, council, trustees,
 2 or governing body of any county, city, town, township,
 3 school corporation, political subdivision, or tax-supported
 4 district in this state shall be public meetings, unless
 5 some other provision of the Code expressly permits secret
 6 or confidential meetings.

1 Sec. 2. All meetings of any board, council, or commission
 2 of this state shall be public meetings, unless some other
 3 provisions of the Code expressly permits secret or confi-
 4 dential meetings.

1 Sec. 3. Every citizen of Iowa shall have the right to
 2 be present at any meeting referred to in this Act. However,
 3 any board, council, trustees, governing body, or commission
 4 subject to this Act shall have the right to make and enforce
 5 reasonable rules and regulations on conduct of persons
 6 attending its meetings and problems arising when there is
 7 not enough room for all citizens who wish to be present
 8 at a meeting.

1 Sec. 4. The provisions of this Act and all rights
 2 of citizens under this Act may be enforced by mandamus

3 or injunction, whether or not any other remedy is also
4 available.
1 Sec. 5. Any person knowingly violating or attempting
2 to violate any provision of this Act shall be guilty
3 of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be punished
4 by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00)
5 or imprisonment in the county jail not more than thirty
6 (30) days or by both such fine and imprisonment.

EXPLANATION OF HOUSE FILE 478

This bill will require public governing bodies to hold public meetings, and will protect the right of citizens of Iowa to be present at these meetings.

This bill applies to local governing bodies such as county boards of supervisors, city councils, school boards, township trustees and boards of other tax-supported districts. It also applies to state boards, councils and commissions. It does not apply to courts or juries. It does not apply to the General Assembly or its committees.

There is an exception for any secret or confidential meetings which are expressly permitted by law.

Public business should be done in public. Citizens should be allowed to attend meetings of their public officials. Secret government is not consistent with American principles.

Many other states have already adopted similar laws.