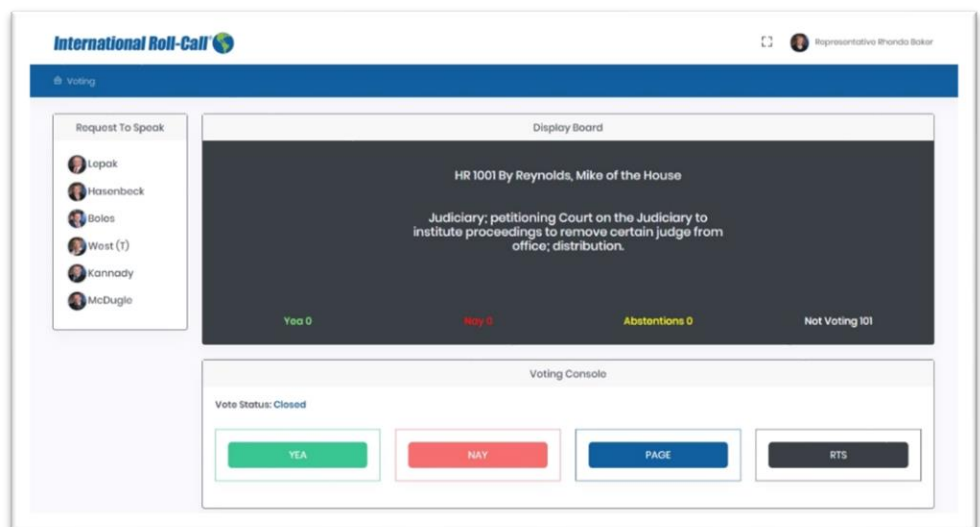


## IRC's NEW Virtual Voting Console (VVC) System

International Roll-Call® Corporation's Virtual Voting Console (VVC) System is a uniquely designed virtual vote entry interface to the xmLegislator™ Voting Software. The system was created to provide seamless voting capabilities during times of emergency or disaster, or any other situation that might require a Member, Members, or the entire body to cast their votes outside of the Chamber environment.

The VVC system allows users, with access to the voting system network, to view the summary and bill information, vote status, and vote totals; and the ability to cast votes via the VVC user interface screen. The VVC system has been developed to be responsive across multiple platforms and devices and can be configured to meet specific device. Once logged in, the VVC user interface screen is designed to provide the same functionality as the Chamber's existing desk voting consoles. Additionally, the VVC has the ability to show supplemental information that would be useful to the Members participating and voting remotely. The VVC system can also be used in a hybrid scenario where certain Members are voting from the Chamber floor while the other legislators are voting remotely.



*Sample VVC System User Interface Screen*

Some of the notable information that can be displayed and functionalities of the Virtual Voting Console System are:

- Request to Speak;
- Vote Status Indication (Vote Open or Vote Closed);
- Vote Totals;
- Bill Information (same data as sent to and viewed on the Chamber Displays);
- Ability to Vote (Yea, Nay, Abstain, Cancel, Vote with Explanation, etc.);
- Display the Member Name as logged into the VVC System;
- A view of the Member names and member vote indicators as a separate tab in the Display Board section of the user interface;
- Member desks located in the Chamber can be locked for the Members using the VVC system;
- Members using the VVC system can have access to the Request to Speak (RTS) queue as part of their user interface; and
- The VVC System can function in tandem with the Chamber floor desk consoles should the desire be to split the membership up between remote locations and the Chamber floor.

*(continued on page 3)*

## Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

I don't have to tell you that these are challenging times that have tested our personal and professional resolve. Over the past months, we have found strength to endure and have risen to new heights of achievement. All of us that work in and support the legislative process are strong, determined, caring, and creative individuals. Together, we continue to overcome each and every challenge. We must continue to move forward.

A major challenge has been to provide a reliable and secure foundation for ensuring the continued integrity and reliability of the legislative voting process. The concept of voting and recording data outside of a controlled legislative network brings much concern. When the voting process is removed from the internal legislative environment, a host of unstable and uncontrollable variables surface including security, internet speed, internet providers, reliable hardware, and the availability of technical support. IRC recognized these concerns and chartered new directions that relied upon the knowledge and experience gained from installing and maintaining legislative voting systems for nearly 100 years. The staff at IRC have met the challenge by creating and implementing our Virtual Voting Console (VVC) system that is featured in this edition. IRC has provided VVC presentations to over 30 legislative chambers. Recently, the Michigan House of Representatives used the VVC for Representatives in their chamber balconies without delay or disruption to the process. The Connecticut House of Representatives will use the VVC later this year to allow Members to vote from their homes, offices, or within the chamber.

As we prepare to celebrate our nation's birthday, on July 4, we wish you all a safe, healthy, and renewed sense of spirit. Together, as colleagues and friends, we will tackle the unknown that lies ahead. We look forward to seeing you soon to share our experiences and create new memories.

Sincerely,  
Bill Schaeffer, President  
International Roll-Call® Corporation

# IRC

## Completed Project Highlights

- ✓ For the Alaska Senate and House of Representatives - Within each Chamber IRC completed the installation of the xmLegislator™ voting software, the VSCU-1000 Member desk voting solution, new member voting stations and two 1.9mm LED Displays.
- ✓ For the Michigan Senate - IRC installed two 4mm LED Displays.
- ✓ For the Michigan House of Representatives – IRC installed the new Virtual Voting Console system for emergency remote voting.
- ✓ For the Montana Senate and House of Representatives - IRC replaced the LED displays of both chambers with 2.5mm LED Displays, and installed the VSCU-1000 Member desk voting solution and new member voting stations.
- ✓ For the Mississippi House of Representatives - IRC installed the xmLegislator™ voting software.
- ✓ For the California Assembly - IRC replaced the last Daktronics BR549 with the new VSCU-1000 Member desk voting solution, and installed new voting buttons and faceplates at each member's desk.
- ✓ For the Oklahoma House of Representatives – IRC provided improvements that included a new 2.5mm LED Display, xmLegislator™ voting software, the VSCU-1000 Member desk voting solution, new member voting stations, Script Assistant Software, xmDisplay video interface, Vote Reporter software and IRC integrated the xmLegislator™ voting software to control the House's new Chamber camera system.
- ✓ For the Rhode Island Senate and House of Representatives - IRC installed the VSCU-1000 Member desk voting solution, new member voting stations, and integrated the xmLegislator™ voting software with the Senate and House's new Chamber sound system and member desk microphones.
- ✓ For the Connecticut House of Representatives – IRC upgraded the existing VB6 voting software to the xmLegislator™ voting software; and installed the new Virtual Voting Console system for emergency remote voting.

*(VVC, continued from page 1)*

Many states that have expressed interest in the VVC System are considering utilizing Windows tablets or similar devices, provided by the legislature to the Members for VVC use in lieu of using personal devices. Providing devices administered and supported by the legislative chamber ensures better control of security settings and support protocols.

IRC has made over 30 presentations to legislative chambers. Many are still deciding on their desired direction, although IRC recently implemented full VVC Systems in Michigan, Connecticut, and Oklahoma. The following highlights the VVC installations of Michigan and Connecticut.

### Michigan House of Representatives

The IRC VVC System was deployed for usage by the Michigan House of Representatives when the legislature reconvened for Session on June 10, 2020. Of the 110 Members of the House, 40 Members were located in the House Chamber balconies while the others remained at their desks on the floor.

The House Members accessed the VVC web interface system using laptops and surface pro tablets over wireless networks. House Clerk Gary Randall reported that the voting went very well and that he was grateful for the excellent work, the speed of the installation, and the responsiveness of IRC.

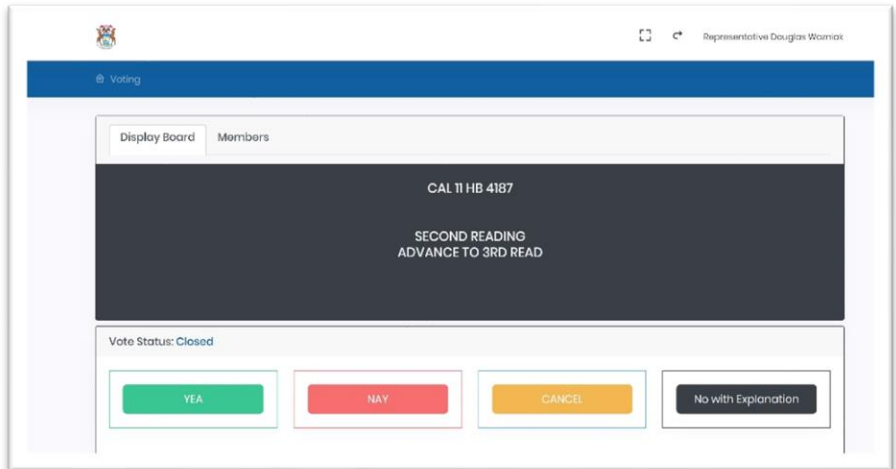
*"It couldn't have worked better! Thanks to you and your team for getting us up and running in such a short time. I appreciate the relationship we have developed over the years."*

- The Hon. Gary Randall, Clerk, Michigan House of Representatives

### Connecticut House of Representatives

In the Connecticut House of Representatives, IRC configured the xmLegislator™ Voting Software and the Daktronics display control equipment to all a Zoom video conferencing feed to display on the Chamber LED displays. IRC assisted with the integration of the Zoom with the Connecticut Television Network (CT-N) and the Chamber sound system. These improvements allow remote House Members in the Chamber and those that are remote to view and talk live with each other. IRC configured the VVC so that Members can access the user interface using their state issued laptops. The implementation and utilization of the VVC system for the Connecticut House of Representatives will undoubtedly benefit the 151 Members, Clerk's staff, and the legislative process.

Prospective clients interested in the VVC System and for those with advanced integration needs, IRC's professional team is able to provide assistance and guidance for any legislature interested in utilizing a video conference product (such as



*Michigan House of Representatives VVC System User Interface Screen*

### Tech Talk

#### Virtual Conferencing Room Applications

Since the work from home mandates began in March, businesses have increased their reliance on and need to schedule virtual meetings and conference calls. Here at IRC we have been using GoToMeeting and Google Hangouts for a long time, and recently began using Zoom and Join.me as alternatives. Regardless of the virtual conference room tool selected for your office, once selected, practice using your new technology to ensure microphones, cameras, and screen sharing work as intended or needed for each scheduled meeting.

Here's a list of virtual conference room tools you may wish to consider using for your office: RingCentral, GoToMeeting, UberConference, Zoom, FreeConferenceCall, Join.me, Google Hangouts, Vast Conference, and Webex.

*(VVC, continued from page 3)*

Zoom or others) to tie into the Chamber feed for the video or sound system.

Further, IRC is currently in active development to enhance the security and authentication features of our systems. IRC is in active development to provide the ability to integrate a video conferencing solution within the VVC system user interface. IRC is scheduled to complete these improvements over the next few months.

If you would like more information or a cost estimate for the implementation of the newly designed and ready for installation IRC Virtual Voting Console, please contact the IRC Office at your convenience by calling 804-730-9600.



**Howard Jorenby,  
Senior Hardware  
Engineer**

As IRC's Senior Hardware Engineer, Howard is vital for the designs related to the custom electronics created for all projects related to chamber displays and hardware installations. With a rock-solid

background in electrical engineering, and with 47 years of microprocessor and mechanical experience, he is the resident expert on how to take the desires and visions of a customer for their legislative process and transform them into tangible components of their voting system. Before joining IRC, Howard spent over 31 years with Daktronics, including designing LED modules and LED display controllers, so the depth and breadth of his knowledge of display systems for the legislative environment is enormous. When not designing the next greatest voting system gadget, he participates in Scandinavian cultural activities in his home state of South Dakota.

**"DID YOU KNOW THAT  
Capitol Brass Door Knobs  
are Germ-Killers?"**

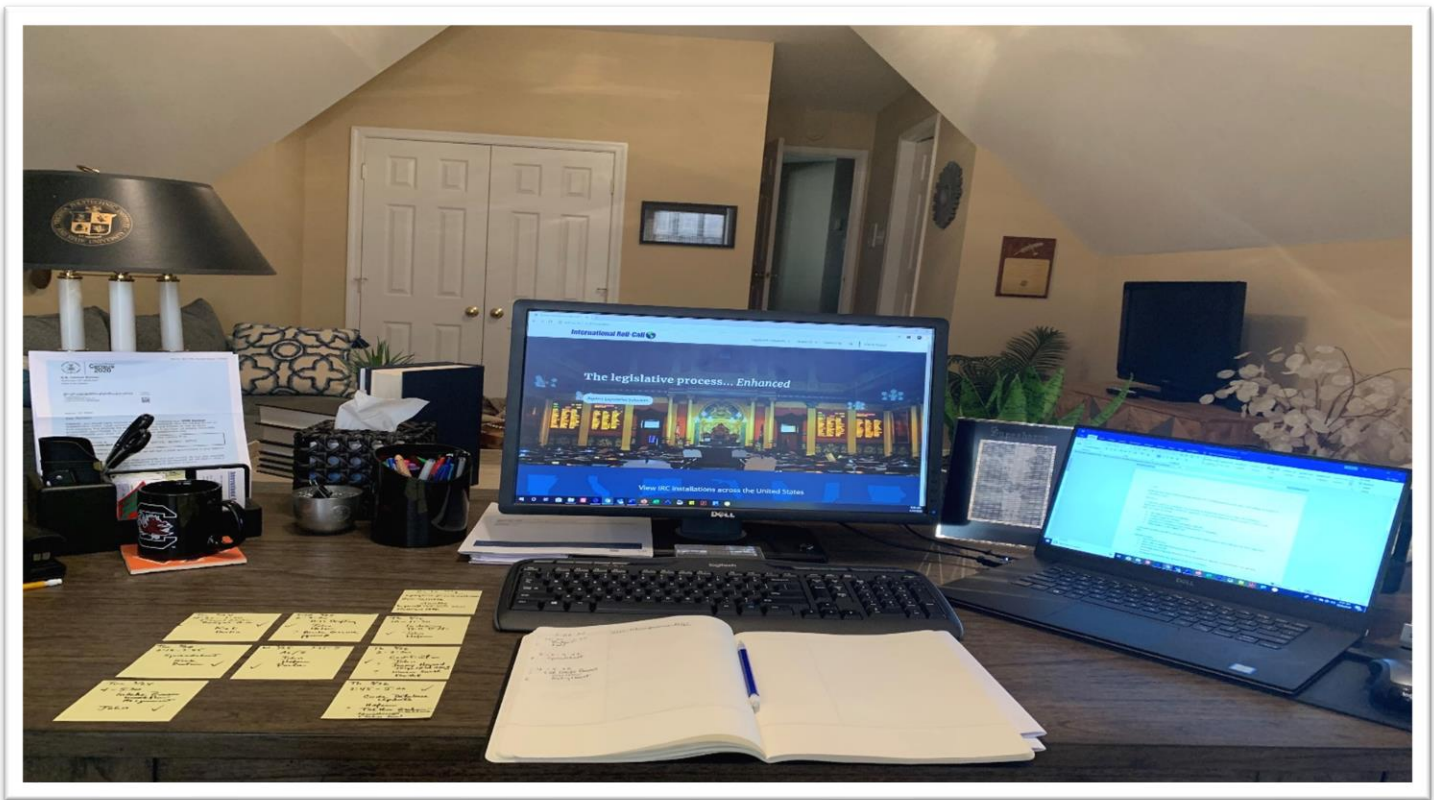


Many State Capitol Buildings were ahead of their time long before the COVID-19 pandemic as they installed brass doorknobs throughout Capitol Buildings. Doorknobs made of brass are not only quite attractive adorning the entrances to the hallways of democracy, but they also serve another purpose, did you know that, brass (a copper alloy) has strong anti-microbial properties. As we know, there are many hands that use the doors of "peoples' house doors" and this anti-microbial property proved quite beneficial.

An online New York Times article written by C. Claiborne Ray noted, "copper surfaces are valuable in killing disease-causing microbes left on them..." The article went further to state that "a significant percentage of many pathogens die on copper surfaces" and that "[t]he phenomenon of so-called contact killing was known in ancient times, when it was observed, for example, that copper vessels could purify drinking water." Further discoveries revealed that copper compounds were often used as antimicrobial agents in medicines until the discovery of antibiotics.

Unfortunately, the flip-side is that the continuous usage of these fixtures can disable their germ-killing powers.

# Working from Home in a Comfortable and Secure Environment



Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic companies have implemented remote work policies that will continue into the foreseeable future. The surge in requirements for remote work has created a rise in the need for enhanced security of employees' equipment and data. Such concerns, while always present, have not been as prominent when everyone was tucked away in their brick and mortar contained office cubicles. Offices have had to quickly initiate or relax certain policies to allow employees working from home the ability to access files, emails and applications, and to provide VPN access thus increasing data risks.

In order for an employee to successfully work from home and be a productive employee it is essential that you designate a specific work location as your home office. This defined personal space provides a home environment that hopefully replicates the office environment. While not everyone can replicate an office environment there is an expectation that the manner in which you work will be replicated as closely as possible. If the work environment is "professional" then the employee is more likely to be both mentally and physically present for a work expectations mindset and ignore the temptations of the household tasks that are ever present. Normally, the working hours will remain the same as the standard office hours; therefore, there is an expectation to work one's normal job during the set business hours and to be accessible via phone, email, text, and to respond to inquiries from management and staff in a timely manner as would be expected at the office.

It is highly suggested that you have the appropriate equipment for your home office environment. It is important to have a desk with enough space for your work routine, a comfortable and ergonomically sound chair, ample lighting, and

*(Working from Home, continued from page 5)*

minimal sound disturbances. Communicate with all household members that you have a defined remote work area and, most importantly, your work hours. Try to establish ground rules to limit personal distractions during work hours (television, pet walks, music, personal conversations, guest visits, etc.) Communicate and set these boundaries early.

The security of your office equipment and data is important. Before starting your remote work, check to be sure you know your office policy regarding allowing non authorized personnel to use your office issued devices. While not as much of a concern at the office, at home, there may be more access to your equipment. If you haven't already, begin the practice of locking your laptop/tablet etc. down when you step away and be sure you have a strong password for access and do not tape the password to the keyboard. To maximize security for your home office computer it is highly recommended that you only use an encrypted Wi-Fi connection. In addition, arrange with your office to provide secure access to office-only-accessible documents via a Virtual Private Network (VPN). The VPN is the office gateway to valuable internal and often sensitive data. Be extra careful with your credentials and how you access this valuable resource.

During this remote work period, as always, be alert for phishing emails. The news and support resources have reported several tricky COVID-19 campaigns luring people with emails about donations, medical supplies, and vaccines. Do NOT ever click an attachment you weren't expecting, even if it appears to be from somebody you know. Always best to check back with that person to make sure the attachment is legitimate before you open it. It also might be prudent to assess your passwords and consider resetting them. When you do create passwords make them as strong as possible using a combination of uppercase, lowercase letters, numbers, and allowable symbols at least 12 characters long. The bottom line is there cannot be too much security for your laptop or personal devices.

The era of the remote worker is here to stay. Regardless if you are working in a traditional office or at home: **Be alert, vigilant, communicate, do not click/open suspicious emails or links, and ask questions!**

## WHAT'S COOKING AT IRC?

### BILL'S HOMEMADE MUFFINS

**Bill Schaeffer**, President, IRC

#### BRAN MUFFINS - (MAKES 4 DOZEN )

1 carton egg beaters - 8oz

2 1/2 cups sugar

1 cup oil

4 cups flour

1 qt. skim milk

5 teaspoons baking soda

3 tablespoons lemon juice

1 box Kellogg's Common Sense Oat Bran w/raisins

Mix together with a spoon egg beaters, oil and 1/2 milk (2 cups) and lemon juice.

Add sugar, flour, baking soda; mix in oat bran and rest of milk

Cover and refrigerate overnight

Bake at 350 - 20 minutes

Freeze to Bake Later

Mix a batch of muffin batter, spoon into muffin cups lined with foil baking cups and freeze. Once frozen solid, you can remove the unbaked muffins from their container, foil and all, and keep them frozen in a plastic bag. When you're ready for a muffin, do not thaw. Bake at the heat recommended in the original recipe — add just one or two more minutes than originally called for. You can do one or two at a time in a toaster oven or microwave oven.



Look for further information on the following IRC products in future editions of *The Tally Sheet*: **Script Assistant, Vote Reporter, xmDisplay™, xmOverlay™, LED Displays, and VSCU 1000 Member Desk Voting Console Solution.**

## Tech Talk

### Internal Communication Platforms

IRC knows and values good communication and realizes that it is essential to a successful business. Communication from management and amongst staff is even more critical during the increased reliance on the remote worker. IRC has recently moved its employees over to Slack for internal communication between teams and individuals. Slack is proving to be a valuable way to communicate within designated teams, with multiple staff on projects and client inquiries, and for one-on-one communication. Slack has the ability to integrate with other common office applications to provide you with a "one stop" office productivity and management resource.

Regardless of the office communication application utilized it is essential to set standards for how the product should be utilized by staff. Once selected, ensure every team member knows how to use the application as designed and expected. Management needs to decide and convey expectations of staff availability via this platform and if it should be monitored during non-business hours. It is suggested that all managers communicate with their teams at least once per day via the application, possibly a daily morning kick-off communicate that would replace the daily "walk about." Be sure to communicate amongst teams on the platform to make sure everyone can communicate when necessary, and that they feel connected and enabled to do their jobs. While these are great tools, do not be afraid to hop on the phone and call. When communication or projects get too complex, pick up the phone!

In addition to Slack, the following are three additional office communication platforms you may wish to consider: Microsoft Teams, Google Chat, and Chanty.

# IRC: ABOUT US AND PRIMARY CONTACTS

The IRC staff is comprised of legislative process and technology professionals that share an appreciation of state legislature functions to create and support superior legislative technology products. IRC knows the value of legislative staff experience and has actively employed such staff.

IRC's success is derived from the company's understanding and appreciation of the intricacies and desired efficiencies of the legislative process. IRC understands the legislative process from drafting to enactment and all the associated complex rules and procedures encountered in a political legislative environment. IRC realizes the importance of the legislative timetable and that any delay is detrimental to the overall operation.

Presently, IRC has two former Clerks, which includes the President of IRC, and a former Deputy Clerk on staff, and collectively the company has the benefit of almost a century of direct legislative process knowledge and experience. These legislative assets are applied to each project and facilitate the development of correct technological solutions that account for any chamber's unique legislative procedure. Further, this foundation of legislative knowledge assures all legislative staff that their respective work products will be accurately represented for implementation in a digital environment.

This collective knowledge of the legislative process allows these individuals to speak the legislative language, and understand the processes and complexities unique to a legislature and to pass this understanding to the IT and Software Development team.

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