



## Guidelines for Submitting Resolutions for the 80<sup>th</sup> General Convention

Resolutions are the legislative vehicle for the acts of General Convention. The following guidelines are provided to assist you in preparing resolutions, and you are encouraged to read them carefully in conjunction with the Rules of Order (2018 Constitution and Canons pp. 314-315).

### Classification of Resolutions

Resolutions are classified according to their origin:

“**A**” Resolutions are those submitted by Interim Bodies in the *Report to the 80th General Convention* (commonly called the Blue Book), or by Legislative Committees during the General Convention.

“**B**” Resolutions are those submitted by Bishops.

“**C**” Resolutions are those submitted by Provinces or Dioceses.

“**D**” Resolutions are those submitted by Deputies.

**Memorials** are submitted as expressions of interest, concern or opinion on a particular subject by provinces, dioceses, bishops, deputies and other groups. They do not call for specific legislation, but are a vehicle for transmitting information to General Convention. See [Guidelines for Submitting Memorials](#) for more information.

### Resources for Preparing Resolutions

These resources are provided to help you deliver your resolution in its best possible form, in order to ensure it receives timely attention at General Convention.

Useful questions to ask while researching to prepare your resolution include:

- 1) Has this been proposed before? If so, how did General Convention act on the matter? If the Convention has already acted, do you need to create this resolution?
- 2) What other resolutions have been passed by previous Conventions that relate to this topic?
- 3) Must this necessarily be a resolution, or would a memorial work better?
- 4) Which bodies or offices of the Episcopal Church would be responsible for acting on a resolution of this kind?
- 5) What kind of language does this resolution require? Would the work it calls for be best explained by a broad statement, or an outline of specific actions? (Specificity is helpful, but can sometimes unnecessarily limit the scope of a resolution.)

**Digital Archives:** <http://www.episcopalarchives.org/e-archives/>.

You are strongly encouraged to search the Acts of Convention, the resolves of Executive Council, and Episcopal News Service (ENS) articles. The digital archives are an excellent tool for researching your resolution's topic. If further assistance is needed, the Archives may be contacted by phone at 1.800.525.9329 or by email at [research@episcopalarchives.org](mailto:research@episcopalarchives.org).

## Interim Bodies

If the content of your resolution concerns a subject that a particular Interim Body may be addressing, you are encouraged to contact the Chair of that group. Please send your message to [gcoffice@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:gcoffice@episcopalchurch.org) and your message will be forwarded. Put the name of the committee and chair in the subject line. The descriptions (mandates) of the interim bodies are available online at:

[https://extranet.generalconvention.org/governing\\_and\\_interim\\_bodies/interim\\_bodies](https://extranet.generalconvention.org/governing_and_interim_bodies/interim_bodies).

<b>Liturgy &amp; Music</b>	The Rev. Paul Fromberg
<b>Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons</b>	The Rev. Canon Sharon Alexander
<b>Nominations</b>	Mr. Scott Haight
<b>Planning &amp; Arrangements</b>	The Rev. Cn. Dr. Michael Barlowe
<b>Program, Budget &amp; Finance</b>	The Rev. Cn. Mike Ehmer
<b>Executive Council</b>	The Most Rev. Michael Curry
<b>World Mission</b>	Ms. Martha Gardner
<b>Anti-Racism</b>	Mr. James McKim
<b>Audit</b>	Mr. Bryan Krislock
<b>Corporate Social Responsibility</b>	The Rt. Rev. Douglas Fisher
<b>Economic Justice Loan</b>	The Rev. Will Mebane
<b>Investment</b>	The Rev. Andrew Walter
<b>Archives of the Episcopal Church</b>	Ms. Pan Adams-McCaslin
<b>Board for Transition Ministries</b>	The Rev. Canon Elizabeth Easton
<b>Church Pension Fund</b>	The Rt. Rev. Thomas Brown
<b>Disciplinary Board for Bishops</b>	Bishop Catherine Waynick
<b>Episcopal Relief &amp; Development Board</b>	Mr. Neel Lane
<b>Forward Movement</b>	The Rev. Canon Scott Gunn
<b>General Board of Examining Chaplains</b>	The Rt. Rev. Larry Benfield
<b>General Theological Seminary</b>	Mr. Michael Braxton
<b>Pastoral Development, House of Bishops</b>	The Rt. Rev. Gayle Harris
<b>State of the Church, House of Deputies</b>	The Rev. Chris Rankin-Williams
<b>Theology, House of Bishops</b>	The Rt. Rev. Laura Ahrens

## Writing Resolutions

### Resolution

1. A resolution should deal with **one topic**.
2. A resolution **must require specific action**. The resolution should be phrased so that, if both Houses concur, it will result in some action by the General Convention or by an identified person or agency of the Church. However, the best resolutions don't necessarily say how to achieve that action. They are descriptive of the action of the church, but not prescriptive of every step of the

process.

Note: If your resolution does not include a specific call to action, it may be better served as a memorial.

3. Use the **subjunctive** verb tense.

Examples: “That the 80th General Convention *adopt* the following statement...” (instead of adopts); That the 80th General Convention *confirm*” (instead of confirms).

4. If a resolution contains more than one resolve clause, the clauses should be joined with a semicolon, followed by the words “and be it further,” and then a line break. Ideally, no resolution should contain more than three resolve clauses, for reasons of clarity and execution. (*for resolutions amending the Constitution or Canons, see below*)

Note: Resolutions **cannot** be submitted if their passage is dependent on the passage of another resolution. The two actions must be submitted together as clauses of the same resolution, so the Convention can discuss them as one unit. For example, if one resolution would delete a paragraph from the Canons, and a second resolution would paste the same text in a new section of the Canons, the two resolutions must be combined.

5. If you reference a report, study or other document that is not generally known by members of the House or readily available, you must provide copies of it with your resolution for distribution to the Houses (*Joint Rules of Order, III.12*). There is now a provision in place to submit and distribute documents electronically, but please note: it is the responsibility of the proposer to provide an electronic copy of any document referenced, and it is also the responsibility of the proposer to have the document translated. No resolution will be accepted without it. If the document is not absolutely necessary to the discussion of your resolution, include it in the explanation.
6. If the resolution calls for the creation of an **Interim Body**, it should state the composition of the proposed body, and, unless otherwise provided for in the Canons or Rules of Order, how it is to be constituted. Particular care must be taken in the formulation of a Taskforce by resolution (*see Joint Rule IX*).

In other words, the resolution must clearly state who appoints members of the body; how many people it is composed of; whether the members must be lay, clergy, or a mixture of both; the length of the time needed for the completion of the assigned work; and a proposed budget, if any. Review the Joint Rules of Order for guidance. Please use this format:

*Resolved, That the General Convention authorize the establishment of a task force, appointed by [unless specified, the Presiding Bishop shall appoint the Episcopal members and the President of the House of Deputies shall appoint the Priests and Deacons and the Lay Persons – JR IX], composed of [number of people] as follows: x bishops, x priests or deacons, x lay persons, to complete the work assigned. Task Force ends with the submission of the Report to General Convention.*

7. **Funding:** If your resolution contains **budgetary implications**, a cost estimate *must* be included within a last resolve clause of your resolution. Please use this format:

“Resolved, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$ \_\_\_ for the implementation of this resolution.”

Note: The General Convention Office estimates the cost of a 2.5 day, in-person meeting to be approximately \$1,700 per person.

8. Please:

- **do not** indent paragraphs
- **do not** bold text. Bold is used to indicate “final text” when the resolution is passed by convention.
- **do not** use preambles and “whereas” clauses in resolutions. Further context and justification for the resolution can be added in the “explanation” section.
- **do not** include web references in your resolution. Web sites come and go and may not be relevant in the future to the legislation passed.
- **do not** refer to or attach congressional legislation or bills. They often change and may have “riders” attached that do not refer to the intent of the resolution being proposed.

[Click here to see an example of a resolution.](#)

### Amending the Constitution and Canons

Note: If the proposed resolution amends the Constitution or Canons, or affects the structure or governance of the church, please contact the **Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, and Constitution and Canons**. The resolution will need additional review before it is brought to debate at General Convention. To maximize Convention’s consideration of your resolution, send your questions and drafts to the Standing Commission using this form:

[https://dfms.fomstack.com/forms/resolution\\_contact\\_form](https://dfms.fomstack.com/forms/resolution_contact_form)

- A. Begin your resolve clause with the article or canon reference. *Example:* “That Canon 1.17.1(c) is hereby amended to read as follows...”
- B. The Constitution and Canons **must be quoted exactly—do not paraphrase or edit the text in any way**. To minimize errors, we suggest you copy and paste the text you are amending from the electronic version of the 2018 Constitution and Canons, which can be found at: <https://extranet.generalconvention.org/staff/files/download/26801>
- C. Include the entire section or paragraph from which you are amending instead of using ellipse marks ( ... ). This provides clarity when the resolution is being discussed. Do not, however, include sections or paragraphs that are not being amended. *Example:* If only Canon IV.17.2(e) is under discussion, do not include paragraphs (d) or (f) or the entire section. Provide only the entirety of paragraph (e).

- D. Text to be deleted is indicated by a ~~strike-through~~ mark and text to be inserted is indicated by *italics*.
- E. You may amend different sections of the Constitution and Canons in the same resolution, if
- all of the changes address a single issue (like changing all instances of the Phrase “Provincial Court of Review” to “Court of Review”), or
  - if the changes are dependent upon on one another. (For example, if a paragraph needs to be deleted from one section and added to another. See step 5, above, for further explanation.)

If you are amending more than one section of the Constitution and Canons, or if there is an additional resolve clause after a proposed amendment, the first clause closes with a period. “And be it further,” is on the next line followed by the next resolve clause on its own line.

- F. The words Bishop, Priest, Deacon, Priest and Lay Person and their plurals are capitalized.

*Example: For Resolutions amending the Constitution or Canons*

Title: Amend Canon I.1.1(c)

*Resolved*, That Canon I.1.1(c) is hereby amended to read as follows:

Sec. 1 (c) In order to aid the Secretary of the House of Deputies in preparing the record specified in Clause (a), it shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Convention of every Diocese to forward to the Secretary of the House of Deputies, as soon as may be practicable, an *electronic* copy of the latest Journal of the Diocesan Convention, together with a certified copy of the testimonials of members aforesaid. ~~and a duplicate copy of such testimonials.~~ Where testimonials are received for persons from jurisdictions which have not previously been represented in General Convention, the Secretary of the House of Deputies shall ascertain that the applicable provisions of Article V, Section 1, of the Constitution have been complied with prior to such persons being permitted to take their seats in the House.

### **Title**

A brief descriptive title is assigned to highlight the area of legislation. Titles should address the *subject* of the resolution, not its proposed outcome. *Example: Support for Seminarians.*

For resolutions that propose amendments to the Constitution or Canons, the title should consist of the article or canon reference and a brief description. *Example: Amend Canon 1.17.1(c) To Clarify Full Communion.*

*The Office of the General Convention reserves the right to edit or change a title.*

### **Explanation**

Anything that is necessary to the discussion of a resolution should be included in the resolution itself. The purpose, intentions, and justifications for a resolution should be included in the

attached explanation. The explanation is not part of the official text of the resolution, and thus can include links, references to other documents, and historical context for the resolution. *Explanations are only used with the original filed version of the resolution. Please limit explanations to a few paragraphs.*

### **Endorsers**

All resolutions of Bishops (“B” resolutions) shall be proposed by one Bishop and endorsed by no fewer than two additional Bishops, with all three being from different dioceses. **Each Bishop may propose no more than three resolutions.** (*HOB Rules of Order IV*)

All resolutions of Deputies (“D” resolutions) shall be proposed by one Deputy endorsed by no fewer than two additional Deputies. **Each Deputy may propose no more than three resolutions.** (*HOD Rules of Order VI.22 (c)*)

*Note:* Resolutions submitted by Interim Bodies in the Blue Book (“A” resolutions) and resolutions submitted by Provinces or Dioceses (“C” resolutions) do not require endorsers. They can, however, be *supported* by individuals or groups such as other Dioceses or Provinces, which is not an official endorsement but allows the Convention to see who backs the resolution. Similarly, “B” and “D” resolutions may have additional sponsors beyond their required endorsers.

### **Submitting Resolutions**

“A” Resolutions are submitted by Interim Bodies as part of their Blue Book report to the General Convention. The General Convention Office will edit and translate these reports, and post them online in Reports to the 80th General Convention (The Blue Book). The entire Blue Book will be online by May, 2021 on the General Convention website: <https://www.generalconvention.org/bluebook>.

“B”, “C” and “D” Resolutions must be submitted to the General Convention Office. “A” resolutions will be submitted through the Blue Book application. All other resolutions should be prepared in standard word processing software such as Microsoft Word, and submitted via email to [gcoffice@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:gcoffice@episcopalchurch.org) with the [Resolution Cover Sheet](#). All such resolutions will be acknowledged, and if no acknowledgement is received, please call Carrie Surbaugh in the Office of General Convention at 212-716-6096. If you are unable to submit electronically, please call Carrie for assistance.

All resolutions that have been properly submitted will be processed and assigned to Legislative Committees as soon as possible, beginning with the meeting of Legislative Committee chairs in the spring of 2021.

The final deadline for submitting resolutions is 6:00 p.m. on July 1st (the 2nd legislative day). On site, resolutions may be submitted to the General Convention Secretariat in the convention center.

**The Office of the General Convention:** General email: [gcoffice@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:gcoffice@episcopalchurch.org)

The Rev. Molly F. James, (212) 716-6048 [mjames@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:mjames@episcopalchurch.org)

Ms. Twila Rios, (212) 716-6141, [trios@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:trios@episcopalchurch.org)

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