



Guidelines for Submitting Resolutions to General Convention

When preparing a resolution, please use these guidelines, the resources that are noted within this document, and the Rules of Order in the [2022 Constitution and Canons](#). It is the responsibility of the resolution proposer to write their resolutions in the proper form and to conform to any requirements of the Rules of Order.

Resources for Preparing Resolutions

Some helpful 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, what are you asking that is different?
2. What other groups are working on this issue or topic? Are they planning to submit resolutions or memorials?
3. What other resolutions have been passed by previous General Conventions that relate to this topic?
4. Does this need be a resolution? Would a memorial work better?
5. Which governing bodies, organizations, or offices of The Episcopal Church would be responsible for acting on a resolution of this kind?
6. What kind of language does this resolution require? Would the work called for be best explained by a broad statement or a more detailed outline? (Specificity is helpful but can unnecessarily limit the scope of a resolution.)

The Archives of The Episcopal Church

<https://www.episcopalarchives.org>

The digital archives maintained by The Archives of the Episcopal Church are an excellent tool for researching your resolution's topic. Some particularly helpful areas of the digital archive to search include:

- Acts of Convention
- The resolves of Executive Council
- Episcopal News Service (ENS) articles

If you need assistance in your search, please contact The Archives at research@episcopalarchives.org or 800-525-9327.

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. If you do not have contact information for an Interim Body, please send your message along with the name of the Interim Body you want to speak with to the General Convention Office at gc.support@episcopalchurch.org.

The descriptions (mandates) of the Interim Bodies are available online at:

https://extranet.generalconvention.org/governing_and_interim_bodies/interim_bodies

About Resolutions

A common point of confusion when writing a resolution is that two additional sections can be included with the text of the resolution itself – the explanation and supporting documents. These later two items are not part of the resolution but may be made available if desired to assist in the deliberation and decision-making process. For the purpose of this guide, resolution refers only to the text that is calling on General Convention to take specific action on something.

Resolution vs. Memorial

Resolutions call on General Convention to take specific legislative action. If you want the church to commend or commemorate a person, event, or other matter; take up legislative action on a particular topic but do not have specific steps to do this; or take a stance on a particular issue, a memorial may be a more appropriate choice than a resolution.

Memorials, like resolutions, will be referred to the appropriate Legislative Committee(s) which can then create or modify legislation that is put forward to the floor of General Convention.

Memorials speak to the Convention on a particular topic and to draw attention to issues. This includes the Committee on Courtesy and Privilege that can take calls for commending or commemoration of people, events, etc. and create a courtesy resolution (because it's not calling on specific legislative action) that can be brought to the floor of General Convention.

Classification of Resolutions (Resolution “Type”)

Resolutions are classified by a letter representing what governing entity the proposer belongs to.

“**A**” Resolutions are submitted by Interim Bodies and Legislative Committees

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

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

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

This letter is the resolution “type.” A number will also be assigned by the Secretariat staff. The letter and number together identify the resolution. When referencing resolutions from past General Conventions, the year is prepended, as in 2015-A300.

Proposer

The Interim Body, Legislative Committee, Deputy, Bishop, Diocese, or Province that writes a resolution is the proposer of the resolution as referred to in the Rules of Order.

Submitter

The submitter is the person entering the resolution into the resolution submissions system, available online at <https://legislation.generalconvention.org>. The submitter may be the proposer, or someone else entering the resolution on behalf of the proposer.

Resolution Submission System

<https://legislation.generalconvention.org>

All resolutions should be submitted online via the Legislation Processing Online (LPO) system. Users will need to create an account with their name and an email where they can receive an access link to the system. Note that the email used must already exist in the GCO Database. Deputies, Bishops, Diocesan and Provincial staff, and Interim Body members are already in this database. For help with this contact gc.support@episcopalchurch.org. The submission system can be found here:

<https://legislation.generalconvention.org>.

Once the account is created the user must ask for an access link. A new link is only required if the user uses a new browser or device to access the system, or their security settings remove the token after they close their session, or when the link eventually expires. One may get a new access link at any time. One may reconnect to the system and continue working on resolutions as many times as needed. Instructions are available in the system. If you have any questions about using the resolution submission system, please contact gc.support@episcopalchurch.org.

Writing Resolutions

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

*(For resolutions that **amend the Constitution or Canons**, please use the following and see additional instructions further below).*

Title:

Include a brief descriptive title 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 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 for clarity and consistency.*

Endorsements

For “A” Resolutions:

“A” resolutions do not require or have any endorsers beyond the Interim Bodies or Legislative Committees that are proposing them.

For “B” Resolutions:

“All resolutions of Bishops shall be proposed by one Bishop and be endorsed by not less than two additional Bishops, all three being from different dioceses. Individual Bishops shall be limited to proposing not more than three resolutions.” (HOB Rules of Order V.C)

For “C” Resolutions:

“C” resolutions do not require or have any endorsers beyond the Dioceses or Provinces that are proposing them.

For “D” Resolutions:

“A Resolution or Memorial may be proposed by:

1. a Deputy, if:
 - i. two other Deputies endorse the Resolution or Memorial; and
 - ii. the Deputy proposes no more than a total of three Resolutions and three Memorials.”

(HOD Rules of Order VII.D.1)

Supporters

All resolutions, “A”, “B”, “C”, and “D” can have individuals or groups (Interim Body, Diocese, Province, organization, committee, etc.) as supporters. This is not an official endorsement but does allow the Convention to see who else backs the resolution.

Explanation

The purpose, intentions, and justifications for a resolution should be included in the explanation which immediately follows the text of the resolution. Since the explanation is not part of the official text of the resolution, it can include links, references to other documents, and historical context for the resolution. *Please limit explanations to a few paragraphs.* Explanations will be translated into Spanish.

Supporting Documents

Joint Rule II.2.f states: “No proposal for legislative consideration which approves, endorses, adopts, or rejects a report, study, or other document that is not generally known by the members of the House or readily available, may be considered by the General Convention unless such material is first distributed to both Houses. It is the responsibility of the proposer to provide the necessary copies to the Secretary of each House.”

The Submission system has a “supporting documents” option where one may either upload PDF or Word documents, or insert a link out to an online document. This supporting documents option may be used for documents required by JR II.2.f, or for other documents that may aid in consideration of the resolution. All documents or links must be *either* available in Spanish or translated into Spanish (additional languages can also be accepted). No resolution that includes any additional documents or document links will be accepted without versions of those documents in Spanish.

General Guidelines for Resolution Content

- **One Topic:** A resolution should have one topic.
- **Specific Action:** A resolution must require specific action. Resolutions are phrased so that, if both Houses concur, it will result in some action to be taken by the General Convention or an identified person or agency of the Church. If you do not have a specific call to action, it may be better to submit as a memorial. Resolutions don't have to say how to achieve that action.

To put it another way, resolutions must be descriptive of the action(s) to be taken by the Church, but it does not have to be prescriptive of every step of the process.

- **Use Subjunctive:** Use the subjunctive verb tense. *Examples:* “That the 81st General Convention *adopt* the following statement...” (instead of *adopts*); That the 81st General Convention *confirm*...” (instead of *confirms*).
- **Refer to “the 81st General Convention” instead of “this 81st General Convention”.** Always use “the” instead of “this” in the phrase “the 81st General Convention.”
- **Begin each resolve with “*Resolved, That...*”:** Please begin each resolve clause with the word “*Resolved,*” in italics, and “That” in regular text with a capital “T”. Please do not put in the phrase “the house of ____ concurring” as that will be added programmatically. For example: “*Resolved, That* the 81st General Convention ...”.
- **End each interim resolve with “; and be it further”:** 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.

For example:

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,
That the 81st General Convention {text of first resolve}; and be it further
Resolved, That {text of the second resolve}; and be it further
Resolved, That {text of the third resolve}.

Ideally, resolutions should not contain more than three resolve clauses.

- **Follow resolves that end in a list with “And be it further”:** If an interim resolve ends in a list, start a new paragraph and enter “And be it further” on its own line. Then to start the new resolve with “*Resolved, That*”

For example:

Resolved, That {text of resolve}

1. List item
2. List item
3. List item

And be it further

Resolved, That {text of next resolve}

- **No Conditional language or required order of consideration:** Resolutions cannot be submitted if the passage of one is dependent on the passage of another, separate resolution. *No conditional language about the passage will be accepted.* The two must be submitted together as different resolve clauses of the same resolution so General Convention can discuss them as one unit. For example, a resolution that calls for changing the Canons in one section but can only occur if another section of the Canons is changed must be submitted as one resolution. *Resolutions cannot be filed and considered in a particular order, i.e. to wait to see if that other change is made.*
- **Creation of a new Interim Body:** If the resolution calls for the creation of an Interim Body (such as a Task Force), 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. For guidance on creating a Task Force by resolution, please use the Joint Rules. 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, bishops, or a mixture of all three orders and if so, if certain minimum or maximums of each order are required; the work they are tasked with completing; the length of the time needed for the completion of the assigned work; and a proposed budget, if any. Please use this format:

Resolved, That the General Convention authorize the establishment of a Task Force [on/for/to], appointed by [Unless otherwise specifically provided in the establishing Resolution, 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 VII], composed of [number of people] as follows: [x] Bishops, [x] Priests or Deacons, and [x] Lay Persons, to complete [work assigned and any specific time frame]. The Task Force ends with the submission of their report to the 82nd General Convention.

- **Cost Estimate:** 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 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.

- **Translation:** All resolutions will be translated into Spanish.
- **Things you cannot use in the text of the resolution itself** (but you can use in the explanation and supporting documents):
 - Bold text. This is only used after a resolution has been passed by General Convention to indicate the finalized version.
 - Preambles or “whereas” clauses. Use the explanation section for further information, context, and rationale for the resolution.
 - Links to websites. Links are usually temporary and therefore are not good for archival copies of resolutions. Therefore, links should not be inserted in the text of resolutions. Place links in the explanation or in the supporting documents.
 - Referrals to or attachments of Congressional legislation or bills. They often change and may have “riders” attached that do not refer to the intent of the resolution being proposed.

Amending the Constitution and Canons or Rules of Order

Any resolution that proposes modification of the Constitution, Canons or Rules of Order or will affect the structure or governance of the Church will need **additional review** before it is filed for consideration at General Convention. Please contact the **Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, and Constitution and Canons**. Send your questions and drafts to gc.support@episcopalchurch.org.

General Guidelines for Resolutions that amend the Constitution, Canons, or Rules of Order

- A. **Article, Canon or Rules Reference:** Begin your resolve clause with the article, canon or rules of order reference. *Example:* “That Canon 1.17.1.c is hereby amended to read as follows...”
- B. **Quote Exactly:** The Constitution, Canons or Rules of Order must be quoted exactly. Do not paraphrase anything. To minimize errors, we recommend that you copy and paste the text you are amending from the quotable version of the document, available online at the General Convention website, or at this direct link: [Constitution and Canons 2022, quotable version](#).
- C. **Entire amended paragraph:** Include the entire section or paragraph that you are amending. Do not omit any sections or use an ellipse (...) to skip over parts. This provides clarity when the resolution is being discussed. You do not need to 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. **Strikethrough for deletions:** Text to be deleted is indicated by a ~~strike through~~ mark.
- E. **Italics for insertions:** Text to be inserted is indicated by *italics*.
- F. **Multiple sections in the same resolution:** You may amend different sections of the Constitution and Canons or Rules 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.

If you are amending more than one section of the Constitution and Canons in a single resolution, each section being changed should be a separate resolve clause.

- G. **Capitalization:** When referring to the formal orders and members of them, the words Bishop, Priest, Deacon, and Lay Person and their plurals are capitalized. Outside of this context, the words a not capitalized.

Please use the following steps when proposing amendments to the C&C or Rules of Order:

Begin the resolution with the following:

<Amended text as it would appear if adopted and concurred. Scroll below the line of asterisks (*****) to see the version showing all deleted and added text.>

Put the text of the resolution as it would appear if adopted and concurred. This means remove any text that is to be taken out and/or add any new text without using italics. There should be no strikethrough or italics in this version of the text.

Then add the following text:

<Proposed amended resolution text showing exact changes being made:>

Put the text of the resolution showing the exact changes being made. This means show any text being removed using a ~~striketrough~~ and any new text being added using *italics*. Note that bold should never be used in resolutions as this has been a longstanding way that the General Convention has shown the final version of the resolution text after it has been adopted and concurred.

Resolution writers and amendment proposers are encouraged to strikethrough entire words and phrases, as is practical for the situation, but to still show exactly what is being modified. Please do not strikethrough only a portion of a word as this interferes with translation.

[Please see here for an example of a resolution that amends the Canons](#)

Editing and Review

It is the responsibility of the proposer to write their resolutions in the proper form, and to arrange for proofreading and editing of their resolutions, explanations, and supporting materials. The Secretariat staff may lightly edit resolutions for formatting and to correct some elements to fit standards used by the General Convention such as punctuation of titles, names of people or institutions, exact quoting of the C&C, or conformation to resolution structure, but will never edit or otherwise modify the content of a resolution. The submitter may be contacted if the Secretariat staff or Presiding Officers believe corrections are needed to content before the resolution is referred to a Legislative committee.

Remember, submission is done through <https://legislation.generalconvention.org>. If you have questions about submitting a resolution, please contact gc.support@episcopalchurch.org.