Guidelines for Submitting Resolutions to the 82nd General Convention

As you prepare to submit a Resolution, please utilize these guidelines, the various resources linked in this document, and the Rules of Order in the 2024 Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church. While it is the responsibility of the Resolution submitter to propose their Resolution in the proper form, the House of Deputies Resolution Review Committee is available to offer support. The new Governance and Legislative System (GLS) will also help to guide you through the process.

Resources for Preparing Resolutions

The GLS will ask you to answer several questions as you prepare to submit your Resolution. Doing your research ahead of time will help ensure your Resolution conforms to the Rules and has a better chance of making its way successfully through both Houses.

Questions to consider:

- Is this a Resolution or a Memorial?
    - A Resolution is a call to action: It requires that something be done by the Church, one of its constituent members, a governing body, or an outside entity.
    - A Memorial is a petition calling the attention of the General Convention to a matter and does not require any specific action.
- What is the topic of my Resolution?
    - Does my Resolution propose to amend the Constitution, Canons, or Rules of Order of The Episcopal Church?
    - Does my Resolution deal with the Church's common worship, liturgy, and music?
    - Does my Resolution direct work to be done between General Conventions?
    - Does my Resolution seek to amend the Church's shared theological, ethical, or moral discernment on an issue?
- Who am I asking to act as a result of this Resolution?
- Am I creating a Task Force?
    - If so, how will it be constituted, what is its goal, and how will it be funded?
- Has the General Convention, Executive Council, or another Interim Body previously acted, issued a statement, Resolution, or report on the subject matter of your submission?
- Does the subject matter of your submission duplicate or overlap with existing work or Resolutions of other Deputies, Bishops, or Interim Bodies?
- Is this Resolution related to or dependent upon the adoption of other Resolutions at this General Convention?
- Have you consulted with The Archives of The Episcopal Church (episcopalarchives.org) to research previous Resolutions, statements, or reports on the issue your Resolutions addresses?

- Have you consulted with the Mission Program; Public Policy, Partnership, and Witness; or Congregational Vitality leadership regarding your Resolution?
- What other kinds of consultation and collaboration have you sought?
    - Does this Resolution have any impact on the budget of The Episcopal Church?If so, how much, and how will it be funded?
    - If not, how will the work directed by this Resolution will be accomplished (e.g., absorbed staff time, volunteer work, or existing appropriations)?

The Archives of The Episcopal Church

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 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 also 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 wish to contact, to Steve Pankey, the Secretary of the House of Deputies pro tempore, at spankey@episcopalchurch.org.

The descriptions and mandates of the Interim Bodies are available at https://extranet.generalconvention.org/governing_and_interim_bodies/interim_bodies

About Explanations and Supporting Documents

While every Resolution has a title and resolve clause(s), some will also include an explanation and/or supporting documents. These are not part of the Resolution itself and are not voted on by the Convention, but they may be made available if desired to assist in the deliberation and decision-making process. The GLS has a tab on which you can upload your supporting documents, and an explanation may be added on the Resolution Text tab.

Classification or Resolution 'Type'

The 82nd General Convention will introduce a new numbering system for Resolutions. Replacing the old A, B, C, D model that focused on who proposed the Resolution, this new system is designed to help everyone quickly identify what your Resolution is about. The new categories are:

- **CC (Constitution and Canons): Addresses** changes to the Constitution, Canons, or Rules of Order of the General Convention or its Houses

- **LM (Liturgy and Music): Pertains to c**ommon worship and authorized texts, including the Book of Common Prayer, trial and permanent liturgies, the Calendar of Saints, authorized Scripture translations, and other liturgical resources
- **DI (Churchwide Directives and Interim Work): Addresses w**ork between General Conventions—studies, task forces, commissions, Executive Council actions, programmatic implementation, reports, or coordinated efforts
- **CD (Common Discernment): Pertains to t**he Church's shared theological, ethical, and moral discernment, including statements on matters of faith, justice, public policy, social concerns, and calls to action that articulate the Church's voice and values

Resolution numbers are assigned in the order in which they are filed to the Presiding Officers. Gone are the days of A001, B001, C001, and D001; numbering will now happen sequentially, no matter the category designation (ex. DI001, CC002, CD003, etc.).

Governance and Legislative System (GLS)

All Resolutions must be submitted online via the Governance and Legislative System (GLS) at GLS.episcopalchurch.org. All authorized users will be issued a passkey for The Episcopal Church's login system. If you have been recently elected as an officer in your diocese or province, you may need to request access by reaching out to Steve Pankey, the Secretary of the House of Deputies pro tempore at spankey@episcopalchurch.org. Full instructions for submitting a Resolution into the GLS can be found in the GLS Submission Form Document.

Writing Resolutions

Title

Your title should be descriptive and succinct, highlighting the specific action of the Resolution. For Resolutions that propose amendments to the governing documents, the title must include the article or canon reference (e.g., Amend Canon 1.17.1.c). Titles may be changed for accuracy or in the event the substance of the Resolution is subsequently amended or substituted.

Endorsements

Per House of Bishops Rule V.C and House of Deputies Rule VII.D.1.i, Resolutions submitted by Deputies and Bishops require two additional endorsers. Specific to the House of Bishops is the additional requirement that all three Bishops must be from different dioceses. The GLS will have a list of active Bishops and Deputies that connects with the authorized user database. If you think someone is missing from the database, you can request a contact be added, and House leadership will review the request.

Explanation

The purpose, intentions, and justification for a Resolution should not be included in the body of the Resolution, but rather in the explanation that immediately follows the text in the GLS. 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, and long explanations can delay processing your Resolution.

External Supporting Documents
Joint Rule II.2.f says, "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 GLS has an "External Documents" tab where one may upload PDF or Word documents in compliance with JR II.2.f. All documents must be either available in Spanish or translated into Spanish (additional languages are also accepted). It is the responsibility of the submitter to provide translated versions of external documents. If you need assistance, please contact Language Services at languages@episcopalchurch.org.

General Guidelines for Resolution Content

- **One topic:** A Resolution should cover only one topic.
- **Specific action:** A Resolution must call for a specific action to be taken. Resolutions are phrased so that, if both Houses concur, it will result in some action to be taken by the General Convention, an identified person or entity of the Church, or someone or something outside of the Church. If you do not have a specific call to action, it may be better to submit a Memorial. Note that Resolutions do not need to indicate how the action will be achieved, simply that the action should be taken.
- **Use subjunctive tense:** Resolutions are written in the subjunctive verb tense. Examples: "That the 82nd General Convention adopt the following statement…" (instead of "adopts"); "That the 82nd General Convention confirm…" (rather than "confirms").
- **Refer to "the 82nd General Convention":** Always use "the" instead of "this" in the phrase "the 82nd General Convention."
- **Resolves:** The GLS will automatically populate the various resolve clauses necessary to make your Resolution flow. Simply click the "Add Further Resolved" button to create a new resolve clause.
- **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. 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. Calendaring is not based on Resolution number.
- **Creation of a new Interim Body:** If your Resolution calls for the creation of a new Interim Body, it must conform to the Canons and Rules required.
    - A Standing Commission is created by Canon and must be assigned specific duties on subjects that are considered to be of continuing concern to the mission of the Church. Standing Commissions are composed of five Bishops, five Priests and/or Deacons, and 10 Lay Persons who are confirmed adult communicants in good standing.
    - A Resolution that creates a Task Force must 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. The Resolution may state who appoints members; however, Joint

Rule VII allows for the Presiding Officers to make appointments in the absence of other direction. It must include a clear description of the work assigned to the body, the timeline for its completion, and the budget impact of the body's work. The GLS Task Force Tab will ask you a series of questions to help you flesh out these requirements. Ultimately, these questions will result in a resolve clause that looks like the following:

  - 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, [x] 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 83rd General Convention.

- **Budget impact:** If your Resolution has budgetary implications, a cost estimate and proposed budget, including funding sources, is required. The GLS will walk you through this process, which will require a final resolve clause that reads as follows:
  - That the Joint Budget Committee of Executive Council consider a budget allocation of $_____ for implementation of this Resolution**.**
  - Note: The General Convention Office estimates the cost of a 2.5-day meeting to be approximately $2,000 per person. Zoom meetings that require interpretation are approximately $250 per hour.
- **Translation:** All Resolutions will be professionally translated into Spanish. The GLS will provide machine translations in French, Haitian Creole, and Mandarin (Traditional Chinese).
- **Do not use:** Things you cannot use in the text of the Resolution (but could be part of the explanation):
  - Bold text
  - Preambles or "whereas" clauses
  - Links to websites
  - Referrals to or attachments of Congressional legislation or bills
  - Bullet points

Amending the Constitution, Canons, or Rules or Order

Any Resolution that proposes a modification to the Constitution, Canons, or Rules of Order will need additional review before it is filed for consideration at General Convention. Please contact the Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution, and Canons via spankey@episcopalchurch.org.

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

- **Article, canon, or rules reference:** Begin your resolve clause with the article, canon, or rule reference. Example: "That Canon 1.17.1.c is hereby amended to read as follows…"
- **Amend entire paragraph:** Include the entire section or paragraph that you are amending. Do not omit any sections or use ellipses (…) to skip over parts. This provides clarity when the Resolution is being discussed, especially as it relates to translation. 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.

- **Amending text:** The GLS will ask you to input the original text of the article, canon, or rule and show the changes you intend to make.
    - **Quote Exactly:** The Constitution, Canons, or Rules of Order must be quoted exactly. 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: 2024 Quotable C&C.
    - **Strikethrough for deletions:** Text to be deleted is indicate by a ~~strike-through~~ mark.
    - **Italics for insertions:** Text to be inserted is *indicated by italics*.
- **Multiple sections in the same Resolution:** You may amend different sections of the Constitution and Canons or Rules in the same resolution:
    - If all the changes address a single issue (like changing all instances of the Phrase "Provincial Court of Review" to "Court of Review"), or
    - The changes are dependent upon one another (e.g., 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.
- **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 are not capitalized.

Editing and Review

New for the 82nd General Convention is the ability for submitters to reach out for help from the House of Deputies Resolution Review Committee throughout the drafting processes. While it remains the responsibility of the submitter to write their Resolutions in the proper form, and to arrange for proofreading and editing of their resolutions, explanations, and supporting materials, Resolution Review will be happy to help. Simply click "I'd like help with my draft," and a member of Resolution Review will follow up. Additionally, once you hit "Submit," Resolution Review will work with you to ensure your Resolution is in proper form before it is filed and becomes the property of General Convention.