

A deep dive into

# Rules of Order

# Today we will

- Cover background on what a resolution is (and is not)
- Review the Committee's role with respect to resolutions (What is your deliverable)
- Review options that the Committee must dispose of a resolution
- Identify traps and issues to look out for, including common pitfalls

# Concept of a Resolution and Ownership;

- Resolutions are matters by which the House or the General Convention speaks to a particular subject or concern, amends the Constitution or Canons, or expresses the mind of the House.
- Once a resolution is submitted, it is owned by the House and the GC – not the proposer.
- A resolution, if adopted, becomes the Statement of The Episcopal Church once adopted. GC has the final voice for what the Church is or should be.

# Why do we have committees?

- The committee's job is to :
  - Reflect, revise and recommend to the House on what it thinks the final resolution or action that the House should take
  - Consider testimony and feedback
  - Perfect the resolution and propose revisions
  - DISCERN and Recommend to the House on what it should do
- The committee's job is NOT to:
  - Act as a simple facilitator for the proposer or treating the process like a "friendly amendment"
  - Not think critically about the resolution
  - Treating the process like a rubber stamp
- Remember, what is adopted becomes what the Church believes, thinks, feels, or does on a subject – and your consideration should reflect this
- The Committees have an awesome responsibility and their work reflect on all of us

# Sources of Rules:

- Constitution
- Canons
- Joint Rules of Order
- House Rules of Order
- Roberts Rules of Order
- The first four can be found at [www.generalconvention.org](http://www.generalconvention.org)

# Options for the Committee to recommend:

- Adopt;
- Adopt as amended;
- Adopt a substitute;
- Adopt a consolidated substitute;
- Reject;
- Refer to a CCAB; and
- Take no further action.

# Adopt

- Adopt as is – no changes – the resolution is perfect!
- Resolution will then be presented to the House as is.

# Adopt as Amended

- Needs some changes, minor to moderate
- Must be related to the same subject (i.e. germane)
- Germane does not mean friendly, it means related to the same subject or topic
- The amendment can take the opposite position of the resolution
- Remember the goal is not to help the proposer accomplish their goal, the goal is to present the Church's position on a subject
- Any amendments automatically become part of the resolution
- Reserved for simple, strike through and underline amendments when the bulk of the resolution remains the same



# Adopt a substitute

- Used when a resolution needs a substantial overhaul and it's easier to do a ctrl-a, strikethrough then to try and tweak or massage it
- Must be related to the same subject (i.e. germane)
- Germane does not mean friendly; it means related to the same subject or topic
- Can take a different or opposite position on that subject—even work contrary to the proposer's goals
- Replaces the resolution in whole
- Used for more complex changes

# Adopt a consolidated substitute

- There are multiple resolutions on this subject, we should just adopt one single resolution for coherence and clarity
- Automatically “takes no further action” on the other resolutions
- Similar rules to the adopt with amendment or adopt substitute

# Reject

- This resolution should be outright rejected by the House.
- Indicates a disapproval of the resolution
- The House still reserves the right to adopt it despite the committee's recommendation

# Refer to a CCAB

- This resolution should be sent to an interim body for study and a report back on what the Convention should do *with the resolution*
- If you want a CCAB to consider a topic, you may want to consider changing the resolution to direct the CCAB to study something rather than just refer the resolution to the CCAB
- Consider what you want the CCAB to report back on at the next GC and include specific instructions; be careful about creating task forces, you may want to ask the Executive Council to assign or appoint a group to study and report back
- Existing or new task force?

# Take no further action

- This resolution has been acted upon, is moot, or shouldn't be considered further by the convention
- Common reasons are the Convention has already spoken to the subject, there is another resolution that covers it, its moot, or there are existing resolutions that speak to that subject
- Indicates neither approval nor disapproval – unlike a vote up or down, referral, etc. it is neutral, it is not an “action”

# Actions once the Bishops have acted:

- A house of initial action is assigned to each resolution (generally by committee). The other house can't act until after the 3<sup>rd</sup> legislative day
- After the Bishop's act, the Committee may need to change its recommendation. The options are:
  - Concur
  - Concur with Amendment
  - Not Concur
  - Not Concur and "refer, etc"

# Consent Calendar

- The Consent Calendar is automatic unless your committee elects to remove it from the consent calendar – the Bishops' calendar is handled differently
- The action recommended by the committee is the action taken
- The proposer, 3 deputies, dispatch, or the President can also remove items from the calendar
- Items that require a 2/3rds vote or vote by orders are not placed on the calendar

# Multiple resolutions, same subject at the convention;

- RONR 38.1, Resolutions that are the same or substantially the same question are out of order after the first resolution is adopted
- This means that if you have multiple resolutions on the same subject, after the convention takes action on the first resolution, subsequent resolutions can be ruled out of order
- Consolidate as much as possible to avoid this
- Resolutions can always be considered in part if needed—a better practice than multiple resolutions



# Common pitfalls

- Failing to follow the Joint Rules
  - Creating a task force? Joint Rule IX—must specify the task force composition, appointment, and term and cannot last longer than a triennium.
  - Asking for funding? Joint Rule IV—funding in resolution does not mean it will appear in the budget; you should direct the proposer to JSCPBF to testify
  - Incorporating items by reference in the resolution? Joint Rule III—requires the proposer to distribute materials to the House
- Adopting multiple resolutions on the same subject - don't do it!

# Questions?

# Remember...

- The work you produce, the refinements you do, and the recommendation you make become a reflection of The Episcopal Church and us –you have an awesome responsibility and are charged with important work, keep that in mind as you consider, discern and vote.