

Guidelines for Writing a Resolution

Structure of a Resolution:

A resolution is a main motion in parliamentary procedure, which expresses the Assembly's formal opinions or sentiments. A resolution is often prefaced by statements, each introduced by the word "whereas," that state the reasons for the resolution. The statements contained in the "Whereas" clauses do not have legal effect. Assembly members should be careful not to spend excessive time debating or amending these prefacing statements at the expense of the main resolution. The "Whereas" clauses are useful mainly when the organization plans to publish the resolution and would like the reasons for its adoption to be read with it.

The "Resolved" clause(s) comes at the end of all prefacing statements and should be concise and clear. "Resolved" clauses should be stated in the affirmative, since the negative form is often confusing to the Assembly. If the wording of the resolution is unclear, confusing, unnecessarily long, involved, or if the "Resolved" clause is stated in the negative, it is within the purview of the Chair to request the proposer to rephrase the motion prior to the Assembly being opened officially for business, and if necessary, help in doing so. However, the motion can be rephrased only in wording that is approved by its proposer.

All resolutions must be submitted by a deadline determined by the rules and announced well in advance of the meeting. In general, the resolution deadline is seven (7) days before the day of the meeting.

In summary, the following points should be considered when writing a resolution:

- All resolutions should be typed and in proper form to be considered by the task force.
- "Whereas" clauses or preambles of the resolution should identify a problem or need for action, address its timeliness or urgency and its effects on the task force, or the public at large. They must also include references and indicate whether the proposed policy or action will alter current task force policy.
- "Whereas" clauses will not be voted upon. Instead, they offer an explanation and the rationale of the resolution.
- "Resolved" clauses are the essential part of the resolution; they should positively state the action or policy called for by the resolution.
- A single issue should be addressed in each resolution. If multiple "Resolved" clauses are included in a resolution, each "Resolved" clause must be independent, related to the central subject, stated in simple and concise terms, and completely comprehensible after removal of the "Whereas" clauses.

Technical points to consider:

- A. Unclear resolutions may not be passed.
- B. Grammatically poor resolutions may be defeated.
- C. Too many "Resolved" clauses may cause referral or defeat of a resolution.
- D. "Whereas" clauses may also help defeat or pass a resolution