

DEMYSTIFYING RESOLUTION WRITING & SUBMISSION –
Presentation to Creation Care Network Mtg on June 12, 2023

- 1) Research previous resolutions on the same or similar topics –
 - a. Especially resolutions previously approved by your diocese's annual convention
 - b. But perhaps also ones approved by TEC's General Convention & Executive Council
 - c. Look online, but if your diocese's resolutions are not available online, contact your diocesan office for help
 - d. A list of all Creation Care amendments approved by the last several General Conventions can be found here:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_zgg_9VHjC7EVOsIoKAYAzAL2xqY5w_187HeutCJCqI/edit
 - e. But the online archive of ALL General Convention resolutions on all topics through 2018 can be found here: [The Acts of Convention: Digital Archive 1973-2018 \(episcopalarchives.org\)](https://www.episcopalarchives.org/acts-of-convention-digital-archive-1973-2018)
 - f. Resolutions of the most recent General Convention (80th, 2022) can be found here: [Resolutions at the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church — The General Convention of The Episcopal Church](https://www.episcopalarchives.org/resolutions-at-the-80th-general-convention-of-the-episcopal-church)
 - g. The online archive of Executive Council resolutions is here: [Executive Council: Digital Archive 1976-2020 \(episcopalarchives.org\)](https://www.episcopalarchives.org/executive-council-digital-archive-1976-2020)
 - h. Finally, you could investigate whether your provincial synod, which probably meets once every three years (in the same years as General Convention) has approved resolutions on a topic similar to what you're working on. Look on your province's website to see who to contact.
- 2) If a very similar resolution has already been approved,
 - a. Consider whether implementation may have been inadequate or could be improved,
 - b. Try to differentiate your idea for a new resolution by discovering new implementation methods and ways to track and measure success...or
 - c. Shift the focus of your resolution to make it more original overall
 - d. Remember that you will be able to (and should) cite the most similar previously approved resolutions in the end notes to your resolution.

- 3) Keep at hand a few reputable, serious, but readable articles supporting your idea for a resolution.
 - a. Such articles will describe the specific problem you're hoping to address and perhaps endorse the mechanism you want to set up through your resolution to help solve the problem.
 - b. You probably already have a few such articles that inspired you to pursue a resolution in the first place.
 - c. You should consult these articles periodically while working on your resolution, to make sure you're following the best expert opinion...and
 - d. Share these articles with other people who help you at various stages of your work on your resolution, so they understand better what your goal is
- 4) Focus on the main goal of your resolution idea. Don't be concerned about formatting correctly your eventual resolution.
 - a. Rules for formatting and wording resolutions can seem esoteric and intimidating. Don't worry about that stuff initially.
 - b. The rules on formatting and wording change over time and can vary at different levels of TEC.
 - c. So previously approved resolutions can actually look very different among themselves. Don't be confused by that, and focus just on their content.
 - d. Getting the formatting and wording right is one of the last things you'll deal with in preparing your resolution, and many different people can help.
- 5) Learn the most basic requirements for submitting a resolution in your diocese, such as...
 - a. Deadlines and who is allowed to submit resolutions.
 - b. Special requirements often exist for resolutions that impact church finances, even slightly.
 - c. Such basic info will probably be available on your diocesan website, but if not...
- 6) Contact your diocesan Resolutions Committee.
 - a. Even if basic info is available online, you should consider contacting the chair of your Resolutions Cmte

- b. Let them know you might submit a resolution, and start a dialogue with them about the process.
 - c. Alternatively, you could contact another member of your diocesan Resolutions Committee.
- 7) Reach out to friends within your diocese who have experience writing and submitting resolutions. Their advice could be valuable.
- 8) Identify people within your diocese who agree with you on the issue you're trying to address...
 - a. They might agree to be co-authors and co-sponsors of your resolution.
 - b. Any like-minded person who is also a delegate to your annual convention could be especially helpful.
- 9) Optional, but strategic: Identify a smart, articulate leader in your diocese who might oppose your resolution, in part or in whole.
 - a. Discuss your idea with them, and see if you can re-frame your resolution to circumvent at least some of their objections.
 - b. It might be as simple as avoiding certain words or phrases that they dislike.
 - c. If your resolution turns out to be a bit controversial – which is not necessarily a bad thing – addressing typical objections early on may increase its chance of passage at your annual convention, and by a large margin.
- 10) Too ambitious? Consider briefly whether your goal might be too ambitious or too big to be tackled at the diocesan level.
 - a. Scaling back your plan a bit might make it easier to implement and ultimately more effective and beneficial.
 - b. It might also make your resolution less controversial and easier to get approved.
- 11) The title of your resolution. It's never too early to think about a good title for your resolution.
 - a. Often, the title is the last thing decided, but you can always have a temporary title.
 - b. A good early title provides a handle for talking about and promoting your resolution to other people.
- 12) Action or Statement?

- a. Resolutions usually call for concrete actions to be taken.
- b. But sometimes it's appropriate for delegates to make an official statement in support of or in opposition to something happening in the world, even if action is difficult or impossible.
- c. Ideally, a statement of position will be combined with some action, even if it's just ongoing advocacy in support or opposition.
- d. If your idea for a resolution involves only making a statement or taking a position, that may be OK, but talk to someone who knows more about resolutions in your diocese, to see if there any special requirements in such a situation.

13) Consider time cost.

- a. Debating and voting on a resolution take up time at a convention.
- b. Practically, only a certain number of resolutions can be discussed, debated, amended (if necessary), and voted on at a single convention.
- c. Don't feel embarrassed or feel like a failure, if you decide to wait a year to submit your resolution, because you'll be better prepared then, and because you don't want to overburden the agenda of this year's convention.
- d. Your diocesan Resolutions Committee will have a much clearer idea about whether too many resolutions are being submitted in a single year. Consult with them, if you're in doubt about this.

14) Spiritual dimension of your resolution. Crafting a sentence or two about how your resolution supports the spiritual enterprise of TEC will probably be permitted and may even be advisable in your diocese.