

Province II Synod

Proposed Resolution submitted by Paul Ambros

Resolution 2024-2

Submission of Resolution to the 81st General Convention

Length of the 82nd General Convention

Be it resolved, That The International Atlantic Province – the Second Province of The Episcopal Church – submit the following resolution to the 81st General Convention of the Episcopal Church meeting in 2024:

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Arrangements schedule the 82nd General Convention for not fewer than ten days between June 15 and October 15, to include various committee meetings for up to four days prior to Convention, in accordance with the Guidelines set forth in Resolution 1988-A150.

Explanation

This Resolution would direct planners for the 82nd General Convention to follow the existing 1988 guidelines for scheduling General Conventions.

The Covid pandemic caused a shortening of the 80th General Convention from the originally planned ten days to four, with no time allotted for legislative hearings during those four days; all legislative-committee hearings were held online in the two months before opening. The 81st is scheduled for six days, but with minimal hearing time other than a single three-hour slot the day before opening, again relying almost exclusively on preconvention online hearings.

Many of the necessary online legislative-committee hearings are held during the working day. This diminishes the voices of those who (a) are not able to sporadically take off work to attend, (b) may not have sufficient computer or smartphone facilities to enable access, and (c) may not have available or reliable internet connections. Those of us who are privileged to be able to participate in the weeks before Convention aren't able to appreciate the plight of those less privileged, and whose voices will not be heard before the opening gavel. When legislative hearings, or final legislative hearings, are held on-site before or during General Convention, everyone who can be present can participate in the legislative process.

The reliance on preconvention online hearings has led to draconian rules-of-order proposals that purport to rule any Resolution (other than as submitted by a Diocese or Province) proposed later than three months before Convention as a "late resolution" requiring special hurdles to allow its consideration. Such a rule is deemed necessary in order to force online LC review before arrival at Convention. This is the opposite of openness and transparency.

Allowing time for complying with the Guidelines for Convention length will foster better deliberative consideration of legislation and allow for the collegiality that was so sadly missing in Baltimore and is likewise reduced in Louisville. The House of Bishops meets often between Conventions; Deputies only have Conventions in which to meet and work together.

If Budget line 513 is insufficient to cover the logistical needs for a ten-day convention (although it was significantly increased from the prior two Conventions), the Executive Council can increase it as necessary.

Document: https://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts_resolution.pl?resolution=1988-A150