

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2022 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2022-A162
Title: Feasibility Study of a Fund to Pay Congregations' Future Benefit Obligations
Proposer: 17 - Agencies & Boards
Topic: Employee Benefits, Small Churches

Directly Related: (Attached)

2015-A045 Authorize a Task Force on Ministry Formation in Small Congregations
2006-D057 Develop Priorities for the Standing Commission on Small Congregations

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

2012-A076 Recognize Mission and Work in Small Congregations
2006-D048 Establish Equitable Benefits for Small Church Workers

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2018, selecting "direct" resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The "direct" resolutions are attached and "indirect" resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#) or call 800-525-9329.

A162 - Feasibility Study of a Fund to Pay Congregations' Future Benefit Obligations

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: 17 - Agencies & Boards

Requests New Interim Body: No

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Has Budget Implications: Yes

Cost: \$20,000.00

HiA: HD

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 17 - Agencies & Boards

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the General Convention Office shall conduct a feasibility study, using an outside consultant to the extent practical, of the steps, resources, and time necessary to establish a fund to pay some or all of the pension and health plan obligations of clergy and lay professionals deploying to historically non-white and small congregations, particularly to congregations whose economic viability has likely been impaired by historic discrimination; and be it further

Resolved, for the purposes of this resolution, the term “small congregation” shall mean congregations whose annual pledge and plate income is in the lowest 20% of congregations in their diocese, and which are without other significant sources of income; and be it further

Resolved, that the study estimate the funding needed to pay the annual estimated benefit obligations of 100, 500, and 1,000 clergy and lay professionals to deploy to such less affluent or historically non-white congregations, as well as the estimated funding needed to permanently endow such a fund for each of those increased deployment levels; and be it further

Resolved, that study results be provided to Executive Council by September 1, 2023 and published that month; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$20,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

Explanation

One remedy suggested to help increase deployment of clergy and lay professionals to historically non-white and smaller congregations is to establish a separate fund to assume these payment obligations. This resolution would mandate a feasibility study to determine the steps needed to establish such a fund, the time needed to do so, and the level of resources needed to pay benefit obligations for deployment levels of 100, 500, and 1,000 clergy and lay professionals to these congregations, both on an annual basis, and how much would be needed to permanently endow such a fund.

This information would be reported to Executive Council in September 2023, enough time for Executive Council to determine whether efforts to establish such a fund should be part of larger efforts to improve clergy deployment to historically non-white and smaller congregations.



Resolution Number: 2015-A045
Title: Authorize a Task Force on Ministry Formation in Small Congregations
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention authorize a task force with membership appointed by the Presiding Officers consisting of no fewer than 10 nor more than 20 representatives including, but not limited to, representatives from local diocesan programs, representatives from seminaries, ecumenical representation, or representatives who are engaged in advanced theological education; and that the task force be made up of bishops, priests, deacons, and laity to explore quality programs for formation, for expanding education opportunities for clergy and laity, for collaboration between local diocesan school programs and seminaries, for ecumenical collaboration, and to explore a wide range of delivery methods. The task force shall report back to the 79th General Convention with a plan to provide quality formation for clergy in small congregations that is affordable, theologically reflective, and innovative; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request the joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$150,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), p. 416.



Resolution Number: 2006-D057

Title: Develop Priorities for the Standing Commission on Small Congregations

Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended

Final Text:

Resolved, That the Standing Commission for Small Congregations work with Church Center staff to develop and offer opportunities for leadership training in Small Church Ministry; and be it further

Resolved, That the Standing Commission for Small Congregations work with Church Center staff to facilitate sharing and cooperation among the various networks and organizations committed to collaboration, training, and education that enrich and equip small congregations for mission; and be it further

Resolved, That the Standing Commission for Small Congregations continue conversation with the Church Pension Fund regarding compensation and benefit issues for clergy and lay participants in the Church Pension Fund serving small congregations; and be it further

Resolved, That the Standing Commission for Small Congregations plan with the General Convention Office opportunities to celebrate the life and ministry of small congregations at the 76th General Convention.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), p. 326.