

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2022 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2022-C008
Title: Freedom to Call, Freedom to Elect
Proposer: Wyoming
Topic: Canons

Directly Related: (Attached)

None

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

2018-A168 On the Topic of Amending Canon III.12.9(a) [Resignation at Age Seventy-Two]
(Rejected)

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.

C008 - Freedom to Call, Freedom to Elect

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Wyoming

Requests New Interim Body: No

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: Yes

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

HiA: HB

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 15 - Ministry

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 80th General Convention, amend Article II, Sec. 9 of the Constitution as follows:

Article II.9

Sec. 9. Upon attaining the age of seventy-two years a Bishop shall resign from all jurisdiction. *Anything in this Article to the contrary notwithstanding, any Episcopal entity or institution, with the appropriate consenting authorities, may elect or call a Bishop to serve in a position for a set period of time, regardless of their age when they accept the call and their anticipated age when the terms of agreement end.*

And be it further

Resolved, that Canon III.12.9 have a new subsection p added as follows:

p. Anything in this Canon to the contrary notwithstanding, any Episcopal entity or institution, with the appropriate consenting authorities, may elect or call a Bishop to serve in a position for a set period of time, regardless of their age when they accept the call and their anticipated age when the terms of agreement end.

And be it further

Resolved, that Canon III.9.8 have a new subsection d added as follows:

d. Anything in this Canon to the contrary notwithstanding, any Episcopal entity or institution, with the appropriate consenting authorities, may elect or call a Priest to serve in a position for a set period of time, regardless of their age when they accept the call and their anticipated age when the terms of agreement end.

And be it further

Resolved, that Canon III.7.7, be amended to read in its entirety:

Sec. 7. On reaching the age of seventy-two years, a Deacon shall resign from all positions of active service in this Church, and the resignation shall be accepted. The Bishop may, with the consent of the Deacon, assign a resigned Deacon to any congregation, other community of faith or ministry in another setting, for a term not to exceed twelve months, and this term may be renewed. *Anything in this Canon to the contrary notwithstanding, any Episcopal entity or institution, with the appropriate consenting authorities, may elect or call a Deacon to serve in a position for a set period of time, regardless of their age when they accept the call and their anticipated age when the terms of agreement end.*

Explanation

Whereas Episcopal entities may want the opportunity from time to time to call or elect a clergy person to fill a position for a set period of time;

Whereas precedents exist for calling clergy for set periods of times; i.e. nine-year term for Presiding Bishop and time limited “priest in charge” calls.

Whereas there are precedents in the ongoing revision of how, when and for how long a clergy person or bishop or presiding bishop can serve, including the passing of the above-mentioned canons and Article in the Constitution: i.e. originally bishops served for life, but now must resign at age 72;

Whereas there are clergy persons, especially those ordained in middle age, who are willing and able to serve beyond the age of 72, without the constriction of only serving one year at a time with the bishop’s permission;

Whereas there may be situations where Dioceses may want the option to elect a bishop to serve for a set period of time, regardless of their age;

Whereas it can be cost prohibitive for a Diocese that wants to terminate its relationship with their bishop, if they are required to pay a bishop the equivalent of their package until they reach the age of 72;

Whereas electing younger clergy as bishops as a “mid-career” position without having to commit to them for decades, can be a new energizing dynamic in the life of the Diocese; and

Whereas age 72 is an arbitrary age set decades ago, while most professions have removed the mandatory retirement age requirement;

This resolution addresses several situations.

1. It puts the choice into the Episcopal institutions or entities rather than with some predetermined administrative or actuarial number.
2. This resolution allows for exceptions to the “mandatory retirement” canon, while keeping age 72 as the normal time for resigning one’s cure.