

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2022 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2022-D091
Title: Defining Equal Place in the Life of the Church
Proposer: The Rev. José Rodríguez-Sanjuro
Topic: Appointments/Elections, Lay Ministry

Directly Related: (Attached)

2018-A284 Amend Canons I.17.5 and III.1.2 [Rights of Laity, Access to Discernment Process]
2012-D019 Amend Canon I.17.5 [Rights of Laity]
1994-C020 Amend Canon I.17.5 [Of Regulations Respecting the Laity]
1991-D025 On the Topic of the Canon on Regulations Respecting the Laity (Rejected)
1988-D007 On the Topic of the Canon on Regulations Respecting the Laity (Rejected)

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

1994-A061 On the Topic of the Canon on Regulations Respecting the Laity (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.

D091 - Defining Equal Place in the Life of the Church

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: The Rev. José Rodríguez-Sanjuro

Endorsed by: Mr. Joe McDaniel, Ms. Wendy Cañas, The Rev. Daniel Vélez-Rivera

Requests New Interim Body: No

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

HiA: HB

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 10 - Congregational & Diocesan Vitality

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church affirms that an "equal place" protects the rights of the laity to have equal voting representation on church-wide and diocesan bodies unless otherwise specified by the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, that dioceses shall ensure that the rights of the laity are affirmed and respected in all diocesan bodies; and be it further

Resolved, that dioceses shall ensure that all lay appointments and assignments (non-elected) to diocesan-wide bodies represent the diocese's racial and ethnic diversity; and be it further

Resolved, that dioceses shall promote the participation of underrepresented lay groups in elections to diocesan-wide bodies; and be it further

Resolved, that dioceses shall ensure that accommodations are granted on equal terms to lay and clerical members of diocesan-wide bodies; and be it further

Resolved, that church-wide bodies shall ensure that laity has an equal voice in church-wide leadership, except as otherwise specified by Canons; and be it further

Resolved, that dioceses shall be encouraged to ensure that diocesan-wide bodies ensure that equal voice is given to the laity, except as otherwise specified by Canons; and be it further

Resolved, that dioceses shall be encouraged to proactively address barriers or other inequalities that discourage or prevent lay participation in the diocesan-wide elections; and be it further

Resolved, that dioceses shall be encouraged to ensure that resources are granted on equal terms to lay and clerical members of diocesan-wide bodies.

Explanation

Whereas, Canon I.17.5 concerning the rights of the laity enumerates the rights of the laity as says: "No one shall be denied rights, status or access to an equal place in the life, worship, governance, or employment of this Church because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, marital or family status (including pregnancy or child care plans), sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disabilities or age, except as otherwise specified by Canons."

Resolved, that an "equal place" protects the rights of the laity to have an equal voice at leadership gatherings and on church-wide and diocesan bodies where lay representation is included unless otherwise specified by church-wide Canons.



Resolution Number: 2018-A284
Title: Amend Canons I.17.5 and III.1.2 [Rights of Laity, Access to Discernment Process]
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That Canon I.17.5 be amended to read as follows:

Sec. 5. No one shall be denied rights, status or access to an equal place in the life, worship, and governance, or *employment* of this Church because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, marital or family status (*including pregnancy or child care plans*), sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disabilities or age, except as otherwise specified by Canons.

And be it further

Resolved, That Canon III.1.2 be amended to read as follows:

Sec. 2. No person shall be denied access to the discernment process or to any process for the employment, licensing, calling, or deployment for any ministry, lay or ordained, in this Church because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, sex, marital or family status (*including pregnancy and child care plans*), sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disabilities or age, except as otherwise provided by these Canons. No right to *employment, licensing, ordination, call, deployment, or election* is hereby established.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), p. 674.



Resolution Number: 2012-D019
Title: Amend Canon I.17.5 [Rights of Laity]
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That Title I, Canon 17, Sec. 5 of the Canons of The Episcopal Church be hereby amended to read as follows:

Sec. 5. No one shall be denied rights, status or access to an equal place in the life, worship, and governance of this Church because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, *gender identity and expression*, disabilities or age, except as otherwise specified by Canons.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), pp. 505-506.



Resolution Number: 1994-C020
Title: Amend Canon I.17.5 [Of Regulations Respecting the Laity]
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That Title I, Canon 17, Section 5 be amended as follows:

No person shall be denied rights, status [in], or [access to] an equal place in the life, worship, and governance of this Church because of race, color, [or] ethnic origin, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, disabilities or age, except as otherwise specified by [this] Canon.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 1994* (New York: General Convention, 1995), p. 356.



Resolution Number: 1991-D025
Title: On the Topic of the Canon on Regulations Respecting the Laity
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Text of Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That Title I, Canon 17, Section 5 be amended as follows:

No one shall be denied [rights or status in] *a place in the life, worship, and governance of this Church because of race, color [or], ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, physical disabilities or age, except as otherwise specified by Canon.*



Resolution Number: 1988-D007
Title: On the Topic of the Canon on Regulations Respecting the Laity
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Text of Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That Title I, Canon 17, Section 5 be amended as follows:

No one shall be denied rights or status in this Church because of race, color, ethnic origin, *sex, sexual orientation, physical disability or age, except as otherwise specified by Canon.*