

## General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

**Resolution No.:** 2024-A006  
**Title:** Feasibility Study of a Fund to Pay Congregations' Future Benefit Obligations  
**Proposer:** Secretary of General Convention  
**Topic:** Employee Benefits, Small Churches

---

---

### **Directly Related:** (Attached)

2022-D003 On the Topic of Creating a Clergy Retirement Contribution Fund (Rejected)  
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 2022, 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](#).*

# A006 - Feasibility Study of a Fund to Pay Congregationsâ€™™ Future Benefit Obligations

---

**Final Status:** Not Yet Finalized

**Proposed by:** Secretary of General Convention

**Has Budget Implications:** Yes

**Cost:** \$20,000.00

**Amends C&C or Rules of Order:** No

**Requests New Interim Body:** No

**Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib:** No

**Directs Dfms Staff:** Yes

**Directs Dioceses:** No

**Directs Executive Council:** No

**HiA:** No House Assigned

**Legislative Committee Currently Assigned:** No Committee Assigned

**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*, That 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**

This resolution was referred from the 80th General Convention. It was proposed by Legislative Committee 17 - Agencies & Boards, listed as 2022-A162, and referred to Legislative Committee 17 - Agencies & Boards



**Resolution Number:** 2022-D003  
**Title:** On the Topic of Creating a Clergy Retirement Contribution Fund  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Rejected  
**Text of Resolution:**

*Resolved*, the House of Bishops concurring,

That the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church direct the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church (the “Episcopal Church”) to conduct a study to determine if it is possible to establish a permanent Retirement Contribution Fund (the “Fund”) whereby the applicable pension contributions will be made from such fund to pay the pension contributions of a parish priest’s salary who would serve such parish but for the fact that the required pension contributions makes it unaffordable for the hiring of such priest; and be it further

*Resolved*, That no priest may be eligible to participate in receiving pension contributions from the Fund where hisher parish’s gross income exceeds \$250,000; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the study shall include discussions with dioceses to determine the feasibility of a diocese’s ability to contribute a meaningful percentage to the Fund to support a priest’s pension contribution; and be it further

*Resolved*, That The Church Pension Fund also be included in the discussions because of the financial expertise it would bring to the table in the management of pension contributions; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Officers of the Episcopal Church and Executive Council shall refer this resolution to the appropriate Interim Body for consideration; and be it further

*Resolved*, That The Episcopal Church shall report to the 81st General Convention on the progress that it has made during the triennium in its efforts to effectuate the purposes of this resolution.



**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.