

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-D015
Title: Examine the Disparity in Treatment in the Adjudication of Clergy under Title IV Disciplinary Process by Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation
Proposer: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation
Topic: Discipline

Directly Related: (Attached)

2015-D076 Collect Information on Title IV Proceedings

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

2018-A120 Amend Canons IV.19.30, III.12.7(c), and IV.13.11 [Preserve Records]
2018-A129 Amend Canon IV.19.30(a)(1) [Preserve Records]
2018-D016 Create a Task Force for Women, Truth, and Reconciliation

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](#).

D015 - Examine the disparity in treatment in the adjudication of Clergy under Title IV Disciplinary Process by Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Kemp, The Rev. Rowena

Endorsed by: McDaniel, Mr. Joe, Buchanan, Canon Annette

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

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: HD

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 18 - Title IV Disciplinary Canons

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81th General Convention of The Episcopal Church direct the Office of Pastoral Development to maintain statistics of the Racial, Ethnic, Gender and Sexual Orientation of men and women who have been subjected to a Reference Panel inquiry, or where an accord has been reached, or where there has been an adjudication of guilt (i.e. a sentence imposed upon the cleric, which permanently inhibited in their ministry), as a result of being disciplined under Title IV and to report them annually to the Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the 81st General Convention direct the Office of Pastoral Development in consultation with the Office for Transition Ministry, dioceses, the Archives of The Episcopal Church and other appropriate agencies to gather data annually about 1). the composition by race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation of men and women who have been subjected to a Reference Panel inquiry, or where an accord has been reached, or where there has been an adjudication of guilt (i.e., a sentence imposed which rendered the cleric

permanently inhibited in the exercise of their ministry), as a result of being disciplined under Title IV, and 2) the numbers of all male and female clergy by race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation of men and women who have been subjected to a Reference Panel inquiry, or where an accord has been reached, or where there has been an adjudication of guilt (i.e., a sentence imposed which rendered the cleric permanently inhibited in the exercise of their ministry), as a result of being disciplined under Title IV, and to broadly disseminate the report by electronic and other means on an annual basis; and be it further

Resolved, That the 81st General Convention direct the Office of Pastoral Development in consultation with the Office for Transition Ministry, dioceses, the Archives of The Episcopal Church and other appropriate agencies to gather data going back from the year 1996 to the year 2024 about 1). the composition by race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation of men and women who have been subjected to a Reference Panel inquiry, or where an accord has been reached, or where there has been an adjudication of guilt (i.e., a sentence imposed which rendered the cleric permanently inhibited in the exercise of their ministry), as a result of being disciplined under Title IV, and 2). the numbers of all male and female clergy by race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation of men and women who have been subjected to a Reference Panel inquiry, or where an accord has been reached, or where there has been an adjudication of guilt (i.e., a sentence imposed which rendered the cleric permanently inhibited in the exercise of their ministry), as a result of being disciplined under Title IV, and to report those findings to the Church.

Explanation

Title IV, Canon 1: Of Accountability and Ecclesiastical Discipline:

.....The Church and each Diocese shall support their members in their life in Christ and seek to resolve conflicts by promoting healing, repentance, forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life and reconciliation among all involved or affected.....

When former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin killed George Floyd by kneeling on his neck in 2020, the world witnessed the most racist elements of the U.S. criminal legal system on broad display. The uprisings that followed Floyd's death articulated a vision for transforming public safety practices and investments. Almost one year later, Chauvin was convicted for Floyd's death, a rare outcome among law enforcement officers who kill unarmed citizens. The fight for racial justice within the criminal legal system continues, however, the data epitomize the enormity of the task. For example,

1. Black Americans are incarcerated in state prisons at nearly 5 times the rate of white Americans.
2. Nationally, one in 81 Black adults in the U.S. is serving time in state prison. Wisconsin leads the nation in Black imprisonment rates; one of every 36 Black Wisconsinites is in prison.
3. In 12 states, more than half the prison population is Black: Alabama, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia.
4. Seven states maintain a Black/white disparity larger than 9 to 1: California, Connecticut, Iowa, Maine, Minnesota, New Jersey, and Wisconsin.

5. Latinx individuals are incarcerated in state prisons at a rate that is 1.3 times the incarceration rate of whites. Ethnic disparities are highest in Massachusetts, which reports an ethnic differential of 4.1 to 1.

These statistics demonstrate the staggering disparities among Black and Latinx people imprisoned in the United States given their overall representation in the general population. As the data reveals, Black Americans are imprisoned at a rate that is roughly five times the rate of white Americans. During the present era of criminal justice reform, not enough emphasis has been focused on ending racial and ethnic disparities systemwide.

Going to prison is a major life-altering event that creates obstacles to building stable lives in the community, such as gaining employment and finding stable and safe housing after release. Imprisonment also reduces lifetime earnings and negatively affects life outcomes among children of incarcerated parents. These are individual-level consequences of imprisonment but there are societal level consequences as well: high levels of imprisonment in communities cause high crime rates and neighborhood deterioration, thus fueling greater disparities. This cycle both individually and societally is felt disproportionately by people of color. The outcome of mass incarceration today has not occurred by happenstance but has been designed through policies created by a dominant white culture that insists on suppression of others.

In like manner, the Church is not immune from these same racist policies and consequences that result in a disproportionate punishment for clergy of color who are charged with Title IV Violations. The same societal consequences impact clergy family lives, careers, and lifetime finances.

Truly meaningful reforms to the church's Title IV system cannot be accomplished without acknowledgement of its racist underpinnings. Immediate and focused attention on the causes and consequences of racial disparities is required to eliminate them. True progress towards a racially just system requires an understanding of the variations in racial and ethnic inequities in the Church's implementation of Title IV Charges and the policies and day-to-day practices that drive these inequities.

This resolution is a first step in bringing about needed reforms. First, we must know the magnitude of the problem and the implementation of this resolution will shine a much-needed spot light on the inequities that result from the disproportionate charging of Title IV Actions against clergy members from traditionally marginalized groups.



Resolution Number: 2015-D076
Title: Collect Information on Title IV Proceedings
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons to study the need to collect information relating to all Title IV proceedings, identify the information to be collected, the methodology to collect and report the information, and the person or office responsible for administration of the process.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), p. 897.