

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2018  
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

**RESOLUTION NO.:** 2018-A114  
**TITLE:** Amend I.10 Regarding the Union of Dioceses  
**PROPOSER:** Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons  
**TOPIC:** Canons

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**Directly Related:** (Attached)

2015-A100 On the Topic of Assessing Diocesan Viability and Vitality (Rejected)  
2015-C031 Request Study of the Number and Size of Dioceses  
2012-A101 On the Topic of Re-aligning Dioceses (Rejected)

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

None

**Supplemental Documents:** (Linked)

*(Blue Book) Report to General Convention, [Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons](#), see pages 425-427.*

*In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1976 through 2015, 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 at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.*

# A114 Amend I.10 Regarding the Union of Dioceses

<b>Proposer</b>	Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons
<b>Topic</b>	Canons
<b>Endorsed by</b>	
<b>Sponsored by</b>	
<b>Page numbers</b>	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. 46-47
<b>HiA / Leg. Cttee</b>	/
<b>Current Status</b>	Resolution Filed
<b>Version</b>	Original (as filed)
<b>Review Status</b>	Not yet reviewed

## RESOLUTION TEXT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 79th General Convention amend Canon I.10 as follows:
- 2 Sec. 1. Whenever a new Diocese ~~shall is proposed~~ to be formed within the limits of any Diocese, or by the junction of two (2) or more Dioceses, or parts of Dioceses, ~~and such action shall have been ratified by the General Convention, the Bishop of the Diocese within the limits of which a Diocese is formed, or in case of the junction of two or more Dioceses, or parts of Dioceses, the senior Bishop by consecration, shall thereupon call the Primary Convention of the new Diocese, for the purpose of enabling it to organize, and shall fix the time and place of holding the same, such place being within the territorial limits of the new Diocese.~~ *the Ecclesiastical Authorities and the Standing Committees of the Dioceses affected shall submit for approval to the Conventions of each Diocese involved a joint agreement of union setting forth their agreements, including the manner of determining the Bishop Diocesan and other Bishops (if any), provisions of the Constitution and Canons of the new Diocese, and such other matters as may be necessary or proper. The approved joint agreement of union shall be submitted for ratification by the General Convention no less than ninety (90) days prior to the first day of the meeting of the General Convention.*
- 3 Sec. 2. *Immediately after ratification by the General Convention, the Ecclesiastical Authority of the new Diocese, as set forth in the joint agreement of union, shall call the Primary Convention of the new Diocese, for the purpose of enabling it to organize, and shall fix the time and place of holding the same, such place being within the territorial limits of the new Diocese. In case there should be no Bishop who can call such Primary Convention, pursuant to the foregoing provision, then the duty of calling such Convention for the purpose of organizing and of fixing the time and place of its meeting, shall be vested in the Standing Committee of the Diocese within the limits of which the new one is erected, or in the Standing Committee of the oldest of the Dioceses by the junction of which, or of parts of which, the new Diocese may be formed. And such Standing Committee shall make the call immediately after ratification of the General Convention.*
- 4 Sec. 3. Whenever one (1) Diocese is about to be divided into two (2) Dioceses, the Convention of such Diocese shall declare which portion thereof is to be in the new Diocese, and shall make the

same known to the General Convention before the ratification of such division.

- 5 Sec. 4. Whenever a new Diocese shall have organized in Primary Convention in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and Canons in such case made and provided, and in the manner prescribed in the previous Sections of this Canon, and shall have chosen a name and acceded to the Constitution of the General Convention in accordance with Article V, Section 1 of the Constitution, and shall have laid before the Executive Council certified copies of the Constitution adopted at its Primary Convention, and the proceedings preparatory to the formation of the proposed new Diocese, such new Diocese shall thereupon be admitted into union with the General Convention.
- 6 Sec. 5. In the event of the erection of an Area Mission into a Diocese of this Church, as provided in Article V, ~~See~~ *Section 1*, the Convocation of the said Area Mission shall be entitled to elect Deputies to the succeeding General Convention, and also to elect a Bishop. The jurisdiction previously assigned to the Bishop in the Area Mission shall be terminated upon the admission of the new Diocese.
- 7 Sec. 6 (a) When a Diocese, and ~~another Diocese~~ *one or more other Dioceses* which ~~has been~~ *were* formed either by division therefrom or by erection into a Diocese or a Missionary Diocese formed by division therefrom, shall desire to be reunited into one Diocese, the proposed reunion must be initiated by the *approval of the Conventions of the Diocese of a joint agreement of union setting forth their agreements, including the manner of determining the Bishop Diocesan and other Bishops (if any), provisions of the Constitution and Canons of the new Diocese, and such other matters as may be necessary or proper.* ~~mutual agreement between the Conventions of the two Dioceses, consented to by the Ecclesiastical Authority of each Diocese.~~ If the *said agreement of the Dioceses* is made and the consents *of their Conventions are* given more than three months before the next meeting of the General Convention, the fact of the agreement and consents shall be certified by the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Secretary of the Convention of each Diocese to all the Bishops of the Church having jurisdiction and to the Standing Committees of all the Dioceses; and when the consents of a majority of such Bishops and of a majority of the Standing Committees to the proposed reunion shall have been received, the facts shall be similarly certified to the Secretary of the House of Deputies of the General Convention, and thereupon the reunion shall be considered complete. But if the agreement is made and the consents given within three months of the next meeting of the General Convention, the facts shall be certified instead to the Secretary of the House of Deputies, who shall lay them before the two Houses; and the reunion shall be deemed to be complete when it shall have been sanctioned by a majority vote in the House of Bishops, and in the House of Deputies. ~~voting by orders.~~
- 8 (b) ~~The Bishop of the parent Diocese shall be the Bishop, and the Bishop of the junior Diocese shall be the Bishop Coadjutor, of the reunited Diocese; but if there be a vacancy in the Episcopate of either Diocese, the Bishop of the other Diocese shall be the Bishop, and the Bishop Coadjutor if there be one shall be the Bishop Coadjutor, of the reunited Diocese.~~
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- 9 (e) *Sec. 7* When the union of two (2) or more Dioceses or portions of Dioceses or the reunion of the two (2) or more Dioceses shall have been completed, the facts shall be certified to the Presiding Bishop and to the Secretary of the House of Deputies. Thereupon the Presiding Bishop shall notify the Secretary of the House of Bishops of any alteration in the status or style of the Bishop or Bishops concerned, and the Secretary of the House of Deputies shall strike the name of ~~the junior~~ any Diocese that will cease to exist or are being renamed from the roll of Dioceses in union with the General Convention and, if appropriate, amend the name of the newly united Diocese on the roll of Dioceses in union with the General Convention.
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**EXPLANATION**

The amendments provide a process for dioceses to formulate an agreement of union to be approved by the affected Diocesan Conventions and then presented to General Convention. The process for uniting dioceses or portions of dioceses is simplified and places the decisions for leadership and other matters of importance with leaders at the local level and removes provisions relying on seniority or which diocese is the “surviving” diocese.



**Resolution Number:** 2015-A100  
**Title:** On the Topic of Assessing Diocesan Viability and Vitality  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Rejected  
**Text of Resolution:**

*Resolved*, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 78th General Convention encourages Bishops and Dioceses to prayerfully engage in a candid assessment of the viability and vitality of their Dioceses and to seek creative possibilities for enhancing the viability and vitality of their Dioceses, and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Standing Commission of the Structure of the Church support these efforts by developing and making available tools and processes for such processes and by facilitating conversations and communications about processes for increasing the viability and vitality of Dioceses.



**Resolution Number:** 2015-C031  
**Title:** Request Study of the Number and Size of Dioceses  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Substituted  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 78th General Convention ask that the bishops and dioceses of The Episcopal Church create, nurture, and develop a culture of collaboration that results in new structures, partnerships, and practices on the interpersonal, group, and organizational levels; measurable outcomes of performance; standards of accountability, reporting and mutual ministry reviews at all levels (bishops, clergy, diocesan bodies); and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 78th General Convention encourages Dioceses to explore opportunities for collaboration, and possibly merging, with contiguous Dioceses, to better carry out their common mission; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 78th General Convention urge the bishops and diocesan leadership of The Episcopal Church to engage in frank discussion about the number and size of our dioceses across the church, diocesan collaboration, vitality, and shared ministry, and what change is needed; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Planning Committee of the House of Bishops is requested to set aside time this Triennium to discuss issues of diocesan vitality; and be it further*

*Resolved, That The Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church is directed to seek input from the above conversations and to study opportunities and challenges of diocesan collaboration, vitality, shared ministry, and the number and size of dioceses, and to report back to the 79th General Convention.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), pp. 462-463.



**Resolution Number:** 2012-A101  
**Title:** On the Topic of Re-aligning Dioceses  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Rejected  
**Text of the Resolution:**

*Resolved*, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 77th General Convention request that the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church convene a consultation on the effectiveness of dioceses, with a focus on the potential for re-aligning dioceses to maximize their effective witness and ministry; and be it further

*Resolved*, that the Committee on Program, Budget and Finance consider including in the 2013–2015 budget \$25,000 to fund such consultation.