

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

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-A145
TITLE: Urging Adoption of Local Canons Relating to Episcopal Elections
PROPOSER: Task Force on the Episcopacy
TOPIC: Bishops

Directly Related: (Attached)

2015-C028 Utilize Available Background Resources in a Search Process
2015-D004 Appoint a Task Force on the Episcopacy
2012-A144 Monitor Underrepresented Groups in Episcopal Elections
2003-D007 On the Topic of Episcopal Election Reform (Rejected)
2003-D043 On the Topic of Assessing Diversity of Clergy Deployment (Rejected)
1988-A158 On the Topic of the Selection and Education of Bishops (Rejected)

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

2015-A031 Continue Development of the Clergy Search Toolkit
2009-A145 Request Study of Diocesan Processes to Recruit Persons of Color
2009-A169 Gather Statistics About Episcopal Elections and Clergy Compensation
2003-A063 Encourage Diversity in Diocesan Leadership
1997-A033 Request a Review of the Ordination Process With Emphasis on Inclusiveness
1994-A045 Recruit and Retain People of Color in the Ordained Ministry

Supplemental Documents: (Linked)

(*Blue Book*) Report to General Convention, [Task Force on the Episcopacy](#), see page 724.

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.

A145 Urging Adoption of Local Canons Relating to Episcopal Elections

Proposer	Task Force on the Episcopacy
Topic	Bishops
Endorsed by	
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
HiA / Leg. Cttee	/
Current Status	Resolution Filed
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

RESOLUTION TEXT

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 79th General Convention urges each diocese and jurisdiction of The Episcopal Church, prior to the call for the election of its next bishop, to adopt canons addressing the following subjects:

- An outline of the procedure to be followed by the diocese in its search and election process beginning with the initial call for an election and ending with the ordination of the new bishop;
- Identify specific actions to be taken to
- Encourage a diverse applicant pool and follow a search and election process that reduces the likelihood of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, or gender;
- Ensure that the process is transparent throughout the entire search and election process;
- Provide accountability for all involved in the search and election process;
- Require the collection of pertinent data for all persons being considered for nomination using the most current means available for background checks, financial information, and interviews of all bishops and transition officers having knowledge of a person being considered for nomination

EXPLANATION

Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution requires that the “Bishop or the Bishop Coadjutor shall be chosen agreeably pursuant to rules prescribed by the Convention” of that diocese. This is consistent with the polity of the Church. While it is important that the listed issues be addressed by each electing diocese or jurisdiction, the convention of each diocese has the right to define the actions needed to be taken to address these issues. It is in the interest of the Church, however, that each diocese act prior to the call for an election is made by the incumbent bishop, so this Resolution calls each diocese’s attention to the need for action and leaves to the electing diocese the ability of each individual diocese to act.

Section IV.C.4 of this report goes into additional detail on the need for background and medical screenings, and how we recommend dioceses handle and use the data obtained from those efforts.



Resolution Number: 2015-C028
Title: Utilize Available Background Recourses in a Search Process
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention recommends that all discernment, search, and nominating committees for bishops and rectors in the Episcopal Church use resources available to them including knowledge of unrestricted criminal convictions in evaluation of candidates in thoughtful ways and make certain that all members of such committees be made aware of any issues which may impact the character and competence of candidates; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention commends to all such discernment, search, and nominating committees a policy that more than two members of such committee review all reports prepared for or provided to such committees on the character or competence of candidates.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), pp. 450-451.



Resolution Number: 2015-D004
Title: Appoint a Task Force on the Episcopacy
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That a Task Force on the Episcopacy be appointed by the Presiding Officers composed of three bishops, three presbyters or deacons, and six lay persons; and be it further Resolved, That at least one member of the Task Force will have been a finalist in an Episcopal search who did not receive enough votes for election in the last three years; at least one member of the Task Force will have served as a Transition Consultant in an Episcopal search over the past three years; and at least two members of the Task Force will have served on an Episcopal Search and/or Transition Committee in an Episcopal search process over the past three years; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force will study the election, appointment, roles, and responsibilities of the Episcopate, including the use of Bishops Diocesan, Bishops Coadjutor, Bishops Suffragan, Provisional Bishops, Missionary Bishops, and Assistant Bishops in this Church; looking specifically at the particular gifts, life experience, and expertise required for episcopal office; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force will pay particular attention to the recent trend away from a diverse House of Bishops, and seek ways to encourage diversity in the Episcopate; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force will propose to the 79th General Convention a new process for discernment, nomination, formation, search, election, and transition of bishops in The Episcopal Church including, but not limited to: the roles and responsibilities of the Office of Pastoral Development; the selection of, roles and responsibilities of Transition Consultants; how adjoining dioceses may aid and inform the discernment of a diocese in transition; and any required Constitutional and Canonical changes necessary; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force will work with the Office of Pastoral Development to develop best practices and educational materials to be published electronically and made publicly available, and may use some of its budget to retain consultants who will help with this task; 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), pp. 457-458.



Resolution Number: 2012-A144
Title: Monitor Underrepresented Groups in Episcopal Elections
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention request the Office of Pastoral Development to work with other offices to monitor the ratio of female to male candidates, nominees, and electees to episcopal offices, as well as other underrepresented groups (such as racial and ethnic minorities), and to report annually to the Executive Council; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention direct the Office of Pastoral Development to work with other offices in analyzing existing data on episcopal transition processes, Called to Serve survey findings, and other relevant research to determine and recommend steps to help improve the ratio of episcopal electees and nominees who are female or members of other underrepresented groups, and to report appropriate recommendations to the 78th General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention direct the Office of Pastoral Development to advise dioceses moving toward or in the midst of episcopal transitions about the extent to which the process is affected by gender, racial and other cultural bias that can perpetuate discrimination, and to work with these dioceses to develop steps that ensure the elimination of this bias.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), p. 508.



Resolution Number: 2003-D007
Title: On the Topic of Episcopal Election Reform
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected [Died with Adjournment]
Text of the Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That ~~an appropriate existing committee, commission, agency or board (CCAB)~~ the *Standing Commission on Ministry Development* be charged with the task of *gathering data and* reviewing all aspects of nominating, electing, and consecrating a bishop, and *present a* report to the 75th General Convention recommending ways for these processes to model ministry for *this present time millennium with the bishop seen less as prince and more as servant*; and be it further

Resolved, That the *Standing Commission on Ministry Development* ~~group~~ identify some of the ~~conflicting and impossible~~ expectations of nominees and of the one elected, and offer guidance regarding ways dioceses can be as clear and reasonable as possible in nominating, electing, *and* consecrating, ~~and holding those elected accountable~~; and be it further

Resolved, That the ~~group~~ imagine and identify ways local and diocesan communities can identify clergy who potentially have the gifts for episcopal ministry and assist them in discerning whether or not they are being called to it; and be it further

Resolved, That the report include data on the costs of all episcopal elections over the two most recent triennia, ~~reported within the context of the diocesan budgets to encourage good stewardship~~; and be it further

Resolved, That the report provide examples of ways that some have used these processes to ~~model servanthood~~ *facilitate understanding of the ministry of all the baptized, model simplicity, and* celebrate diversity.



Resolution Number: 2003-D043
Title: On the Topic of Assessing Diversity of Clergy Deployment
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected [Died With Adjournment]
Text of the Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 74th General Convention of The Episcopal Church recognize and celebrate the blessings God has given the Church through the gifts of ordained persons of color and ordained women, while acknowledging that in many places the Church does not yet systematically recruit, train, and deploy such clergy; and be it further

Resolved, That each diocese shall assess the extent to which it has recruited, trained, and deployed women and persons of color for ordained ministries and report these data to the Office of the Assistant to the Presiding Bishop for Program by March 31, 2005; and be it further

Resolved, That each congregation and diocese shall complete by January 2006 a process of self-assessment to identify systemic barriers in its recruitment, training, and deployment of clergy of color and ordained women; and be it further

Resolved, That the ~~Anti-Racism Desk~~ *Peace and Justice Ministries* and the Women's Desk at the Church Center shall assist dioceses and congregations by identifying available, appropriate self-assessment tools and other resources which could help the Church move toward elimination of such barriers to more inclusive ordination processes.



Resolution Number: 1988-A158
Title: On the Topic of the Selection and Education of Bishops
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Text of the Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 69th General Convention request the Council for the Development of Ministry, with the cooperation of the House of Bishops Committee on Pastoral Development, to carry out a study of the entire process for the selection, orientation, evaluation, continuing education, and transition of bishops as leaders in growth in the Episcopal Church, and report its findings to the 70th General Convention in 1991.