

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

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-B002
TITLE: Anti-Corruption
PROPOSER: The Rt. Rev. Wendell Gibbs
TOPIC: Justice

Directly Related: (Attached)

None

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

1997-B017 Establish Policy on Personal Financial Gain from Pastoral Relationships
1997-D078 Make Changes in Financial Accountability and Access to Reports

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.

B002 Anti-Corruption

Proposer	The Rt. Rev. Wendell Gibbs
Endorsed by	Prior, The Rt. Rev. Brian N.; Johnston, The Rt. Rev. Shannon
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
HiA / Leg. Cttee	HB / 08 - Social Justice and United States Policy
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 recognizes that corruption – including bribery, collusion, fraud, coercion, and obstruction – inhibits the transparent and proper functioning of institutions to serve their constituencies, limits public confidence and undermines trust, and can negatively impact education, health, security and human rights; and be it further
- 2 *Resolved*, That 79th General Convention urge Episcopal clergy, laypeople, and institutions to advocate for transparency in the public, private, and non-profit sectors, recognizing the unique voice religious institutions have in addressing this societal ill, and ensuring transparent finances in all of its institutions; and be it further
- 3 *Resolved*, That 79th General Convention urge the U.S. government to address its role in contributing to domestic and international corruption, including by ending facilitation of shell companies that can enable money laundering and illicit financial flows, while also partnering with foreign governments, multilateral institutions, and multinational corporations to minimize corruption and encourage transparency.

EXPLANATION

Corruption in government, private industry, and religious and non-governmental institutions erodes public trust and damages the ability of these institutions to carry out their work. Transparency International defines corruption as “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain.” In government contexts, corruption can include the bribery of public officials, tax evasion, and misuse and misappropriation of taxpayer funds. In private industry, corruption breaks down systems of financial accountability to stakeholders, shareholders, and investors by obstructing transparent financial reporting and management. In religious institutional settings, corruption, often expressed through the mishandling and mismanagement of charitably donated resources, undermines donor confidence in the mission of the religious institution.

Corruption undermines public trust in institutions, especially when corruption results in human rights abuses, the failure of health systems, and the inability for citizens to take care of daily business without extensive bribery and additional resources.

Instituting financial accountability and anti-corruption measures help to uplift and protect the church’s mission to bring about God’s kingdom on earth, and serve to enshrine trust in a religious

institution. Anti-corruption measures, and in particular independent governance oversight, robust third-party accounting practices, and public disclosure of financial activity discourage waste, fraud and abuse of funds intended to support and sustain the work of the church.

The Church can have a unique voice in fighting corruption – in terms of the moral authority and the pressure we can put on governments to become more accountable and transparent. We can also ensure that our own financial practices are transparent and accountable, and that we root out corruption in our own institutions.

Additional resources:

Chayes, Sarah, *Thieves of State: Why Corruption Threatens Global Security*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2015

Fisman, Ray and Edward Migel, *Economic Gangsters: Corruption, Violence, and the Poverty of Nations*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/katherine-marshall/ethics-in-the-swamp-the-r_b_13534468.html

Role of faith leaders in fighting corruption: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/katherine-marshall/nigeria-faith-against-cor_b_9132912.html