

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

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-D097
TITLE: Ms. Charis Hill
PROPOSER: Establish an Advisory Council on Disability and Deaf Access
TOPIC: Structure

Directly Related: (Attached)

2015-D043 Ensure Accessibility for Disabled Persons at All Church Events
2009-A081 Make Accommodation for People with Disabilities at Church Meetings
2003-D051 Recommend that Meeting Locations Be Accessible to the Disabled
1985-A087 Encourage Opportunities Within the Church for Persons with Disabilities

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

2015-D034 Support the Civil Rights of Disabled Persons
1988-D004 Encourage Sensitivity to Persons With Disabilities
1985-D130 Recommend and Direct Use of Funds for Employing Interpreters for the Deaf
1982-D120 Establish a Task Force on Disabled and Handicapped Persons

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.

D097 Establish an Advisory Council on Disability and Deaf Access

Proposer	Ms. Charis Hill
Endorsed by	Baker, The Very Rev. Dr. Brian; McKeefry Delmas, The Rev. Hailey
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
HiA / Leg. Cttee	/
Current Status	Pre-Filed Resolution
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

RESOLUTION TEXT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 79th General Convention reaffirm and renew its previous commitments to Resolutions 2003-DO51 and 2015-DO43, which require the Church to provide persons with disabilities and Deaf people with full independent accessibility to all official and ancillary events of the Church; and be it further
- 2 *Resolved*, That the 79th General Convention authorize the establishment of an Advisory Council to guide the implementation of the Church's commitment to accessibility for people with disabilities and Deaf people; and be it further
- 3 *Resolved*, That the work of the Advisory Council include: a triennial review of progress made toward full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and any other relevant statutes; consultation with Church staff to ensure that materials, policies, and procedures for accessibility and reasonable accommodations are developed and implemented for each General Convention and ancillary Church event; and developing a means of reconciliation with people who have been excluded from Church events due to lack of accessibility or failure to provide reasonable accommodations; and be it further
- 4 *Resolved*, That the Advisory Council shall consist of between five and nine members, to be appointed jointly by the President of the House of Deputies and the Presiding Bishop, and a majority of the members shall be persons who identify as Deaf and/or disabled.

EXPLANATION

The Episcopal Church is called to be an inclusive church, and the work done at Convention largely supports our desire to include all of God's children in as many ways as possible. However, in recent years, people with disabilities have encountered lack of access and other barriers to General Convention but to other ministries of the Church and calls to service. These barriers have included lack of effective communication access, lack of information regarding accessible bathrooms, accessible exits and entrances, and procedure for requesting and appealing reasonable accommodation decisions. Despite previous resolutions passed at General Convention that affirmed the right of people with disabilities to participate in the Church (2003-DO51 and 2015-DO43), there is

still a need for significant improvements to basic inclusion and access.

By having a majority of the advisory council be Deaf people and/or people with disabilities, the Church would recognize and affirm the right of people with disabilities to determine their own needs and ensure that the Church's work in this area is guided by individuals who have first-hand knowledge of access, inclusion, and legal protections for people with disabilities. Creation of this advisory council will allow for The Episcopal Church to become a more inclusive place for people with disabilities who are called to serve Christ and the Church through participation in General Convention, ancillary bodies and committees, and advocacy consultations.



Resolution Number: 2015-D043
Title: Ensure Accessibility for Disabled Persons at All Church Events
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church reaffirm and renew the Church's commitment to the spiritual and physical welcome of all people, including hospitality to and accommodation of people with disabilities, encouraging people with disabilities to become more active church members, to take leadership roles, and to increase awareness of people throughout the Church of the gifts that people with disabilities contribute; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church reaffirm and renew the call to leadership of the Episcopal Disability Network and Episcopal Conference of the Deaf in helping to challenge and guide our Church's work in this area; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church, in solidarity with the civil and human rights of all persons with disabilities, renew its commitment to voluntary compliance with the disability rights protections that apply in different countries of The Episcopal Church, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, among others; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th Convention of The Episcopal Church reaffirm and renew its commitment to Resolution 2003-D051, which requires the Church to provide full independent accessibility to all official and ancillary events of the Church for people with disabilities; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church develop and make readily available information on the process for requesting disability accommodations needed to fully participate in meetings, conventions, and other activities of the Church, including placing this information in event materials, on the Church website and relevant social media platforms; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church recognize the need for reconciliation with persons with disabilities who have been denied accommodations needed to participate in Church events or who have been otherwise excluded from the activities of the Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention request that the General Convention Office, along with leaders from the Episcopal Disability Network and the Episcopal Conference of the Deaf, compile a Best Practices Guide for providing disability accommodations at all official and ancillary Church events that will include resources and policies that would otherwise comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and UN CRPD, to be reviewed and updated at least once every triennium; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$80,000 (\$40,000 to fulfill accommodation requests at the 79th General Convention and \$40,000 to fulfill accommodations requests at ancillary meetings and events) 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. 946.



Resolution Number: 2009-A081
Title: Make Reasonable Accommodation for People with Disabilities
at Church Meetings
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church dioceses or congregations make those reasonable accommodations necessary for the full participation of staff members or volunteers with disabilities who attend conferences or meetings on behalf of the Church.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), p. 630.



Resolution Number: 2003-D051
Title: Recommend that Meeting Locations Be Accessible to the Disabled
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 74th General Convention direct the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Arrangements to recommend for future General Conventions, subsequent meetings of Executive Council, standing committees [sic], and Province meetings, only locations and schedules that provide full independent accessibility to all events, both official and ancillary, for all members of this Church including but not limited to the hearing impaired, sight impaired, and persons with other physical disabilities.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 337.



Resolution Number: 1985-A087
Title: Encourage Opportunities Within the Church for Persons with Disabilities
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the Task Force on Accessibility of this Church be commended and authorized to continue its work and ministry of providing leadership, training and education throughout this Church; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention again calls on the dioceses which have not yet done so to convene committees on disability concerns; and be it further

Resolved, That local vestries be encouraged to conduct accessibility surveys of their buildings with the assistance of people trained in this field and to designate a person or persons to be particularly responsible for disability concerns; and be it further

Resolved, That all Episcopal Church properties and all Episcopal Church meeting places be made (so far as possible) accessible to persons with disabilities and barrier-free; and be it further

Resolved, That this Church promote the hiring of qualified persons with disabilities within its own structures and within society at large; and that each parish seek as a first step for one person with a disability; and be it further

Resolved, That qualified persons with disabilities not be disqualified for postulancy, for Holy Orders, for ordination or for further employment in the Church solely on the basis of their handicaps; and be it further

Resolved, That persons in leadership roles of this Church be encouraged to participate at community, state and national levels in advocating legislation that will assist persons with disabilities; and be it further

Resolved, That the liturgies, Christian education programs and other forms of meetings throughout this Church be designed for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, using such means as captioning and interpreters for the deaf; and be it further

Resolved, That each church seek to focus on awareness/educational issues related to persons with disabilities including informing themselves about architectural and attitudinal barriers which prevent full participation of persons with disabilities in congregational life; and be it further

Resolved, That this Church at national, diocesan and local places encourage and support the assumption of leadership roles in both church and community by qualified persons who have disabilities.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 1985* (New York: General Convention, 1986), p. 274.