

2017 Proposed Constitution and Bylaw Amendments and Proposed Resolution

Constitution of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution

Article III. Eligibility for Membership

Amend Article III of the Constitution to remove unduly restrictive language which required that an ancestor had to be “at all times unflinching in loyalty to, and rendered active service in the cause of American Independence.”

Any male shall be eligible for membership in the Society being a citizen of good repute in the community, is the lineal descendant of an ancestor who ~~was at all times unflinching in loyalty to, at the time of his last known service demonstrated loyalty to,~~ and rendered active service in the cause of American Independence....

Rationale: Now that the eligibility requirements of Article III of our Constitution are restated on the applicant certification on membership applications, the restrictive phrase “at all times unflinching in loyalty to...” is problematic. We have situations such as Hessian soldiers who deserted their prior service in support of the British, and became loyal to the patriot’s cause such as paying taxes to support the Revolution. French and Spanish soldiers, before their nations supported American Independence, had loyalty neither for or against American Independence rather than loyalty for at all times. Some made their minds up only after British atrocities. Some members of the Continental Congress did not support independence until the summer of 1776.

Submitted by the California Society

Article IV. Officers and Trustees

Amend Article IV of the Constitution to change the term of office of the General Officers of the Society from one to two years except for the Vice President General(s). This proposal includes a request to have this amendment take effect and be effective for the 2018 Congress elections.

Section 1. The General Officers of this Society shall be a President General, a Vice-President General for each of the regularly established districts within the United States as specified in the Bylaws and one or more Vice-Presidents for outside areas- provided that the Board of Trustees shall so provide, Secretary General, Treasurer General, Chancellor General, Genealogist General, Registrar General, Historian General, Librarian General, Surgeon General, and Chaplain General, who shall be elected by ballot by a majority of the delegates present and voting at the Annual Congress of the Society and shall hold office for ~~one year~~ two years except for Vice President General who will continue to hold office for one year or until their successors are elected and qualified. Such General Officers shall serve without compensation in such capacities.

Rationale: The current one year term of office does not allow officers enough time to propose, implement and complete programs and projects beneficial to the society through long term goals.

Submitted by the Indiana Society

Bylaw No. 4. President General

Delete the second paragraph.

~~The President General shall appoint two (2) elected National Trustees as members of the Nominating Committee. The two (2) appointees shall be residents of states other than those in which the five (5) Presidents General who serve on the Nominating Committee reside while in office and the four (4) selected by the Council of State Presidents to serve on the Nominating Committee reside. These appointments shall be announced no later than the Fall meeting of the Board of Trustees.~~

Rationale: The same language is presently also found in Bylaw No. 20, Section 1(a)(iii) and Section 1(d). Elimination of the paragraph will remove the duplication and avoid confusion.

Submitted by the Bylaws Committee

Bylaw No. 5. Vice-Presidents General

Amend Section 1 of Bylaw No. 5 by creating the position of Alternate Vice-President and adding a new Section 4 to provide that the Alternate Vice-President General shall function if the elected Vice-President General cannot fulfill the duties of the office.

Section 1. There shall be one (1) Vice-President General and one (1) Alternate Vice-President General elected from each of the following Districts of the National Society:

.....

Section 4. The Alternate Vice-President General shall function as the Vice-President General if the elected Vice-President General cannot fulfill the duties of this Office.

Submitted by the Indiana Society

Bylaw No. 14. Chaplain General

Amend Bylaw No. 14 to incorporate the standards required of military chaplains and professional chaplain certification organizations to clarify the required professional credentials for the Chaplain General.

The Chaplain General shall be a regularly ordained minister certified by his denomination or faith group who has earned a baccalaureate degree from an institution authorized by a government department of education plus a Master of Divinity or equivalent degree also from an institution authorized by a government department of education. The Chaplain General shall support the free exercise of religion as guaranteed in the United States Constitution. ~~and He~~ shall open and close meetings of the National Society with such services as are usual and proper on such occasions. The Annual Memorial Service shall be planned in consultation with the Chaplain General.

Rationale: The National Society has three General Officers which require professional credentials. The Chancellor General must “be a licensed attorney-at-law in good standing.” The Surgeon General must “be a licensed physician of Medicine or Osteopathy.” The standards for these licenses are straight forward. The Chaplain General must be “a regularly ordained minister,” but this credential is not standardized in the same manner as the other required professional standards. The proposal incorporates the standards required of military chaplains and professional chaplain certification organizations to clarify the required professional credentials for the Chaplain General.

Submitted by the Florida Society

Bylaw No. 16. Board of Trustees

Amend Sections 1(a) and 2 of Bylaw No. 16 to increase the number of Trustees from each state from one to two. This proposal includes a request to have this amendment of increasing the number of Trustees take effect **immediately** upon passage, with the nominee for the position of Alternate Trustee becoming the second Trustee and having the State Society submitting the name of the nominee for a new Alternate Trustee to be sworn in at a later time.

Section 1. The Board of Trustees shall be composed of the following:

(a) ~~One (1)~~ Two (2) members from each of the State Societies who ~~is~~ are nominated by his State Society and then elected by the delegates at-large at the Annual Congress for one year.

Section 2. The names of the nominees for ~~Trustee~~ Two Trustees and an Alternate Trustee to represent each of the State Societies shall be communicated to the Secretary General at least thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Congress. The President of the State Society shall be considered the nominee for the Office of Trustee to represent his State Society if the society fails to notify the Secretary General of a nominee. The State Society’s Alternate Trustee shall function as a Trustee if ~~the~~ either elected Trustee cannot fulfill the duties of his Office.....

Rationale: The National Society continues to grow and increased membership is anticipated. State Societies should be properly represented and a greater number of Trustees could enhance participation and attendance at the annual Congress, Leadership meetings and other meetings of National Society importance. More Trustees would provide a larger pool of potential leaders.

Submitted by the Kansas Society

Amend Section 1(d) to conform with the proposed revision to Bylaw 18 providing delegate approval of the President General appointed Executive Committee members. This proposal includes a request to have this amendment take effect **immediately** upon passage.

Section 1. The Board of Trustees shall be composed of the following:

(d) Any member of the Executive Committee, who is not included in a, b or c above, and who has been approved by the ~~Board of Trustees~~ delegates to the Annual Congress, may be nominated as a Trustee and may be elected as a Trustee by the delegates at the Annual Congress to the Board of Trustees for a term of one year.

Rationale: The current provision requires an adjournment of the Annual Congress to hold the organizational meeting of the Board of Trustees for approval of the President General's appointments to the Executive Committee, only to adjourn the Trustee's meeting and return to the Annual Congress session. The current procedure is unwieldy; the amendment coordinates with the proposed change to Bylaw No. 18.

Submitted by the Bylaws Committee

Bylaw No. 18. Standing Committees

Amend Section 1 to provide that the delegates to the Annual Congress will approve the President General's appointments to the Executive Committee; grammatical changes are also proposed. The proposal includes a request to have this amendment take effect **immediately** upon passage.

Section 1. There shall be an Executive Committee with a total membership of nine (9) Compatriots, ~~to include the following General Officers who shall serve on the Executive Committee be-ex officio members thereof:~~ The President General, Secretary General, Treasurer General, and Chancellor General. ~~At the organizational meeting of the Board of Trustees in each year at the Annual Congress, the President General shall appoint the remaining five (5) members of said the Executive Committee, who shall be announced to, and be subject to the approval of, the said Board of Trustees delegates to the Annual Congress.~~ In case of a vacancy for any cause in the membership of this Committee the President General shall fill said vacancy with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee. The appointment to fill said vacancy shall be confirmed by a majority of the Board of Trustees present and voting at its next meeting.

Rationale: The current provision requires an adjournment of the Annual Congress to hold the organizational meeting of the Board of Trustees for approval of the President General's appointments to the Executive Committee, only to adjourn the Trustee's meeting and return to the Annual Congress session. The current procedure is unwieldy; the amendments will resolve confusion, delay, and inadvertent violations of the Bylaws by eliminating Trustee approval of appointments in favor of approval by the broader pool of delegates.

Submitted by the Bylaws Committee

Bylaw 19. Nominating Committee and Nominating Process

Amend Bylaw 19 to alter the date when campaigning may commence and to limit the period of campaigning consistent with the proposed change of terms of office from one to two years. This proposal includes a request that it become effective for the 2018 Congress elections.

Section 2. Nomination Procedure.

(a) *Announcement of Candidacy for General Office.* Neither a Compatriot who seeks a National Society office, nor may any other person or entity circulating his resume on his behalf and commence seeking endorsements less than ~~10 days~~ one year after conclusion of the immediately preceding Congress. A Compatriot who seeks National Society Office shall advise the Chairman of the National Society's Nominating Committee not later than December 31 of the year preceding the next Congress of his intent to serve if elected.....

Rationale: Following election of officers, campaigning for the next positions currently begin ten days following their election into the current position. An officer cannot properly focus on their current position when immediately campaigning for the next position. Campaigning should be restricted to a limited time before an election, a maximum of a year being acceptable. A large amount of monies and efforts are dedicated to campaigning and these personal resources could be better utilized by directing those funds and dedication into accomplishment through SAR programs and projects.

Submitted by the Indiana Society

Bylaw No. 22. Fees and Dues

Amend Section 2 pertaining to Family Plan applications to expand eligibility requirements.

Section 2. The fee for Family applications shall be fixed by the Annual Congress for the first application and for each additional application, ~~provided that e~~Each additional application shall be on the same genealogical line or shall be connected by relationships not to exceed two linkages removed from the ~~first applicant's line, proof of which shall be by primary documentation only~~ line of some other applicant in the family plan. In the case of supplemental applications, each supplemental application can also be from an ancestor or spouse of an ancestor that both the first applicant and additional applicant(s) have established through their previously accepted SAR applications. Family applications ~~shall~~ must be submitted to the National Society at the same time and on the same Transmittal Form.

Rationale: There is no reason to require that a proof shall use primary information only as this is not required for other proofs. In the case of supplemental applications, the family plan members almost always cite their earlier applications to prove the link to other members in the plan. Those earlier applications are not sources of primary information.

Under the present wording, if two brothers and a grandson and grandson of each brother were to apply for membership, only one of the grandsons would qualify for applying under the family plan. This would be an unusual case, but it would be reasonable for all four to be eligible to apply under a family plan.

Supplemental applications support the SAR objective of perpetuating the memory of those patriots who, by their service or sacrifices during the American Revolution, achieved the independence of the American people. Under the proposal, as long as the participants have proven back to the same ancestor previously, they would be eligible to participate in a family

plan for supplemental applications going back from that ancestor or spouse, even if they are not close cousins. Enabling two (or more) members who have already proven their lineage to a common ancestor who descends from a patriot being proven to qualify for a discount promotes supplemental applications.

The financial impact of the proposal would not be great. The new service and portion of the lineage from the common ancestor would be exactly the same for the applicants and would require only a single review of the supporting documentation. The additional time to signify acceptance of the lineage and service on additional applications would be negligible.

Submitted by the Bylaws Committee

There are two proposals to amend the first paragraph of Section 6 to clarify the date dues will be credited to the following year:

Executive Committee Proposal:

Section 6. A new member shall pay National Society dues for the calendar year in which his application is approved except as follows. Each State Society shall determine when the dues of its members are to be collected; provided, however, that the National Society dues accompanying any application ~~received~~ registered after October 31 shall be credited to the following year.

....

Indiana Society Proposal:

Section 6. A new member shall pay National Society dues for the calendar year in which his application is approved. Each State Society shall determine when the dues of its members are to be collected; provided, however, that the National Society dues accompanying any application ~~received~~ approved on or after September ~~October 31~~ 01 shall be credited to the following year. At no time shall the National Society hold or delay approval of applications in order to cause membership fees to be credited to the following year.

Rationale: Both proposal seek to clarify the current Bylaw provision which is felt needs clarity. Both proposed amendments provide a bright line rule establishing when dues will be credited to the following year is the registration date.