

**Frequently Asked Questions
On
Proposed Amendments to Constitution and Canons
Related to the Standing Committee**

At the request of the Bishop, who seeks greater regional representation on the Standing Committee as the Committee serves as the Bishop's "Council of Advice," the Committee on the Constitution and Canons is proposing amendments to the Constitution and Canons.

The proposed amendments were presented to the Convention in 2022, but because the Convention was held electronically, there was no discussion or vote.

The proposed amendments were presented again and discussed at the Regional Gatherings this past fall, and the Convention will vote on the proposed amendments when Convention meets on Saturday, January 28, 2023.

The following frequently asked questions came up during the discussion at Regional Gatherings.

Are regions expected to only provide one nominee or may they provide two or three? If only providing one, and in the absence of a floor nominee, then would we need a convention vote on the nominee?

Each Region will nominate one person to serve on the Standing Committee. That individual may be a priest, deacon or lay person. In the absence of a floor nomination, the Convention will still need to vote on the one nominee.

But, what if someone is nominated from the floor for a region that already has a nominee, then what happens?

In this situation, the Convention votes to elect one of the two nominees. It is important to remember that the floor nominee must also be from the region for which the election is being held, in order to maintain the geographical representation.

Does this mean the Convention would, in effect, only approve the regional elections (unless someone is nominated from the floor)?

Yes, if there is only one nominee from a region, the Convention votes to elect that one nominee who has been nominated to represent the region on the Standing Committee.

Presuming terms are staggered, you could continue to have multiple representatives from any given region?

No. Each region will have one representative on the Standing Committee. The representative may be a priest, deacon or lay person.

Right now, the Standing Committee consists of half clergy and half lay people. Will the half clergy/half lay balance be maintained?

Equal representation of clergy and lay people will not be required by the canons, but regions may look at the clergy/lay configuration of the Standing Committee when making their nominations. This should ensure a close balance of clergy and lay representation.

Even if regions look at the clergy/lay configuration when making their nominations, isn't it possible that there still could be a significant imbalance between clergy and lay representatives on the Standing Committee?

While it is possible, it seems unlikely that there will be a significant imbalance. Regional leaders can look at the current configuration of the Committee and make nominations to help maintain a close balance of clergy and lay representatives.

How will the amendments support and ensure racial and gender diversity, especially among clergy?

By clearly enabling regional leaders to consider the current configuration of the Standing Committee in making their nominations, the proposed amendments provide greater support in ensuring the full diversity of the diocese is represented on the Standing Committee.

Was there any consideration of having term limits so that Standing Committee membership is fresh and energetic?

Term limits already exist for the Standing Committee, and those limits remain in place under the proposed amendments.

Was increasing the size of the Standing Committee considered?

Because the Standing Committee currently consists of eight members, and there happen to be eight regions in the diocese, the Committee on the Constitution and Canons did not consider increasing the size of the Standing Committee.

Are these changes in compliance with the Episcopal Church constitution and canons.

Yes, the Committee on the Constitution and Canons made sure the proposed amendments were in compliance with the Episcopal Church constitution and canons.