

How to Write a Resolution (October 23, 2023)

1. OPERATIVE CLAUSE: “BE IT RESOLVED THAT”

- a. This is the "resolution proper," as it describes the proposed changes or actions to be accomplished. This part of the resolution should specifically designate the actions that you wish to accomplish and designate who should do what to accomplish the intended result. A resolution needs to always begin with the phrase “*BE IT RESOLVED THAT*” and if additional action is called for, then each new clause begins “*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT.*”
- b. A resolution is always written on behalf of the group that is taking up the proposed resolution. Remember the group taking action is speaking for itself. So, “*BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Body Taking Action does something.*” It is important to define who is taking action. For example, the Diocesan Convention speaks for the Diocese of Hawai‘i, it is acting for the Diocese in “*Convention.*”
- c. The Operative Clause needs an active verb noting the action of Convention. For example: *Accepts, Declares, Asks, Proclaims, Regrets, Affirms, Deplores, Reminds, Requests, Approves, Draws attention, Recommends, Urges, Authorizes, Designates, Celebrates, Condemns, Encourages, Invites, Supports, Endorses, Proclaims, Notes, Congratulates, Expresses its appreciation, Reaffirms, Takes note of, Confirms, Trusts, Directs.*
- d. If the purpose of the Resolution is calling on someone to take a specific action, then the resolution must be clear on who needs to do what.
- e. The resolution must be clear on the authority by which it is acting. It must be clear that the group taking action has the realistic authority to do what is being asked in the resolution. For example, if speaking to someone inside the group or to those over whom there is authority, then the resolution can “*direct.*” The Diocesan Convention can “*direct*” congregations. If resolutions are directed to those outside the group’s oversight, then the action verbs must be appropriate. The Diocesan Convention does not have the authority to “*direct*” or “*demand*” something of someone outside the Diocese. In such a case, the Diocesan Convention can “*Urge*” or “*Recommend.*” Likewise, a group can respond to community events with terms like “*Celebrate*” or “*Decry.*” These are “mind of the group” resolutions and have limited practical application.
- f. EXAMPLE RESOLUTIONS
 - i. BE IT RESOLVED THAT the 56th Annual Meeting of the Convention of the Diocese of Hawai‘i decries the use of sunscreens containing Oxybenzone, Benzophenone-1, Benzophenone-8, OD-PABA, 4-Methylbenzylidene camphor, 3-Benzylidene camphor, nano-Titanium

dioxide, Methoxycinnamate, nano-Zinc oxide, Octinoxate, Octocrylene, homosalate, and octisalate;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the 56th Annual Meeting of the Convention of the Diocese of Hawai‘i commends the Legislature and Governor of the State of Hawai‘i for enacting laws banning the use of those chemicals in sunscreens sold in this State; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the 56th Annual Meeting of the Convention of the Diocese of Hawai‘i directs the Secretary of this Convention to communicate this resolution to the Governor and Members of both Houses of the Legislature.

- ii.* BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Diocesan Council of the Diocese of Hawai‘i approves the attached contract between the Episcopal Church in Hawai‘i and One Big Construction Company for the first building phase of Holy Innocents Church, Lahaina; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Diocesan Support Center be directed to obtain the authorized signatures for this contract and take the necessary steps for implementation of this contract.

- iii.* BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Hawai‘i approves and recommends Keikipuapi‘inokehōkūpa‘a Lopaka Hargauk for ordination to the diaconate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Secretary of Standing Committee communicate this action to the Bishop as soon as possible.

- iv.* BE IT RESOLVED THAT the 56th Annual Meeting of the Convention of the Diocese of Hawai‘i notes the tradition that Puakalaunu (Crown Flower) was Queen Lililu‘okalani’s favorite flower;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the 56th Annual Meeting of the Convention of the Diocese of Hawai‘i directs all congregations of this Diocese to have Puakalaunu on the altars of this Diocese during any public worship services honoring the Queen on or near her feast day, November 11th; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the 56th Annual Meeting of the Convention of the Diocese of Hawai‘i directs that the Secretary of this Convention communicate this direction to all congregations of the Diocese of Hawai‘i.

- 2. RATIONALE/EXPLANATION:** Replaces the “Whereas” previously commonly used in resolutions [please do not submit resolutions with Preambulatory Clauses (Whereas)]
- a. This information may include why the resolution is being proposed and important background events, studies, or the scope of the problem. They should be brief and include all documentation that the members will need in order to understand the resolution and its context. This should be a brief but persuasive argument as to why the members should approve your resolution. It is not part of the resolution and is not debatable.
 - b. A fiscal note, if necessary, is important. The costs in the future to implement the resolution if it is passed.

- c. Why no Preambulatory Clauses (Whereas)? Too often, debate gets bogged down in the Preambulatory Clauses without addressing the resolution proper. Preambulatory Clauses (Whereas) can be misleading and unhelpful. The key is the action and not the explanation. The Rationale/Explanation gives the proposer an initial opportunity to explain the purpose and/or need for the resolution without distracting from the actual action that is being proposed. By focusing on the Resolution proper without the Preambulatory Clauses (Whereas), the group can perfect the Resolution before taking action.