

Resolutions



As the State Deputy and his fellow officers prepare for their annual meeting each spring, they will have to consider the various resolutions proposed by the councils in their jurisdiction and whether to support or oppose these resolutions. Most of the resolutions that are submitted at state conventions recognize notable achievements by members and clergy in that jurisdiction, pertain to issues of State Council governance, or address other matters relating to the jurisdiction. State Councils may also adopt resolutions that are intended to be submitted to the Supreme Council at its annual meeting in August. This memorandum is intended to provide guidance on the resolutions process.

State Deputies and State Advocates should pay special attention to the resolutions that are intended to be submitted to the Supreme Council and that could lead to unnecessary controversy (e.g., a resolution proposing to change a longstanding policy of the Knights of Columbus). If either the State Deputy or State Advocate becomes aware of such a resolution, he should contact the Supreme Advocate as soon as possible.

1. Purpose of the Resolutions Process

The resolutions process was established to enable subordinate councils to: (1) express gratitude or support for a person, a fraternal program, or a policy of the State Council or the Order; (2) amend the Constitution or Laws of the Order or State Council by-laws; or (3) express an official position of the Knights of Columbus on matters relevant to the mission and identity of the Order.

The resolutions process is intended to enhance the fraternal character of the Order, to improve its governance and administration, and to serve its evangelical mission. The process should not be used to “send a message” to the Supreme Council or to challenge policies that have been affirmed at previous Supreme Conventions. While the Supreme Council welcomes resolutions submitted in good faith and in a spirit of charity, unity, and fraternity, it strongly discourages State Councils from submitting resolutions challenging well settled policies of the Knights of Columbus that represent the sound judgment of the Supreme Council.

2. Resolutions Process – Meeting of the State Council

Each local council in a jurisdiction may, on its own initiative, draft, discuss, and adopt resolutions to be considered by the delegates at the next State Council meeting. All local council resolutions must be submitted in the time and manner specified by the State Council by-laws.

3. Format of the resolutions

A resolution is composed of two parts. The first part consists of one or more paragraphs setting forth the relevant facts and the rationale for the action that the delegates are being asked to take. Each paragraph in the first part begins with the word “Whereas.” The second part consists of one or more paragraphs describing with specificity an action to be taken. The first paragraph of the second part of the resolution begins with the words “Therefore be it resolved;” any subsequent paragraphs begin with the words “Further resolved.” [See attached sample resolution.](#)

4. Committee on Laws and Resolutions

Upon receipt by the State Council, resolutions must be forwarded to the committee on resolutions (hereinafter, “the Committee”) in accordance with applicable State Council by-laws. The State Advocate is ordinarily designated by State Council by-laws to serve as Chairman of the Committee. The Committee then meets to review the resolutions and to prepare a recommendation as to the disposition of each resolution. In preparing its recommendations, the Committee should consider

whether the proposed action is consistent with the Charter, Constitution, and Laws of the Order and with the policies and practices adopted or established by the Supreme Council.

The Chairman of the Committee should ensure that copies of the proposed resolutions are presented to all delegates, as specified by State Council by-laws, before or upon registration for the State Council meeting. Resolutions that were not submitted in advance and reviewed by the Committee may not be presented at the State Council meeting unless permitted by State Council by-laws or applicable rules of order.

5. Recommendations

The Committee shall present all the resolutions to the State Council together with its recommendations. As to each resolution, the Committee should offer one of the following recommendations:

- a) Adopt;
- b) Reject;
- c) No Action; or
- d) Refer to Executive Committee.

A recommendation of “No Action” does not indicate that the resolution is without merit. It indicates only that, in the opinion of the Committee: (a) the proposed resolutions should not be expressed by the State Council or the Order at this time; (b) the resolution itself requires no specific action; or (c) that the resolution proposes something that is already in effect in the State Council or in the Order.

In addition, the Committee may offer a substitute resolution, which modifies or refines the rationale and/or proposed action of one or more submitted resolutions. The substitute resolution may articulate a more precise or comprehensive statement of the issue or may summarize the substance of multiple resolutions pertaining to the same issue. Where multiple resolutions pertaining to the same issue have been submitted, the Committee may recommend adopting the one resolution that best expresses the proposal under consideration, and taking no action on all the others.

The recommendations of the Committee should be promulgated in the report submitted by the Chairman of the Committee during the State Council meeting.

The Executive Committee should promptly consider resolutions that have been referred to it. The Executive Committee may, in its discretion, act upon these resolutions or defer action pending further study.

6. Voting on the resolutions

Robert's Rules of Order provides that a motion presented on behalf of a committee having more than one member does not need a second. Because the Committee consists of more than one member, it is assumed that, if needed, someone on the Committee would second the motion.

During the Committee's report at the State Council meeting, the Committee Chairman will announce a recommendation for each resolution that was properly submitted. After this announcement, there will be a brief pause before the gavel is dropped, signifying the end of the discussion period. If no objection is raised during the pause before the drop of the gavel, the assembled body agrees to follow the Committee's recommendation. Ordinarily, only authorized delegates may speak in support of or in opposition to a resolution. The State Council by-laws will identify those members who may serve as delegates.

The Chairman of the meeting will recognize a delegate on the floor as needed. When the delegate is recognized by the Chairman, he shall address the Chairman and give his name, his council number, and his office. He should limit his remarks to the matter under consideration and should speak in a manner befitting a Catholic gentleman. The Chairman of the meeting may, in his discretion and in compliance with State Council by-laws and *Robert's Rules of Order*, invoke a limitation on debate, provided that the same shall apply uniformly to all delegates.

7. Resolutions Submitted to the Supreme Council

The Laws of the Knights of Columbus permit State Councils to submit to the Supreme Council resolutions that pertain to issues affecting the entire Order. It is expected that these resolutions will be submitted in good faith and in a spirit of charity, unity, and fraternity. State Councils should not submit resolutions that deal exclusively with matters of local significance and that are relevant only to that particular jurisdiction. State Councils must also submit to the Supreme Advocate's Office resolutions proposing changes to that State Council's by-laws.

Under the Order's procedures, delegates to the Supreme Council may consider only those resolutions that have been officially "adopted" by a State Council or submitted to the Supreme Council by the Supreme Board of Directors. Resolutions that have not been adopted by the State Council **should not** be submitted to the Supreme Council. A State Council must affirmatively adopt a resolution in order for the Supreme Council to consider it. "Adoption" of a resolution by a State Council means that the program, policy, or sentiments expressed in the resolution have the support of the delegates to the State Council meeting. By adopting a resolution and submitting the resolution to the Supreme Council, the State Council is stating that it supports the resolution and recommends that the Supreme Council adopt the resolution.

Any resolution that would require changing the Constitution or Laws of the Order or any policy of the Supreme Council must be submitted to and adopted by the Supreme Council before it can be enacted. By following this deliberative process, the Order can speak with one voice on the matters that relate to the mission and identity of the Knights of Columbus.

In recent years there have been attempts to use the resolutions process to challenge longstanding policies of the Knights of Columbus that have been carefully considered and consistently reaffirmed at previous conventions. By deliberately submitting provocative proposals through the resolutions process, the sponsors of these resolutions bring discredit upon themselves and their State Councils.

Pursuant to Section 22 of the Laws of the Knights of Columbus, resolutions adopted by a State Council for consideration by the Supreme Council must be submitted to the Office of the Supreme Secretary no later than June 15. Please submit these resolutions by email using the following email address:
supremesecretary@kofc.org

Resolutions will be acknowledged in writing and referred to the Supreme Advocate for further consideration by the Committee on Laws and Resolutions. Any resolutions received after June 15 will not be published to the Supreme Convention and will not be considered by the delegates.

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