

Policy for Handling Resolutions at the Synod Assembly

At its meeting on September 15, 2001, the Western Iowa Synod Council took the following action:

SC 01.09.60 TO AFFIRM the ABC Committee recommendation that any resolution not submitted prior to February 20, 2002 or through the synod council for consideration at the 2002 assembly will be referred to the appropriate committee or reported as information to the assembly. In future years, resolutions should be submitted 60 days prior to the start of the assembly to be considered at the assembly.

The Assembly Business and Council committee had asked the synod council for this affirmation. The ABC committee is instituting this change in procedure for two reasons. First, they are responding to complaints that assembly members have made in the past. Many members have been frustrated at not having enough time to consider resolutions that are not available to assembly members until the assembly has already begun to meet. They have noted that most of these last minute resolutions are not addressed to issues that have just surfaced and that they could easily have been submitted much earlier.

Secondly, at the last assembly the ABC committee itself struggled to deal with such last minute resolutions. Frequently the language needed to be reworked to communicate the intent of the authors while still making sense to assembly members. Several resolutions addressed the same issue and needed to be combined. The committee had to wrestle with the recommendations they should make to the assembly concerning these last minute resolutions. The committee believes that trying to do this on the first evening of the assembly does not allow them to do their work effectively.

Accordingly, the ABC committee is setting April 4th, 2016 as the cutoff date for submitting resolutions for consideration at the 2016 assembly. This will allow these resolutions to appear in the pre-assembly report along with a recommendation from the ABC committee. Any resolutions received after that date will either be referred to the appropriate committee or submitted to the assembly as information. The only exception will be for resolutions coming to the committee from the synod council.

This change in policy is not intended to stifle the consideration of important issues at the assembly. Rather, its intent is that resolutions be handled in an orderly manner and that assembly members should have adequate time for discussion and deliberation. The committee wants to stress that the assembly still has the final say concerning resolutions it wants to consider. Any resolution that is reported as information can still be brought to the floor for consideration by a 2/3 vote of the assembly. Since recent assemblies have made changes in the agenda by a similar vote, it is not unreasonable to expect that the members could take up a resolution if they chose to do so.