

2024 House Procedures for Processing Resolutions

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Sent: Monday, December 11, 2023 10:38 AM
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Subject: Process for House resolutions

Members and Staff:

We are providing you with our annual message that outlines the procedures for processing commemorative House resolutions. A high-level summary is below, followed by a more comprehensive explanation.

Executive Summary:

1. *Email a draft of your resolution to Patty Moore in the Chief Clerk's office, preferably at least a week prior to when you need to have it adopted.*
2. *She will log it in, note your preferences regarding adoption, and forward to the caucus attorneys for approval.*
3. *If approved, we will send the language to the Code Reviser who will finalize it and assign a resolution number. If the Code Reviser's office is drafting the resolution, please let our office know so that we can schedule it in Rules. Signatures may be gathered via pink slip.*

Background & Process:

House Resolutions are used to express recognition for meritorious service or to commemorate an event. We understand that these types of resolutions are important to individual members and will strive to accommodate as many requests as possible. However, if we do not institute certain procedures and guidelines, the amount of time spent on such resolutions can easily overwhelm our ability to conduct the business of the state, which is always our primary objective.

What are House Resolutions?

House Resolutions (also known as "Floor resolutions," or just "resolutions") are motions adopted by the House that deal with its internal affairs or expressions of sentiment or opinion and do not require passage by the Senate or signature by the Governor. Resolutions congratulate or commemorate an individual, organization or event. They are not to be used for the general enactment of laws or to send a message or expression of legislative sentiment on public policy issues. The proper form for that is a bill or joint memorial, if the purpose is to convey such a position to Congress, to the President, or to some other branch of government.

NOTE: Resolutions must be drafted regarding subjects that have some unique or significant characteristic or achievement, in a bi-partisan or non-partisan manner. They cannot be used to create controversy or politicize the subject of the resolution.

Resolutions cannot designate a commemorative day but can recognize a day designated by others (e.g., Congress or the Governor).

They must not express statements regarding public policy issues, including legislation or pending legislation, at the state or federal level.

They must not espouse or support specific religious beliefs.

Resolutions that do not fit the above criteria will be returned to the member's office.

How does the process begin?

Patty Moore in the Chief Clerk's office is the first person to communicate with if you are interested in introducing a resolution. Patty will log your intent to sponsor the resolution, note the subject matter, answer any questions and generally help shepherd the resolution through the process. Verifying issues of substance is the members' responsibility.

At the time of contacting Patty, the member's office should communicate special requests, if any, such as preferred dates for consideration of the resolution. Communications making special requests must be submitted in written form, preferably by e-mail to Patty Moore and to the Chief Clerk. We will ensure all special requests are conveyed to the House Rules Committee and to House Leadership. Resolutions may be drafted by the Code Reviser's office, the member's LA or PIO.

What should the resolution look like?

Resolutions should be brief enough to fit on one page of special commemorative paper. The type should be sized so that it looks nice when framed. Prime sponsors of resolutions which are adopted are given two copies of the resolution, although more copies can be arranged. Resolutions which are adopted are printed in the House Journal and are indexed in past journals under the heading "Floor Resolutions."

Where is the resolution filed?

House Resolutions are filed by the Chief Clerk's Office with the Code Reviser. Although members may have their resolutions drafted by the Code Reviser's office, the Chief Clerk's Office ultimately reviews each resolution to ensure that the language is consistent with House Rules. The Code Reviser will then send its official draft of the resolution to the requesting member's office.

What happens after the sponsors have signed on?

Members should secure sponsors' signatures by pink slip. Once the signed document is filed with the Chief Clerk's office, the resolution will be transmitted to the House Rules Committee which will generally take one of three actions:

- Adopt the resolution by a 60% vote without referring it to the full House; or
- Take no action, in which case the resolution is not adopted.
- Adopt from the rostrum in pro forma session

Please note that House Rules limit resolutions that can be debated on the floor. Floor remarks are allowed only on resolutions concerning internal House processes (e.g., the Rules themselves) and commemorative resolutions marking Children's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, National Guard Day, Day of Remembrance and President's Day.

Due to time constraints, we will not be accepting submissions for floor resolutions to be considered the week prior to cutoff and 2 weeks prior to sine die.

We look forward to assisting you with this process.

Bernard Dean
Chief Clerk
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Contacts:

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