

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-D049
Title: Increase by One the Possible Number of Bishops Suffragans in a Diocese
Proposer: Sherrod, Ms. Kati
Topic: Bishops, Constitution--First Reading

Directly Related: (Attached)

2022-A149 Amend Constitution Article II.4-8 [Bishops Suffragan--Second Reading]
1997-A003 Amend Constitution Article II.4 [Suffragan Bishops--Second Reading]

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

1991-A020 Amend Constitution Article II.4 [Suffragan Bishops--Second Reading]
1985-A004 Amend Constitution Article II.4, 7 [Election of Bishops--Second Reading]

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2022, selecting "direct" resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The "direct" resolutions are attached and "indirect" resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#).

D049 - Increase by one the possible number of bishops suffragans in a Diocese.

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Sherrod, Ms. Katie

Endorsed by: Tavolaro, The Rev. Dante, Troutman-Miller, The Rev. Jana

Supported by: Samuel G. Candler, Stephen Hutchinson, Anna Carmichael, Carolyn Woodall, Jan Dunlap, Cindy Smith, Mary Emeny, Mike Ehmer, Ricardo Lopez, Paige McKay, Miriam Scott, Carla Holeva, Kathy Balch, Dann Wigner

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: Yes

Requests New Interim Body: No

Directs an Interim Body: No

Directs Dfms Staff: No

Directs Dioceses: No

Directs Executive Council: No

HiA: No House Assigned

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: No Committee Assigned

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents:

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That Article II of the Constitution is amended as follows:

<Amended text as it would appear if adopted and concurred. Scroll below the line of asterisks

(*****) to see the version showing all deleted and added text.>

Article II: Of Bishops

Sec. 4. It shall be lawful for a Diocese, at the request of the Bishop of that Diocese, to elect not more than three Bishops Suffragan, without right of succession, and with seat and vote in the House of Bishops. A Bishop Suffragan shall be consecrated and hold office under such conditions and limitations other than those provided in this Article as may be provided by Canons of the General Convention. A Bishop Suffragan shall be eligible for election as Bishop Diocesan or Bishop Coadjutor of a Diocese, or as a Bishop Suffragan in another Diocese.

<Proposed amended resolution text showing exact changes being made:>

Article II: Of Bishops

Sec. 4. It shall be lawful for a Diocese, at the request of the Bishop of that Diocese, to elect not more than ~~two~~ *Three* Bishops Suffragan, without right of succession, and with seat and vote in the House of Bishops. A Bishop Suffragan shall be consecrated and hold office under such conditions and limitations other than those provided in this Article as may be provided by Canons of the General Convention. A Bishop Suffragan shall be eligible for election as Bishop Diocesan or Bishop Coadjutor of a Diocese, or as a Bishop Suffragan in another Diocese.

Explanation

There are fewer active Bishops Suffragan in the House of Bishops now than there were ten years ago. However, with diocesan mergers creating larger geographic dioceses, there is a need for additional suffragans in some places to cover vast geographical distances. This also allows these dioceses to elect someone who meets their particular needs rather than relying on the limited pool of retired bishops for the position of bishop assistant.

This change proactively creates infrastructure for the future. The unequivocal trend is that the diocesan pattern of TEC is reorganizing with formerly separate dioceses joining together in various forms. The future is dioceses with larger geographical boundaries (overseen by one ordinary) sub-designated into regions ("overseen" by suffragan or assisting bishops). While this does practically make for efficient economic stewardship, the more important benefit is that it facilitates the growth of the church with combined, adequately funded, excellent supporting resources such as camps, spiritual formation opportunities, mission capital, etc. - and the professional staff to implement this.



Resolution Number: 2022-A149
Title: Amend Constitution Article II.4-8 [Bishops Suffragan--Second Reading]
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That Article II.4-8 of the Constitution is hereby amended to read as follows:

ARTICLE II

Sec. 4. It shall be lawful for a Diocese, at the request of the Bishop of that Diocese, to elect not more than two **Suffragan Bishops** *Suffragan*, without right of succession, and with seat and vote in the House of Bishops. A **Suffragan Bishop** *Suffragan* shall be consecrated and hold office under such conditions and limitations other than those provided in this Article as may be provided by Canons of the General Convention. A **Suffragan Bishop** *Suffragan* shall be eligible for election as Bishop *Diocesan* or Bishop Coadjutor of a Diocese, or as a *Bishop Suffragan* in another Diocese.

Sec. 5. It shall be lawful for a Diocese to prescribe by the Constitution and Canons of such Diocese that upon the death, *removal or deposition* of the Bishop or *if the Bishop resigns*, a **Suffragan Bishop** *Suffragan* of that Diocese may be placed in charge of such Diocese and become temporarily the Ecclesiastical Authority thereof until such time as a new Bishop shall be chosen and consecrated; or that during the disability or absence of the Bishop, a **Bishop Suffragan** of that Diocese may be placed in charge of such diocese and become temporarily the Ecclesiastical Authority thereof.

Sec. 6. A Bishop may not resign jurisdiction without the consent of the House of Bishops.

Sec. 7. It shall be lawful for the House of Bishops to elect a **Suffragan Bishop** *Suffragan* who, under the direction of the Presiding Bishop, shall be in charge of the work of those chaplains in the Armed Forces of the United States, Veterans' Administration Medical Centers, and Federal Correctional Institutions who are ordained Ministers of this Church. The **Suffragan Bishop** *Suffragan* so elected shall be consecrated and hold office under such conditions and limitations other than those provided in this Article as may be provided by Canons of the General Convention. The **Suffragan Bishop** *Suffragan* shall be eligible for election as Bishop *Diocesan*, or Bishop Coadjutor or **Suffragan Bishop** *Suffragan* of a Diocese.

Sec. 8. A Bishop *Diocesan* or Coadjutor who has ~~for at least five years next preceding exercised jurisdiction as the Ordinary~~, *served as the Bishop Diocesan* or as the Bishop Coadjutor, of a Diocese *for any period of time*, may be elected as Bishop *Diocesan*, Bishop Coadjutor, or **Suffragan Bishop** *Suffragan* of another Diocese *only if five or more years have passed since the Bishop first served as Bishop Diocesan or Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese in which the Bishop is currently or last served as Bishop Diocesan or Bishop Coadjutor*. Before acceptance of such election a resignation of jurisdiction in the Diocese in which the Bishop is then serving, conditioned on the required consents of the Bishops and Standing Committees of the Church to such election, shall be submitted to the House of Bishops, and also, if the Bishop be a Bishop Coadjutor, a renunciation of the right of succession. Such resignation, and renunciation of the right of succession in the case of a Bishop Coadjutor, shall require the consent of the House of Bishops.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 503-504.



Resolution Number: 1997-A003
Title: Amend Constitution Article II.4 [Suffragan Bishops--Second Reading]
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That Article II, Section 4, of the Constitution be amended to read as follows:
It shall be lawful for a Diocese, ~~with consent~~ at the request of the Bishop of that Diocese, to elect ~~one or more~~ not more than two Suffragan Bishops, without right of succession, and with seat and vote in the House of Bishops. [Remainder of the section is unchanged.]

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, 1997* (New York: General Convention, 1998), p. 517.