

Resolution No. 212 New

Report: N/A Date Submitted: [Date Submitted]

Submitted By: [Submitted By]

Reference Committee: [Reference Committee for Worksheet]

Total Net Financial Implication: None Net Dues Impact:

Amount One-time: Amount On-going:

ADA Strategic Forecast Outcome: None

1 OPTIMIZING THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS

2 **Background:** The American Dental Association (ADA), as the national voice for the dental profession,
3 must continually evaluate whether its governance structure supports fiscal responsibility and meets
4 member needs in a changing environment. ADA members expect their dues to be used effectively and
5 ethically. According to the *Manual of the House of Delegates*, “The House of Delegates, as the legislative
6 and governing body, is the supreme authority in the American Dental Association” (*Manual of the House*
7 *of Delegates*, p. 4).

8 The House of Delegates continues to allocate time and resources to ceremonial activities, including the
9 installation of trustees and officers, spouse recognitions, and scripted speeches—which require
10 coordinated travel arrangements, staff planning, event production and media preparation. While these
11 acknowledgments are meaningful, they could be transitioned respectfully to professional digital formats or
12 featured in official publications to preserve recognition while reducing logistical demands and associated
13 costs. This aligns with the ADA’s stated commitment to financial sustainability and operational efficiency
14 ([Common Ground 2025: ADA Strategic Plan](#), April 2021, *Finance Goal*).

15 Environmental concerns also merit attention. The continued use of printed reference committee reports,
16 delegate packets, and physical testimony documents results in substantial paper waste. Reducing printed
17 material and unnecessary travel aligns with the *Finance Goal* in *Common Ground 2025* to ensure
18 financial sustainability and the *Organizational Goal* to improve overall effectiveness and capacity at all
19 levels of the Association.

20 Since the adoption of House Resolution 74H-2012, Transition to an Electronic House of Delegates
21 (*Trans.*2012:407), more than a decade ago, advances in technology, member habits, and ADA’s digital
22 platforms have made a broader digital-first model both feasible and beneficial to operational efficiency.

23 Furthermore, consolidating the in-person portion of the HOD into a three-day format—by conducting
24 preparatory sessions virtually in advance—would enhance accessibility for working dentists, reduce
25 costs, and uphold the authority of the House as the voice of ADA membership. It is understood that some
26 of these matters may be under current review by the Speaker and Board task force; however, this
27 resolution seeks to establish member-driven direction through clear policy, rather than relying solely on
28 internal studies.

29 The ADA has a fiduciary and ethical responsibility to structure its governance in a way that honors
30 member investment, upholds the profession’s values, and operates with maximum efficiency (*2025 ADA*
31 *Principles of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct*, Chapter II. Preamble). These proposed updates
32 aim to align the House of Delegates with widely accepted governance practices—such as reducing
33 procedural overhead, adopting digital materials, and streamlining meeting structure—which are consistent

with the *Organizational Goal in Common Ground 2025: ADA Strategic Plan* to improve effectiveness and capacity at all levels of the Association.

Resolution

Resolved, that the ADA transition ceremonial and non-governance activities during the House of Delegates session to digital formats in time for the 2026 House of Delegates, including:

- Recognition of retiring officers, trustees, and trustee spouses
- Remarks by the ADA Alliance and ADPAC Chair,

and be it further

Resolved, that all live ceremonial speeches delivered by the ADA President, President-Elect, and Executive Director be limited to four (4) minutes each, and be it further

Resolved, the policy Transition to an Electronic House of Delegates (Trans:2012:407) be rescinded,

and be it further

Resolved, that the ADA Governance and Organizational Manual, Chapter VI. *Elective Officers of the Association*, Section B. *Nominations*, be amended as follows (additions are underlined; deletions are ~~stricken through~~):

1. President-Elect and Second Vice President

~~Nominations for the offices of President-elect and Second Vice President shall be made in accordance with the order of business. Candidates for these elective offices shall be nominated from the floor of the House of Delegates by a simple declaratory statement, which may be followed by an acceptance speech not to exceed four (4) minutes by the candidate from the podium, according to the protocol established by the Speaker of the House of Delegates. Seconding a nomination is not permitted.~~

Upon submission of required candidate documentation, nomination statements and acceptance speeches shall be submitted electronically in video format in accordance with the protocol established by the Speaker of the House of Delegates. These pre-recorded materials shall be made available to all delegates in advance of the election. No live nomination or acceptance speeches shall be delivered from the floor of the House of Delegates.

2. Treasurer

~~Each nomination may be followed by an acceptance speech not to exceed four (4) minutes by the candidate from the podium, according to the protocol established by the Speaker of the House of Delegates. Seconding a nomination is not permitted.~~

Treasurer candidates shall submit a nomination statement and acceptance speech electronically in video format, not to exceed four (4) minutes each. These recordings shall follow a

1 standardized protocol established by the Speaker of the House of Delegates and be made
2 available to all delegates in advance of the election. Live speeches shall not be delivered on the
3 House floor.

4 **3. Speaker of the House of Delegates**

5 ~~Each nomination may be followed by an acceptance speech not to exceed four (4) minutes by the~~
6 ~~candidate from the podium, according to the protocol established by the Speaker of the House of~~
7 ~~Delegates. Seconding a nomination is not permitted.~~

8 Candidates for Speaker of the House shall submit nomination and acceptance speeches in
9 electronic video format in accordance with protocols established by the Speaker's Office. Each
10 recording shall not exceed four (4) minutes and shall be made available to delegates for review in
11 advance of the vote. Live speeches shall not be delivered on the House floor.

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