

Resolution 506 — Delaying Board of Trustees Members and Speaker of the House Eligibility to Run for Elected Office to Protect Governance Integrity

Author: Dr. Steven Saxe, Delegate

IF YOU VOTE YES

A YES vote supports the action requested in the resolving clauses. It protects ADA governance integrity by ensuring that sitting Board of Trustees members and the Speaker of the House complete their service before running for higher office.

This resolution introduces a one-year waiting period after a trustee or speaker's term ends before they can seek elective office. The goal is to prevent conflicts of interest, preserve fiduciary focus, and keep Board decisions free from campaign influence or personal ambition.

IF YOU VOTE NO

A NO vote supports allowing sitting Board members and the Speaker to campaign for ADA President-elect or other offices while still serving. It accepts the risk that campaign activity can influence Board decisions and public trust in the ADA's neutrality.

SUMMARY

Resolution 506 amends the Election Commission and Campaign Rules and the ADA Governance and Organizational Manual to prohibit any sitting member of the Board of Trustees or the Speaker of the House from running for elective office until one year after completing their term.

This ensures impartial governance, prevents conflicts of interest, and restores confidence that decisions made by the Board are guided by the ADA mission—not campaign strategy. The amendment includes an exception for the Treasurer and Speaker seeking a second consecutive three-year term.

The resolution mirrors ethical standards found in other national professional associations, including the American Medical Association and the American Psychiatric Nurses Association, both of which restrict active officers from campaigning while in office to protect organizational integrity.

Why the Board Is Wrong

The Board argues that sitting trustees should not be barred from running for higher office, but that stance prioritizes convenience over integrity. This resolution is not about denying opportunity—it is about maintaining trust.

Campaigning while serving creates an unavoidable conflict of interest. Every Board vote, strategic decision, and public statement risks being influenced by election optics. Requiring a one-year gap restores impartiality and ensures decisions are based solely on what is best for the ADA and its members.

Professional integrity and public confidence depend on eliminating even the perception of political self-interest within governance. The Board's objection ignores that transparency and accountability are the foundation of leadership.

TALKING POINTS

- Ensures trustees serve with full fiduciary focus and no political distraction.
- Prevents campaign influence on Board decisions and policy direction.
- Aligns ADA governance with national standards set by other associations.
- Builds member trust in the fairness of ADA elections.
- Upholds integrity, transparency, and ethical leadership.
- Protects the profession's reputation by separating governance from campaigning.



Prepared by Dentistry in General Advocacy Coalition

<https://dentistryingeneral.com/digac>

Resolution No. 506 NewReport: N/A Date Submitted: June 11, 2025Submitted By: Dr. Steven Saxe, delegate, NevadaReference Committee: D (Legislative, Governance and Related Matters)Total Net Financial Implication: None Net Dues Impact: _____

Amount One-time: _____ Amount On-going: _____

ADA Strategic Forecast Outcome: Tripartite: Promote Tripartite stability, success, and future growth.

**1 DELAYING BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBERS AND SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE ELIGIBILITY TO
2 RUN FOR ELECTED OFFICE TO PROTECT GOVERNANCE INTEGRITY****3** The following resolution was submitted on Friday, June 11, 2025, by Dr. Steven Saxe, delegate, Nevada.
4**5 Background:** ADA policy allows current Board of Trustees members and Speaker of the House to begin
6 formal or informal campaigns for national office during their final year on the Board. According to the
7 Election Commission and Campaign Rules paragraph 6, Announcing Candidacy, "Candidates for
8 President-elect and Second Vice President shall formally announce their intent to run for office on the
9 final day of the annual session immediately preceding their candidacy. ..." This means a trustee can
10 actively campaign while still serving, which can compromise fiduciary focus and neutral governance.**11** The decisions made by the ADA Board of Trustees shape the future of the Association and the
12 profession. When trustees are allowed to campaign for ADA President-elect while still serving on the
13 Board, it creates an unavoidable conflict of interest. Every vote, every public statement, and every
14 strategic decision risks being influenced by how it will play in an upcoming election rather than by what is
15 best for the ADA and the members it serves.**16** Trustees should be free to make the most difficult and necessary decisions for the profession without the
17 shadow of political calculation hanging over them. Waiting until a full year has passed after leaving the
18 Board before running for President-elect would remove that pressure. It would free trustees from the
19 temptation to filter decisions through the lens of electability and instead allow them to act with complete
20 loyalty to the mission, vision, and long-term health of the Association.**21** Many major membership organizations restrict current board members from campaigning for other
22 national offices during their term to avoid conflicts of interest and maintain fiduciary focus. For example,
23 the American Medical Association (AMA), a 501(c)(6), states in its Bylaws that "The Chair of the Board of
24 Trustees is not eligible for election as President-Elect until the Annual Meeting following completion of the
25 term as Chair of the Board of Trustees" ([AMA Bylaws, July 2025, § 3.2.1.3. P26](#)). The American
26 Psychiatric Nurses Association (APNA), a 501(c)(3), prohibits the President, President-Elect, and other
27 officers and directors from being candidates for any other elected office until the expiration of their current
28 term ([APNA Bylaws, § 3](#)).**29** By adopting this restriction, the ADA puts the integrity of governance above political ambition, restoring
30 confidence among members that Board decisions are made solely in the best interest of the profession
31 and the public.

Resolution

506. Resolved, that the Election Commission and Campaign Rules be amended by the addition of a new section titled Candidate Eligibility to be placed before the section titled Election Commission Rules Governing the Conduct of Campaigns for all ADA Elective Officers to read as follows (additions underlined, deletions ~~stricken through~~):

Candidate Eligibility

Only an active, life or retired member, in good standing, of this Association shall be eligible to serve as an elective officer. Current members of the Board of Trustees and the Speaker of the House of Delegates are not eligible to run for elective office for a period of one year after completing their term of service on the Board of Trustees. This eligibility limitation does not apply to the Treasurer and/or Speaker when running for a second consecutive three-year term as provided in Chapter VI. ELECTIVE OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION, of the Governance and Organization Manual.

and be it further

Resolved, that the American Dental Association *Governance and Organizational Manual*, Chapter VI. ELECTIVE OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION, Section A. Eligibility, be amended to read as follows (additions underlined, deletions ~~stricken through~~):

A. Eligibility. Only an active, life or retired member, in good standing, of this Association shall be eligible to serve as an elective officer. No trustee or other elected officer is eligible to serve simultaneously as Treasurer or Speaker of the House of Delegates. Current members of the Board of Trustees and the Speaker of the House are not eligible to run for elective office for a period of one year after completing their term of service on the Board of Trustees. This eligibility limitation does not apply to the Treasurer and/or Speaker when running for a second consecutive three-year term.

and be it further

Resolved, that this Resolution shall take effect at the close of the 2025 House of Delegates.

BOARD COMMENT: The Board thanks the author of this resolution. However, it respectfully disagrees with the intent of Resolution 506. Trustees are elected by their districts who put the best individuals forward to serve at the national level. Equally, the House elects its best candidates for president-elect, second vice president, treasurer and speaker of the House. The first obligation of ADA officers, trustees and the speaker of the House is to serve in their elected capacity. However, this service should not preclude sitting members from running as candidates for higher office. They can do both.

The Board believes that the House should be allowed to elect the best candidate. By eliminating the ability to run for office of president-elect, sitting officers and trustees, who have gained experience, knowledge and capacity during their years of service to the ADA, may be discouraged from running for a higher office. If that were to occur, the Association would be deprived of able and qualified candidates.

For these reasons, the Board does not support this resolution.

1 BOARD RECOMMENDATION: Vote No.**2 Vote: Resolution 506**

BERG	No	DOWD	No	KNAPP	No	STUEFEN	No
BOYLE	No	GRAHAM	No	MANN	No	TULAK-GORECKI	No
BROWN	No	HISEL	No	MARKARIAN	No	WANAMAKER	No
CAMMARATA	No	HOWARD	No	MERCER	Absent		
CHOPRA	No	IRANI	No	REAVIS	Absent		
DEL VALLE-SEPÚLVEDA	No	KAHL	No	ROSATO	Yes		