

Resolution No. [Resolution Number] [Type]
Report: [Report] Date Submitted: [Date Submitted]
Submitted By: Dr. Steven Saxe, Delegate, Nevada
Reference Committee: [Reference Committee for Worksheet]
Total Net Financial Implication: [Total Net Financial Impl.] Net Dues Impact:
Amount One-time: Amount On-going:
ADA Strategic Forecast Outcome: Tripartite: Promote Tripartite stability, success, and future growth.

**[STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND ACCESS TO GOVERNANCE TO GROW
MEMBERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT]**

Background:

The ADA has an opportunity to restore trust and grow membership by strengthening how leaders serve, how decisions are documented, and how members are allowed to participate in policymaking.

Leadership Accountability: Waiting to Run for President

ADA policy currently allows sitting trustees to begin formal or informal campaigns for national office during their final year on the Board. According to the *2024 Manual of the House of Delegates and Supplemental Information* (page 62), candidacy announcements for ADA President-Elect may begin as early as the close of the House session two years before the election. This means a trustee can actively campaign while still serving, which can compromise fiduciary focus and neutral governance.

Many major 501(c)(6) membership organizations—including the American Medical Association, American Bar Association, American Institute of Architects, and others—prohibit board members from campaigning for national office while still serving. This is a governance best practice designed to avoid even the appearance of conflict. According to *IRS Publication 557* (January 2025, page 25), a nonprofit’s board members must remain impartial and should not participate in decisions where personal interests could interfere. Restricting active trustees from presidential campaigning aligns with this expectation and helps preserve public trust. Although the ADA is considering a full revision of its Campaign and Election Rules in a separate resolution, the House may choose to adopt this single eligibility restriction independently.

Board Transparency and Majority/Minority Reporting

The ADA currently publishes Board vote tallies, but discussions have occurred internally about removing individual attribution. Rather than reducing transparency, the ADA should enhance it by requiring written majority and minority reports for every policy-related Board vote—including unanimous ones. These explanations would support the House of Delegates, improve

1 institutional memory, and model best practices used by other leading associations and nonprofit
2 boards.

3 **Opening Governance to All Members**

4 Under current rules, resolutions can only be submitted by constituent societies, components,
5 ADA agencies, trustee districts, or individual delegates (*2024 Manual of the House of Delegates*
6 *and Supplemental Information*, page 9). This structure excludes most ADA members from
7 initiating policy. Several state dental associations already allow individual members to submit
8 resolutions if they meet minimal criteria. This resolution creates a pathway for any three ADA
9 members in good standing to co-submit a resolution. It encourages grassroots participation and
10 allows state societies to support formatting—but not block submission—helping the ADA
11 become more responsive and inclusive while reducing friction for members who want to engage
12 in governance.

13 **Resolved**, that the American Dental Association amend its Election Commission and Campaign
14 Rules to state that **no sitting member of the Board of Trustees shall be eligible to run for the**
15 **office of ADA President-Elect**, and that this eligibility restriction shall take effect immediately
16 upon adoption of this resolution, and shall be enforced by the Election Commission in the 2025
17 and subsequent election cycles, **regardless of whether broader campaign rule revisions are**
18 **adopted;**
19 **and be it further**

20 **Resolved**, that the American Dental Association shall continue publishing the complete voting
21 record of every Board of Trustees vote on policy resolutions and decisions, and shall additionally
22 require that a **written majority report and, where applicable, a minority report be submitted**
23 **and published for each vote, including unanimous decisions**, to explain the rationale behind
24 the action and provide transparency to members and delegates; and that such reporting serve as
25 both a tool for decision-making by delegates and a durable governance record for future leaders;
26 **and be it further**

27 **Resolved**, that Chapter III – House of Delegates, Section 10.C. of the ADA Bylaws be amended
28 as follows (**additions underlined**, deletions strikethrough):

29 ~~In addition to resolutions submitted by constituent societies, components, Association agencies,~~
30 ~~trustee districts, and individual delegates,~~

31 **In addition to resolutions submitted by constituent societies, components, Association**
32 **agencies, trustee districts, and individual delegates, any three members in good standing**
33 **may jointly submit a resolution for referral to a reference committee, subject to applicable**
34 **submission deadlines and formatting requirements outlined in the Manual of the House of**
35 **Delegates. The submitting members shall have the option to request formatting support**
36 **from their state or constituent leadership, who may not block, delay, or alter the**
37 **resolution's submission. Alternatively, the members may seek formatting assistance from a**
38 **current or former ADA delegate with experience submitting resolutions, to reduce**
39 **administrative burden and cost to the ADA.**