

Resolution No. 212 New

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

Submitted By: Steve Saxe, Delegate, Nevada

Reference Committee: A (Business, Membership and Administrative Matters)

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 responsibility to structure its governance in ways that honor member investment  
30 and uphold the profession’s integrity. These proposed updates aim to align the House of Delegates with  
31 widely accepted governance practices—such as reducing procedural overhead, adopting digital  
32 materials, and streamlining meeting structure—consistent with the ADA’s defined governance duties and  
33 strategic direction. As stated in the *2025 ADA Governance and Organizational Manual*, “The Board of  
34 Trustees carries out the policies of the House of Delegates and has the power to establish ad interim

1 policies when the House of Delegates is not in session and when such policies are essential to the  
2 management of the Association,” and, “The House of Delegates... establishes, in collaboration with the  
3 Board of Trustees, the strategic direction of the Association” (pp. 8–10)

#### 4 Resolution

5 **Resolved**, that the ADA transition ceremonial and non-governance activities during the House of  
6 Delegates session to digital formats in time for the 2026 House of Delegates, except for components  
7 that are part of the installation service, including:

- 8 • Digital recognition of retiring officers, trustees, and trustee spouses
- 9 • Digital remarks by the ADA Alliance and ADPAC Chair

10 and be it further

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

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

16 1. President-Elect and Second Vice President. ~~Nominations for the offices of President-elect and~~  
17 ~~Second Vice President shall be made in accordance with the order of business. Candidates for~~  
18 ~~these elective offices shall be nominated from the floor of the House of Delegates by a simple~~  
19 ~~declaratory statement, which may be followed by an acceptance speech not to exceed four (4)~~  
20 ~~minutes by the candidate from the podium, according to the protocol established by the Speaker~~  
21 ~~of the House of Delegates. Seconding a nomination is not permitted. No nominations or~~  
22 ~~acceptance speeches shall be delivered from the floor of the House of Delegates. Nomination~~  
23 ~~statements and acceptance speeches shall be submitted electronically in video format not to~~  
24 ~~exceed four (4) minutes each in accordance with the protocol established by the Speaker of the~~  
25 ~~House of Delegates. These pre-recorded materials shall be made available to all delegates prior~~  
26 ~~to the first meeting.~~

27 2. Treasurer. The search for Treasurer shall be announced in an official publication of the  
28 Association in November of the final year of the incumbent Treasurer's term, together with the  
29 recommended qualifications for that position as provided in the *Bylaws*. Candidates for the office  
30 of Treasurer shall apply by submitting a standardized Treasurer *Curriculum Vitae* form to the  
31 Executive Director at least one hundred twenty (120) days prior to the convening of the House of  
32 Delegates. Each candidate's application shall be reviewed by the Board of Trustees. At least sixty  
33 (60) days prior to the convening of the House of Delegates the Executive Director shall provide all  
34 members of the House of Delegates, with each candidate's standardized Treasurer *Curriculum*  
35 *Vitae* and the determination of the Board of Trustees as to whether the candidate meets the  
36 recommended qualifications for the office of Treasurer. ~~No other candidate shall be nominated~~  
37 ~~from the floor of the House of Delegates. Nominations shall be made in accordance with the order~~  
38 ~~of business.~~ Each nomination may be followed by an acceptance speech not to exceed four (4)  
39 minutes by the candidate from the podium, according to the protocol established by the Speaker of  
40 the House of Delegates. ~~Seconding a nomination is not permitted. No further nominations for the~~  
41 ~~office of Treasurer shall be accepted from the floor of the House. No nominations or acceptance~~  
42 ~~speeches shall be delivered from the floor of the House of Delegates. Candidates for the Office of~~  
43 ~~Treasurer shall submit a nomination statement and acceptance speech electronically in video~~  
44 ~~format, not to exceed four (4) minutes each in accordance with the protocol established by the~~  
45 ~~Speaker of the House of Delegates. These pre-recorded materials shall be made available to all~~  
46 ~~delegates prior to the first meeting.~~ If there are no eligible candidates for the office of Treasurer  
47 when the House of Delegates meets, the term of the incumbent Treasurer shall be extended by  
48 one (1) year. Should the incumbent Treasurer be unwilling or unable to serve an additional one (1)

1 year term, the office of Treasurer shall be filled in accordance with the vacancy provisions of this  
2 chapter of the *Governance Manual*. Under these circumstances, former Treasurers of this  
3 Association not otherwise eligible to serve as Treasurer due to term limits will be eligible to serve  
4 as Treasurer until the House of Delegates can elect a Treasurer.

5 3. Speaker of the House of Delegates. The search for Speaker of the House shall be announced in  
6 an official publication of the Association in November of the final year of the incumbent Speaker of  
7 the House's term. Candidates for the office of Speaker of the House shall apply by submitting a  
8 *curriculum vitae* along with a statement supporting their qualifications to the Executive Director at  
9 least one hundred twenty (120) days prior to the convening of the House of Delegates. At least  
10 sixty (60) days prior to the convening of the House of Delegates the Executive Director shall  
11 provide all members of the House of Delegates with each candidate's *Curriculum Vitae* and  
12 statement of qualifications for the office of Speaker of the House. If no candidate has applied and  
13 submitted the required documentation, then the Association shall inform all delegates of this  
14 circumstance and the period to apply shall be extended to thirty (30) days prior to the convening of  
15 the House of Delegates. Only candidates who have applied and submitted the required  
16 documentation shall be nominated from the floor of the House of Delegates. If thirty (30) days prior  
17 to the convening of the House of Delegates no candidate has applied and submitted the required  
18 documentation then the Association shall inform all delegates of this circumstance and also inform  
19 them that nominations shall be permitted from the floor of the House of Delegates. Nominations for  
20 the office of Speaker of the House shall be made in accordance with the order of business. ~~Each~~  
21 ~~nomination may be followed by an acceptance speech not to exceed four (4) minutes by the~~  
22 ~~candidate from the podium, according to the protocol established by the Speaker of the House of~~  
23 ~~Delegates. Seconding a nomination is not permitted. No nominations or acceptance speeches~~  
24 ~~shall be delivered from the floor of the House of Delegates. Candidates for the office of Speaker~~  
25 ~~of the House shall submit a nomination statement and acceptance speech electronically in video~~  
26 ~~format, not to exceed four (4) minutes each in accordance with the protocol established by the~~  
27 ~~Speaker of the House of Delegates. These pre-recorded materials shall be made available to all~~  
28 ~~delegates for review prior to the first meeting.~~ If there are no candidates for the office of Speaker  
29 of the House nominated when the House of Delegates meets, the term of the incumbent Speaker  
30 of the House shall be extended by one (1) year. Should the incumbent Speaker of the House be  
31 unwilling or unable to serve an additional one (1) year term, the office of Speaker of the House  
32 shall be filled in accordance with the vacancy provisions of this chapter of the *Governance Manual*.  
33 Under these circumstances, former Speakers of the House not otherwise eligible to serve as  
34 Speaker due to term limits will be eligible to serve as Speaker until the House of Delegates can  
35 elect a Speaker of the House.

36 and be it further

37 **Resolved**, that the section titled Nomination Procedures in the Standing Rules of the House of  
38 Delegates published in the *Manual of the House of Delegates* be amended as follows (additions  
39 underlined; deletions ~~stricken through~~):

40 Nominations for President-elect, Second Vice President, Treasurer and Speaker of the House of  
41 Delegates are made from the floor of the House of Delegates at the first meeting by a simple  
42 declaratory statement and may be followed by an acceptance speech not to exceed four (4)  
43 minutes by the candidate from the podium, according to the protocol established by the Speaker  
44 of the House of Delegates. ~~Seconding a nomination is not permitted.~~

45 The nominations of these officers will be made at the first meeting. Nomination statements and  
46 acceptance speeches electronically in video format shall be made prior to the first meeting. The  
47 details of the nomination procedure are set forth in the *Governance Manual*.

48 The nominations for membership to councils by the Board of Trustees shall also be made at the  
49 first meeting. The nomination of council members is governed by the provisions of Chapter VIII of  
50 the *Governance Manual*.

No additional nominations will be accepted after the first meeting.