

Petition 2015-07

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES: 2

SUGGESTED TITLE: **Making General Conference Work**

DISCIPLINE PARAGRAPH: *Discipline ¶ 507*

GENERAL CHURCH BUDGET IMPLICATION: None

GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS: Yes

WHEREAS, General Conference is the supreme leadership body for writing and revising the laws and policies of The United Methodist Church, and the only body with the authority to speak officially for The United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, each General Conference costs our denomination millions of dollars, nearly two weeks of intense and exhausting work by nearly 1,000 delegates flown in from all around the world, after an immeasurable amount of work spent by many other United Methodists over many months of preparation; and

WHEREAS, General Conference is the only body that can effectively address certain concerns of United Methodists related to our life together as a church; and

WHEREAS, it is essential that the members of our Church trust that General Conference is run in a way that is just, effective, and gives all duly submitted petitions the chance to be heard; and

WHEREAS, at the 2012 General Conference, a number of petitions were passed by their legislative committees, some by overwhelming super-majorities, but never received a vote in the full plenary session of all delegates; and

WHEREAS, this had the effect of killing petitions that were produced by hard work from their authors, and which dozens of committee delegates had taken to carefully consider and perfect, only to see these petitions never being given the final chance to be approved or rejected on the basis of their merits; and

WHEREAS, it is not good stewardship for our church to spend so much money and for delegates to do so much work without such work being granted even the possibility of producing results; and

WHEREAS, the 2012 General Conference closing before numerous committee-endorsed petitions had even received their final vote left many delegates feeling hurt and frustrated; and

WHEREAS, this raises important questions about whether or not we truly want our General Conference to be structured in such a way that gives a fair hearing to petitions that enjoy broad support from faithful United Methodists;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the 2015 session of the Indiana Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church hereby charges its Conference Secretary, using the

rationale stated above, to petition, in a timely and appropriate manner, the 2016 General Conference to amend ¶ 507 of The Book of Discipline by adding a new point 10 as follows::

¶ **507. *Petitions to General Conference***—Any organization, clergy member, or lay member of The United Methodist Church may petition the General Conference in the following manner:

...

10. All petitions that have been approved by a legislative committee shall receive a vote by the plenary session at that year's General Conference.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the 2015 session of the Indiana Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church hereby charges its Conference Secretary, because of the fifty-word limit on the printed rationales in the public listings of General Conference petitions, to include with this petition the following rationale: “It is unfair and inefficient for legislative committees to perfect legislation, only to see that legislation denied the opportunity for a vote by the plenary session. This rule would discourage filibustering and delay tactics, as well as encourage effective time management of the legislative process.”

Submitted to Indiana Annual Conference 2015 by

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