

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING RESOLUTIONS

What is a resolution?

A resolution is a request from a delegate, county society, or section for the organization to take a certain action or to adopt a certain policy.

What form is a resolution in?

Generally, a resolution may be broken down into “Whereas” clauses and “Resolved” clauses.

“Whereas” clauses serve to give background, reasoning, and information pertaining to the reason(s) that a resolution is submitted. They identify a problem or need for action, address its urgency or timeliness, discuss the effect of the resolution on MAG or the public at large, and indicate whether the proposed policy or action will alter current MAG policy.

“Whereas” clauses are informational only, and are not considered part of the main motion. They are not amendable, though the accuracy of information contained, or the conclusions drawn may be discussed, generally in reference committee. Once the committee makes its report only the “resolved” clauses are considered as official business.

“Resolved” clauses are the essential part of the resolution; they should clearly state the action or policy called for. These clauses come at the end of the “Whereas” clauses, and are the main motion to come before the body.

“Resolved” clauses may request either internal or external action by MAG, or a combination of both. In the case of both, internal action should be in one “Resolved” clause and external action in another, so as to facilitate transmission of the external action to another group, such as the AMA.

“Resolved” clauses must ‘stand alone’; that is, the requested action or policy must be entirely clear from the working of the “Resolved” clause alone, and not require the reader to refer back to the whereas clauses for information. (Examples: Resolved, the MAG take action as noted above, or similar wording, is not acceptable. Also, assuming that the reader knows a reference made in the whereas clauses is not acceptable.)

General Information

All resolutions must be typed and in proper form to be considered by the House. Please see sample resolution for an example of the style and format discussed above.

All resolutions which entail a cost **must** have an attached fiscal note. Questions regarding fiscal notes can be addressed to the Annual Session staff.

All resolutions must be submitted by a deadline as determined by the Speaker, which is announced and published well in advance of the meeting. This deadline allows staff time to put together the delegates handbooks, and to provide any background material needed. Resolutions submitted after this deadline will be considered as late resolutions and must include rationale as to the urgency and importance of the issue at hand, and why it was submitted late. Late resolutions are referred to a committee of the House (Credentials) and a recommendation is made to the

House to consider or not consider the issue at that meeting. The House then votes as to whether or not to consider the issue.

The submitter of a resolution may rephrase or withdraw a resolution at any time prior to the resolution being considered by the reference committee. At that point, the resolution is “in the body of the House” and cannot be withdrawn. Amendments to the wording must take place by the normal parliamentary process.

Research

Research is the first step in developing a resolution. Accurate data regarding an issue, as well as knowledge of current MAG policy, if any, is essential. Often, a brief historical perspective regarding any past MAG actions or policies as regards the issue may be helpful. Current MAG policy is published in the MAG Policy Compendium, but if a particular topic is not listed, please contact the staff of the Annual Session for assistance.

Points to consider

- Unclear resolutions are often counter-productive to the intent of the submitter of the resolution. A little time spent on making the issue as clear and concise as possible is often of great benefit.
- Grammatically poor resolutions may be defeated.
- Too many resolved clauses within a single resolution may result in defeat or referral
- Whereas clauses are vitally important for “making the case” for the resolved clauses.