

Procedures for Submitting and Considering NACo Resolutions

The NACo resolutions process provides the membership with the ability to create national policies affecting county governments. The process is intended to be as open as possible, in order to allow participation from the entire membership. There are, however, some guidelines to ensure that the process is a relatively orderly one. These guidelines are as follows:

Submitting Resolutions

Resolutions and platform changes must be sent to the steering committee staff person or NACo Legislative Director at NACo headquarters 30 days prior to a NACo conference. These resolutions may be introduced at NACo conferences, including the Annual Conference, Legislative Conference, or any other conference where the NACo Board of Directors convenes.

Resolutions should, if possible, be no more than one page in length and be simply and directly written. They should include an “Issue” statement, a “Proposed Policy” statement, a “Background” statement and a “Fiscal/Urban/Rural Impact” statement if possible. For those without a specific impact statement, the NACo steering committee staff will develop an appropriate statement prior to submittal to the Board. For resolutions, the “Issue” statement should succinctly state the need for the resolution, the “Proposed Policy” section should specify a position or action by NACo and/or other entities, the “Background” section should clearly outline the county interest in the particular issue, and the “Fiscal/Urban/Rural Impact” section should attempt to address potential impacts for counties in these areas, if known. Resolutions cannot overrule Platform language, which has been ratified by the membership. NACo staff may make necessary changes to the resolutions to ensure that they are in the proper format.

The NACo Legislative Director or the Deputy Director, in consultation with the steering committee staff person, shall make a preliminary administrative decision as to which steering committee(s) to refer the proposed resolution, subject to review by the Policy Coordinating Committee at the conference.

Distribution of Resolutions

No later than 14 days prior to a conference, all proposed resolutions and platform changes pertinent to a steering committee, and those acted upon at a previous NACo conference that need final disposition by the NACo Board and general membership, will be mailed to members of the appropriate steering committee. The steering committee chairs, vice-chairs, subcommittee chairs and vice-chairs will be mailed material containing all steering committee resolutions and platform changes to be considered at a conference.

The Role of the Policy Coordinating Committee/Request for Referrals

The Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) consists of the chairs of each of the policy steering committees. It is the responsibility of this body to review all resolutions and determine, prior to the meetings of the full steering committees, whether there are resolutions that must be considered by more than one steering committee because of a policy issue that cuts across steering committee jurisdictions.

The first meeting of the PCC is typically held at the end of the first day of the conference. Prior to, or during the first PCC meeting, it is the responsibility of steering committee chairs to request, through the NACo Legislative Director and the presiding NACo Executive Committee member, the opportunity to consider a resolution that has not been previously referred to it by NACo staff. If a subcommittee chair is interested in considering a resolution that was not referred to the full steering committee, he/she must, prior to the first PCC meeting, ask the steering committee chair to consider requesting a referral of the resolution.

For resolutions that have been referred to another committee, time must be made available at the steering committee meeting for a representative of the committee that initially drafted the resolution to explain its intent. This presentation may also be made at a subcommittee, but it shall not replace the presentation at the full steering committee.

Emergency Resolutions Submitted After the 30 Day Time Limit

Steering committees may also consider other resolutions or platform changes that were not submitted within the 30-day time limit. These so-called ‘emergency’ resolutions are federal legislative or regulatory matters that could not have been foreseen 30 days prior to the conference, and is an issue of a timely nature that NACo should consider action immediately. Steering committees receiving emergency resolutions or platform changes may consider them only if two-thirds of the steering committee members present vote to review them. This vote and the vote resulting in the adoption or defeat of the actual resolution must be tallied and reported to the PCC at the conclusion of all steering committee meetings.

If a steering committee, after a two-thirds vote to take action, considered and ultimately adopted a resolution that was not anticipated before the first PCC meeting, the PCC, at the request of any steering committee chair, may table the resolution for consideration until the next meeting of the Association. The request to table must be approved during the PCC meeting by a majority of the steering committee chairs or their designees.

The Subcommittee’s Role

NACo subcommittees usually meet prior to their steering committee to both receive specific, detailed information about their issues and to consider resolutions for later disposition by the full steering committee. Most, but not all, resolutions are usually considered first in a subcommittee. The subcommittee may consider the resolution referred to it by the steering committee chair and make a recommendation, with a recorded vote, to the full steering committee on the disposition of the resolution. A subcommittee does not have the ability to table, or defeat a resolution, thus prohibiting full committee consideration. There is no specific requirement for subcommittees to make recommendations.

Platform Changes/Existing Resolutions

Platform changes are considered only at the Annual Conference. As with resolutions, they must be submitted to the NACo legislative staff at least 30 days prior to the conference. Each year resolutions will automatically be deleted from the American County Platform at the following Annual Conference. At that conference, those resolutions that are still relevant must be incorporated into platform language or offered 30 days in advance as a “new” resolution to be considered by the appropriate steering committee. Resolutions cannot be used to overturn or

modify existing language in the platform. Resolutions passed by the NACo Board at the Legislative Conference must be reviewed by the appropriate steering committee and recommended for ratification by the general membership, or be dropped.

Presentation of Resolutions and Platform Changes to the NACo Board of Directors Sitting as a Resolutions Committee

Each Steering committee chair will report to the Resolutions Committee the platform changes and resolutions adopted by the steering committee. They will also report on the proposed disposition of resolutions adopted at any previous conference. Steering committees should make every effort to settle disputes on resolutions before the meeting of the NACo Board of Directors. They should consider blending and amending the resolutions into one compromise proposal or they should table the issue for further discussion. If those alternatives are not acceptable to the steering committees that have differing views, then the disputed resolution(s) shall be presented to the Board of Directors after all other resolutions have been considered and acted upon. The representative of the steering committee that originally drafted the resolution shall present their resolution first, followed by a response and resolution from the other committee.

Policy Regarding Steering Committee Minority Reports

1. A steering committee chair shall report actions taken on all platform changes and resolutions, both as part of the resolutions “package” and during the chair’s report to the Board of Directors when it sits as a Resolutions Committee.

2. The chair’s report shall identify:

- those platform changes and resolutions that were adopted unanimously;
- those platform changes and resolutions that were adopted with some unrecorded “nay” votes; and
- those platform changes and resolutions that were adopted by roll call vote, announcing the “yeas” and “nays”.

A minority report may be made only on an action taken by roll call vote where the voting minority constituted at least 25% of those steering committee members present and voting. After announcing such a vote, the steering committee chair may allow a member of the minority to present the minority report.

*Adopted 2001
Clarified 2010*