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I. FORWARD

The House of Delegates conducts its business according to a blend of rules imposed by the Laws of the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia; by its own Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws; by its adopted Parliamentary Authority; by Rules of Procedure which may be adopted as each meeting commences; and by the rulings from the chair, which rulings are always subject to modification by the majority opinion of the House of Delegates...which should always remain the ultimate determinant of what it wants to do and how it wants to do it.

No single source codifies all the rules that govern the conduct of the House of Delegates. Any compulsive adherence to inflexible directives will thwart this assembly in translating its beliefs into effective group action. And yet, the House must always guard the rights of free speech and fair debate; of the majority to decide; and of the minority to be heard, represented, and protected.

The following compilation of procedures is offered as a reference guide to help the House of Delegates attend to its challenging business with courtesy, common sense, fairness and efficiency, without confusion or misunderstanding.

II. INTRODUCTION AND CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

The agenda at all sessions of the House of Delegates shall be established by the Speaker. The House may change the agenda by majority vote.

Tradition governs a substantial portion of each formal session of the House of Delegates. Addresses by outgoing and incoming presidents, remarks by the Speaker, presentation of awards, acceptance of awards and gifts, recognition of distinguished guests, etc., are examples of these traditions. It is the prerogative of the Speaker to permit so many of these niceties as may be appropriate without unduly intruding upon the time necessary for the House to accomplish its regular business. In general such items are scheduled in advance in the published order of business. Unscheduled presentations may be arranged, either with the Speaker, or by a request for unanimous consent of the House to hear them. It is to be recognized that the Speaker must usually discourage extraneous unscheduled presentations not because of any lack of merit to the proposals, but because of the primary obligation to conserve the time of the House for its deliberations.

Non-members addressing the House will be limited to not more than five minutes.

If necessary, additional sessions of the House shall be upon the call of the Speaker.
III. GUIDELINES FOR RESOLUTIONS

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References:
1. Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the MSV.
A. THE **PURPOSE** OF A RESOLUTION

The purpose of a resolution is to bring a substantive proposal before the House of Delegates, for its consideration and decision (and/or action). It is the intent of a resolution to commit the organization to the stated proposal.

Possible actions by the House may include:

1. the establishment of policy;
2. the reaffirmation (or modification) of previously established policy;
3. request for action by the Society, Board, its committees, or staff;
4. any others, described in the references on page 3.

B. **WHO** MAY PROPOSE A RESOLUTION

A resolution may be proposed by:

1. any member of the MSV;
2. any member of the House of Delegates of the MSV;
3. any Component Society;
4. any Component Student Society;
5. any Component Resident Physician Section;
6. the Hospital Medical Staff Section;
7. any Specialty Society;
8. any Committee of the Society;
9. the Board
10. any district of the MSV.

C. **WHEN** A RESOLUTION MAY BE PROPOSED

In order to be **CONSIDERED AS REGULAR BUSINESS**, a resolution must be received at the MSV headquarters office no later than 45 days prior to the first session of the House of Delegates. Proposers of resolutions are encouraged to submit them throughout the year, and in coordination with local and state national meetings of Component Societies, and General Medical and/or Specialty Societies.

**EXCEPTIONS:**

1. A Component Society or Specialty Section or District whose latest meeting adjourns within the 45 days is allowed 7 days after the close of such meeting to submit any resolution.

2. The Board, as a result of its meeting before the first session of the House of Delegates, may submit any business or resolution for routine consideration by the House.

3. Any Committee of the Society.
LATE RESOLUTIONS are those received after the 45- or 7-day deadline described above, but before noon of the day before the first session of the House of Delegates (or as differently described below):

(1) Resolutions from the business meeting of the Resident Physician Section or the Hospital Medical Staff Section of the ongoing meeting of the House of Delegates may be presented for consideration by the House of Delegates any time before the beginning of the second session of the House.

(2) Late Resolutions will be considered by the Rules Committee, meeting immediately before the first session of the House of Delegates. This committee is not a reference committee; it will not hold open hearings, but will provide sponsors of late resolutions an opportunity to explain the reasons for their late submissions. The committee may accept a late resolution: 1) if the sponsor(s) can provide a reasonable explanation for failure to meet the announced deadlines; or 2) if the Committee determines that deferral of the resolution would result in significant harm to the MSV, its members, or their patients. The Committee will recommend for or against the acceptance of any Late Resolution for consideration by the House as routine business. The House of Delegates, at its first session and by a 2/3 affirmative vote of those delegates present and voting, may accept the recommendation of the Rules Committee, regarding each Late Resolution.

(3) Except as noted in items “1 and 2” immediately above, the House of Delegates, by a two-thirds-majority vote of those delegates present and voting, may accept any other late resolution presented during its first session.

(4) The House of Delegates, by unanimous consent, may accept any late resolution presented after the close of its first session.

(5) Emergency Resolutions: A resolution of an emergency nature, presented on the final day of a meeting, may be referred by the Speakers to an appropriate committee which shall then report to the House as to whether the matter involved is, or is not, of an emergency nature. If the committee reports that the matter is of an emergency nature, it shall be presented to the House without further consideration by a reference committee; favorable action shall require an affirmative vote of 3/4 of the delegates present and voting. If the committee reports that the matter is not of an emergency nature, the Speakers shall defer its introduction until the next meeting of the House of Delegates.

COURTESY RESOLUTIONS will be in order on the agenda of the second session of the House of Delegates, and, if indicated, at other times. Please coordinate the introduction of courtesy resolutions with the Speakers, by informal conference with them.

D. THE RESOLUTION ITSELF, FORM AND STRUCTURE

1. General Qualities of an Effective Resolution

An effective resolution will enable the House of Delegates to consider its purpose expeditiously and with little need for change, re-writing, amendment, and delay. Consequently, it will be concise and precise, clear, short, well-organized, accurate, and stated in the affirmative (since the negative form easily confuses the members during voting). For example, the motion “I move that we do not permit any members to remain on the Survey Committee who has not been present at three consecutive meetings and has not been excused by written application received before the meeting,” is much more clearly stated affirmatively as, “I move that any member of the Survey Committee who misses three consecutive meetings without excuse be dropped from the committee.”

Each resolution will contain reference to current MSV policy (or absence of any), and will conform to the New Policymaking Procedure, which is separately reported in Section IV.
Commendation Resolutions: The House of Delegates must exercise extreme caution about the introduction of commendation resolutions. If any controversy might exist (and there is usually some controversy), subsequent debate may serve to embarrass the Society or an individual. Commendation proposals should be sent to the Board, for careful consideration for an award or other appropriate recognition.

Memorial Resolutions: The House of Delegates may receive memorial resolutions to remember a physician who has made significant contributions to MSV. At an appropriate time in the meeting, the Speaker will announce the memorial resolutions and call for a moment of silence.

2. The Title

The title should accurately reflect the subject of the resolution and/or the action for which it calls, e.g., “Resolution on Establishing a New Standing Committee, the Survey Committee.”

3. The “Resolved” Section

The essential element of a resolution is the portion expressed as one or more “Resolved” sections, setting forth specific intent.

It is a general principle of common law that an assembly, in adopting a resolution, formally adopts only the “Resolved” section. Preliminary and appended data do not appear in the final proceedings (minutes) of the meeting. It follows that the goal of a resolution is to state, in a freestanding and self-sufficient “Resolve”, precisely the action upon which the author wishes the House of Delegates to act.

The “Resolved” must not refer back to any preceding “whereas” statement, nor to an appended table or report (such as, “Resolved, that the MSV support such policies.”).

The information should be checked for current accuracy. It is recognized that resolutions may be mandated by state or specialty societies months in advance of sessions of the House of Delegates of the MSV. Therefore, they may lack currency, may recommend things which have already been accomplished, or may otherwise be inappropriate. In view of the awkwardness of arranging for such resolutions to be withdrawn, it may be advisable to leave such mandated resolutions unchanged, trusting the reference committee to note the circumstances and recommend to the House of Delegates that it refer them to the Board. This process may seem superior to rejecting them as unnecessary or redundant, provided that they are compatible with Association policy. This method of action may also apply to resolutions which simply reaffirm existing policy.

4. The Preliminary Statement, Preamble, Or “Whereas”

a. A preliminary statement is not necessary when the full significance of the “resolved” portion of the resolution seems apparent.

b. The resolution may carry with it a preliminary statement explaining the rationale behind the resolution, such as preliminary statement, preamble, or “Whereas.”

c. Such introductory statements

**MAY:**

(1) identify the problem;
(2) advise the House as to the timeliness or urgency of the problem;
(3) advise as to the effect of the problem on the MSV;
(4) indicate if the proposed action is in concert with, or contrary to, current MSV policy; and
SHOULD:  be presented in a reasonable and logically-sequential fashion; and

WILL:  have no legal effects, since the House of Delegates will take action only on the “Resolved.” Therefore, it is time-consuming, unnecessary, and usually out of order to propose formal amendments to the wording of accessory preliminary statements, or even to the language of descriptive comments of reference committee reports, unless it is (rarely!) the particular desire to the House of Delegates to do so.

5. The Addenda

Tables, reference data, etc., may be appended to the resolution. This data is not voted upon by the House of Delegates.

On rare occasions, the resolution itself will contain detailed sets of guidelines, rules, regulations or principles that the resolution proposes to approve. In such uncommon circumstances, it may be appropriate to amend this related material to bring it into conformity with the will of the House.

It is encouraged that resolutions include references to evidence based medicine data when applicable as background information for the resolution itself.

6. The Fiscal Note

In the AMA House of Delegates, a Fiscal Note is required for each resolution that would require an expenditure of society funds. In the MSV at the present time, a Fiscal Note is suggested as follows:

a. All reports and resolutions introduced in the House of Delegates, whose implementation necessitates an expenditure of funds, may include a fiscal note supplied by the sponsor, but they may be considered by the House without the attachment of such fiscal data.

b. Resolutions requiring the expenditure of funds should show a specific dollar amount where possible.

c. The office of the Executive Vice President can assist sponsors with the development of fiscal information; requests of this nature should be forwarded well in advance of the deadline for submitting resolutions.

d. Resolutions, which call for the institution of legal action, the repeal of legislation or similar action for which a precise cost estimate cannot be determined, should indicate that a substantial commitment of resources might be necessary for implementation.

e. Resolutions which establish or reaffirm policy, and which do not require other specific action beyond that covered by the MSV’s routine work, need not have fiscal notes appended; MSV staff may provide the appropriate fiscal notes.
E. REVIEW OF A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

When resolutions are properly prepared and are submitted in timely fashion, the Speakers, the MSV administration and legal counsel will be able to consider, with the sponsor, possible improvements in form or language. If changes are indicated, they will be accomplished with the agreement of the sponsor.

When a resolution is not accompanied by sufficient data to allow proper advance consideration of that resolution, it will be sent back to the submitter. If the deficiency is not remedied in time, the resolution will be deemed a “late” resolution and submitted to the Rules Committee for consideration at its meeting held immediately before the first session of the House of Delegates.

When a resolution presents a legal problem to the Medical Society of Virginia or its component societies, the Speakers and staff will contact the sponsor to discuss the problem. If such a conference with the sponsor is able to remedy the situation, the resolution will be distributed in a routine manner. If, for whatever reason (such as a mandate from the sponsoring Component Society that the resolution not be altered) resolution of the legal problem cannot be accomplished, the Speakers will refer the resolution to the Rules Committee, will designate it as a “Deferred Resolution,” and it will not be distributed in the advance handbook.

The Rules Committee will consider “late” and deferred resolutions prior to the first session of the House of Delegates. Legal Counsel of the Society will be present if a deferred resolution is to be heard. The Committee will recommend (by majority vote) that the House either accept or not accept the resolution. A majority vote of the House is required for acceptance of the Committee’s report.

F. PRESENTATION OF A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

Resolutions in the delegates’ Handbook, which have complied with the established deadlines, will be regarded as officially received for consideration by the House of Delegates.

At the appropriate time, the Speaker will call for introduction of resolutions. For each resolution there must be a “sponsor” and a “second” who act officially in indorsing its introduction as business of the House.

Opportunity will be given for the presentation of such changes in any resolution as the sponsor may wish to make. Similar opportunity will exist for the withdrawal of any resolution without vote, when this is desired by the sponsor.

At the time of introduction of any resolution, it is possible for any delegate to object to its consideration; in that event, sustained by a 2/3 vote of the delegates present and voting, the resolution is not accepted as business of the House. It is likewise possible, at the time of introduction of any resolution, for any delegate to move that it be adopted by unanimous consent, or that it be voted upon without referral to a reference committee; objection to such a motion is always in order.
IV. POLICYMAKING PROCEDURE

The first policy compendium (PC) was accepted by Council in September 1992, along with the Procedure for Implementation and Utilization of it. Parts of those documents are referenced here.

Policymaking Procedure

1. The authors (officers, Board, committees, component societies, individual members, et al.) of all resolutions and reports will utilize the PC as the reference point for policymaking. Proposed statements of policy shall be clearly identified as policy recommendations; they shall clearly identify and refer to existing pertinent policy (if any) on the issue addressed, indicating whether the proposed policy is a new addition to the policy base, or a modification of existing policy.

2. While the House of Delegates is the official policymaking body of the Society, not all actions taken by the House are considered policy. Statements of “policy” are general principles by which the Society is guided in its management of public affairs. Actions taken by the House of Delegates that are not considered policy, and that would not be subject to this procedure include the following:

   a. Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws of the MSV.
   b. Items considered by the House of Delegates, which are referred or filed.
   c. Action of the House of Delegates directing the Society, its staff, or some other entity, to undertake a particular activity (“Directives”).
   d. Temporary policy, e.g., a resolution to change the order of the agenda in a meeting.
   e. Appointments, elections, awards, commendations and memorial resolutions.
   f. Action dealing with internal business operations of the MSV, e.g., adoption of the annual budget.
   g. Specific therapeutic considerations.

3. There are two general classes of policymaking instruments used by the House, namely resolutions and reports. Under the new policymaking procedures, new formats will be necessary for reports and resolutions so as prominently to identify existing policy and the proposed action to be taken with respect of it.

   “Policy actions” refer to those resolutions or reports which either create new policy or modify existing policy. There are four major categories of possible action within the broad category of “policy actions,” namely: A) Adoption of new policy where there is no pertinent existing policy; B) Modification of existing policy; C) Substitution of a proposed policy statement for an existing policy; and D) Rescission of an existing policy.

   Hereafter follows the description of the new policymaking procedure in reference to each of these types of policy actions. The PC also should be referenced by resolutions or reports that direct some particular action with regard to a particular statement of policy, i.e., study of the need to establish or change a particular policy.
4. Mechanisms for presenting resolutions and recommendations of reports:

a. **Adoption of New Policy Where There is No Pertinent Existing Policy**

   (1) In the “whereas” section, the sponsor explains the rationale for the proposed new policy.

   (2) In the “resolved” section, the sponsor explicitly identifies the proposal of new policy.

b. **Modification of Existing Policy**

   (1) In the first “whereas” section, the sponsor identifies the existing relevant policy, by PC policy number (with a brief description of it if the policy is long, or with the actual quotation of it if it is shorter).

   (2) In the subsequent “whereas” section(s), the sponsor presents the rationale for the proposed change(s).

   (3) In the “resolved” section(s), the sponsor precisely identifies the proposed change(s) by underlining the proposed additions and by striking out the proposed deletions or changes.

c. **Substitution of a Proposed Policy Statement for Existing Policy**, where a sponsor wants to change substantially existing policy through adoption of a new policy statement.

   (1) In the first “whereas” section, the sponsor identifies the relevant existing policy by PC number (with a brief description of it if the policy is long, or with the actual quotation of it if it is shorter).

   (2) In the subsequent “whereas” section(s), the sponsor presents the rationale for the proposed change(s).

   (3) In the first “resolved” section, the sponsor calls for the rescission of the existing policy by PC number.

   (4) In the subsequent “resolved” section(s), the sponsor states the proposed substitution.

d. **Rescission** would be indicated if the proponent believes the existing policy is no longer needed and there is no need for a substitute policy on the subject.

   (1) In the first “whereas” section, the sponsor identifies the existing policy number (with a brief description of it if the policy is long, or with the actual quotation of it if it is shorter).

   (2) In the subsequent “whereas” section(s), the sponsor presents the rationale for the proposed rescission.

   (3) In the “resolved” section, the sponsor calls for rescission of the existing policy by only the PC policy number.

   (4) Any policy which is rescinded will be transferred to the “Archives,” which will be the last section in the Policy Compendium, utilizing the same number, title and category, adding the date of its rescission, together with the reason. This procedure will begin at the end of the year 2001.
e. Reaffirmation is actually not needed because current MSV policy continues to be MSV policy until altered by one of the above four mechanisms. However, occasionally a sponsor feels compelled to encourage the House of Delegates to reaffirm policy on a particular issue.

(1) In the first “whereas” section, the sponsor identifies the existing policy by PC number, with a brief description of it if the policy is long, or with the actual quotation of it if it is shorter.

(2) In the subsequent “whereas” section(s), the sponsor presents reasons necessitating a restatement or repetition of that existing policy.

(3) In the “resolved” section, the sponsor calls for reaffirmation by only the PC policy number.

f. Directives would be appropriate when the proponent has either identified existing policy in the MSV PC and desired to call for the MSV to undertake some activity in regard to it, or has identified the need for the MSV to study some issue and to develop appropriate policy.

In regard to either issue:

(1) In the first “whereas” section, the sponsor identifies the relevant MSV policy number, with a brief description of it if the policy is long, or with the actual quotation of it if it is shorter.

(2) In the subsequent “whereas” section(s), the sponsor discusses the rationale for the proposed directive.

(3) In the “resolved” section, the sponsor identifies the requested action. In the former example of a directive, a proposal might include encouraging the MSV to contact some group(s) in support of the policy, forwarding MSV policy to the AMA requesting action, preparing a study or model to be utilized by the Society, or encouraging activity to implement existing policy. In regard to the latter example of a directive, a proposal might include studying a given issue to provide the proper basis for creating further policy.

5. A Reaffirmation (Consent) Calendar will be established in the agenda of the House of Delegates to consider established policy where a sponsor of a resolution desires to reaffirm that current policy without changing it. This procedure will allow for the expeditious reaffirmation and re-emphasis of established policy, without the lengthy reconsideration process of the reference committee system and subsequent full debate by the House of Delegates . . . on policy already in force. Any item on the Reaffirmation Consent Calendar can be extracted from it for full debate by the reference committee and the House, by simple request of a single member of the House of Delegates.

6. If two or more policies concerning the same subject are found in the PC, and the two statements either are substantially the same, or are inconsistent or contradictory with one another, the statement most recently adopted by the House of Delegates will prevail, and the less current policy will be removed from the next edition of the PC.

7. The Ten Year (Sunset) Provision of the New Policy Procedure: Ten years after the adoption of each policy action, the Speakers and MSV Staff will present to the MSV Board a “Ten Year Policy Review Report,” encouraging consideration of each item in that report by the mechanisms reported above in paragraphs 4 b through e, or referral of such policies to an appropriate committee for the same purpose. Unless each such policy is acted upon by the subsequent House of Delegates via the 4 b-e mechanisms, it will cease to be policy of the MSV.
8. After each Annual Meeting of the House of Delegates of the MSV, the Speakers will supervise the MSV Staff, utilizing transcripts of the meeting, in:
   a. Incorporating all statements of new policy and policy changes into the PC;
   b. Assigning a topic category or categories for the index of the PC;
   c. Removing statements of policy that have been rendered moot by changes in law, or that have been superseded by later action of the House of Delegates; and transferring them to the Archives section of the Policy Compendium;
   d. Including any item inadvertently omitted during the process of creating the PC and the new Policymaking Procedure;
   e. As in all matters, the House of Delegates has the final authority over the Speakers and Staff in these largely procedural and secretarial matters.

9. The Speakers and Staff will work diligently with the Board and House of Delegates to fairly execute the new Policymaking Procedure, and to further modify it as necessary in coming years.

Reference:

V. REFERENCE COMMITTEES

Reference Committees are groups of delegates or alternate delegates selected by the Speaker to conduct open hearings on matters of business of the Society, which are referred to it by the Speaker. Having heard discussion on the subjects referred to it, the Committee draws up a report with its recommendations to the House.

A. Organization: The Speaker shall appoint Reference Committees and a Chair for each Committee. The number of Reference Committees appointed shall be at the discretion of the Speaker. Each Reference Committee shall be composed of not less than seven delegates, each from a different District. The Speaker shall refer all business (resolutions, motions, Committee reports, Board reports, remarks by Society and House Officers, etc.) to an appropriate Reference Committee. In the assignment of business to Reference Committees, the ruling of the Speaker shall be final, unless the House of Delegates by majority vote directs otherwise.

B. Conduct of the Reference Committee Hearings: Reference Committee hearings are open to all members of the Association, guests, official observers, interested outsiders and the press. Any member of the Society may speak on the resolution or report under consideration. The chair is privileged to call upon anyone attending the hearing if, in his/her opinion, the individual called upon may have information, which would be helpful to the committee. Non-member physicians, guests or interested outsiders may upon recognition by the chair, be permitted to speak. When a Reference Committee member has a special interest in a matter referred to the Committee of which he/she is not a member, he/she may appear before that Committee and participate in the presentation of the subject, but may vote only in the Committee of which he/she is a member.

Equitable hearings are the responsibility of the committee chair, and the committee may establish its own rules on the presentation of testimony with respect to limitations of time, repetitive statements, etc. The chair also has the jurisdiction over such matters as photography, television filming, and the introduction of recording devices. If, in his/her estimation, such factors would be, or become, undesirable for the conduct of an orderly hearing, he or she may act to prohibit them. It is recommended that reference committee chairs not ask for an expression of the sentiments of those attending the hearing by an informal vote on particular items. The committee members may ask questions to be sure that they understand the opinions being expressed, or may answer questions if a member seeks clarification; however, the committee members should not enter into debate with speakers or express opinions during the hearings. It is the responsibility of the committee to listen carefully and evaluate all the opinions presented so that it may provide the voting body with a carefully considered recommendation.

The reference committee hearing is the proper forum for discussion of controversial items of business. In general, delegates who have not taken advantage of such hearings for the presentation of their viewpoints or the introduction of evidence should be reluctant to do so on the floor of the House. It is recognized, however, that some conflicts will prevent a delegate from being present at a Reference Committee hearing, so there is never compulsion for mute acceptance of reference committee recommendations at the time of the presentation of its report.

Following its open hearings, a reference committee will go into executive session for deliberation and construction of its report. It may call into such executive session anyone whom it may wish to hear or question.
C. Reference Committee Reports: Reference committee reports comprise the bulk of the official business of the House of Delegates. They need to be constructed swiftly and succinctly after completion of the hearings in order that they may be processed and made available to the delegates as far as possible in advance of formal presentation to the House.

Reference committees have wide latitude in their efforts to facilitate expression of the will of the majority on the matters before them and to give credence to the testimony they hear. They may amend resolutions, consolidate kindred resolutions by constructing substitutes, and they may recommend the usual parliamentary procedure for disposition of the business before them, such as adoption, rejection, amendment, referral and the like.

The reports of the Reference Committees shall be presented to the House at a meeting subsequent to the first session. A Reference Committee may recommend any method of disposal of business, which is in accordance with the current Parliamentary Authority. The method of presentation of Reference Committee reports shall follow the format employed by the House of Delegates of the AMA.

Your Speakers recommend that each item referred to a reference committee be reported to the House as follows:

1. Identify the resolution or report by number and title;
2. State concisely the committee’s recommendation;
3. Comment, as appropriate, on the testimony presented at the hearings; and,
4. Incorporate supporting evidence of the recommendations of the committee.
5. Consent Calendar: The reference committee report will be presented as a Consent Calendar or waiver of debate list. At the time of presentation of the Consent Calendar, a request may be made for removal of any item for debate or individual action without the need for a vote on permission to separate it from the other items. Items not extracted from the Consent Calendar will be voted on as a block without further debate.

For five common variants of Reference Committee reports, please refer to the Procedures of the House of the Delegates of the AMA. Minority reports from reference committees are in order.

If an item is extracted from the reference committee report, the original report or resolution which has been accepted by the House as its business is the main motion before the House. Any amendments recommended by the reference committee will be accepted for discussion without the need for a second. In the event that a number of closely related items of business have been considered by the reference committee and a consolidation or substitution has been proposed by the committee, the reference committee substitute will be the matter before the House for discussion (as a main motion).

During debate in the House of Delegates, whenever a delegate proposes an amendment to a Reference Committee report, he/she shall immediately submit the proposal in writing to the Speaker. The Speaker shall not formally recognize the amendment until he/she receives it in written form.
D. Form of action upon reports and resolutions: There should be clear understanding of the precise effect of the language used in disposing of items of business. There has been variance in interpretation of such proposals as “to accept for information,” “to approve in principle,” or “to approve,” “accept,” or “adopt.”

In the interest of clarity the following recommendations are offered so that the House may accomplish its intent without misunderstanding:

1. When the House wishes to acknowledge that a report has been received and considered, but that no action upon it is either necessary or desirable, the appropriate proposal for action is that the report be FILED. For example, a report, which explains a government program or regulations, or clarifies the issue in a controversial matter, may properly be filed for information. This does not have the effect of placing the Association on record as approving or accepting responsibility for any of the material in the report.

2. When a report offers recommendations for action, these recommendations may be ADOPTED, APPROVED or ACCEPTED each of which has the effect of making the Association responsible for the matter. In the interest of clarity, the use of the terms “accepted for information” or “approve in principle” should be avoided. The term “endorse” means to express definite approval of -- implying a commitment to implementation not otherwise expressed.

3. When the House does not wish to assume responsibility for the recommendation of a report in its existing form, it may take action to refer back to committee (recommit), to refer elsewhere, to reject the report in entirety or in specific part, or to adopt as amended (Amend and Adopt).

4. The House of Delegates should take a definite action on resolutions and only if necessary reaffirm current policy. In the event that “no action” is the only appropriate posture for the Association with respect to a particular resolution, the chair of the reference committee after consultation with the Speakers, may place such resolution on the Consent Calendar in a category designated “no action.” Such a motion if adopted is the equivalent of a motion to postpone indefinitely and results in suppression of the resolution for the current meeting and in effect quashes it.

5. From time to time the reference committee will report on a resolution which calls for a policy position contrary to or at variance with existing policy. The committee may recommend reaffirmation of existing policy as an amendment by substitution in lieu of the original resolution. However, the committee should recommend rejection of such resolutions contrary to existing policy, particularly since the entire House of Delegates has not had the benefit of a thorough review of existing policy. The Speakers believe that reaffirmation is relatively indecisive since the previous policy has not been specifically reintroduced and debated. The appropriate recommendation therefore would be for a negative vote, so that previous policy will be reaffirmed.
E. Parliamentary Procedure in the House:

A few comments on specific procedures may be helpful.

1. The motion to REFER: If it is desired that a matter be referred to the Board or through the Board to the appropriate Committee, it should be specifically indicated if a report back to the House of Delegates is desired at a definite time. Without such a directive, the matters of reporting back and its timing are up to the body receiving the referral. If the motion to REFER is adopted, all pending or adopted amendments as well as the subject are referred. All referral to specific committees are made through the Board.

The motion to REFER FOR DECISION: When the House of Delegates refers an item of business to the Board for decision, the House delegates to the Board the decision as to what action is appropriate. Once the Board determines the appropriate action, whether affirmative or negative or no action, it will inform the House via the Handbook prior to the next meeting, and may use other appropriate means such as MSV publications.

2. The motion to AMEND something already adopted: Not infrequently it becomes desirable on the basis of afterthought or further consideration to modify an action, which has already been taken. If the modification is a simple addition to the action taken, rather than a substantive change, it is not necessary to RECONSIDER. A motion to AMEND the previous action is in order and it becomes a main motion.

F. The Motion to POSTPONE or DEFER CONSIDERATION of a question:
Such deferment may take two forms – (1) Postpone Definitely and (2) Postpone Temporarily.

1. To postpone definitely is of higher rank than referral, and can be amended as to the definite time for consideration, with debate limited to brief discussion of the time or reason for postponement.

2. To postpone temporarily is the same motion as to “table,” is the highest ranking subsidiary motion to be applied to a main motion, requires a majority vote, and can be applied to a motion even after it has been determined that debate on the motion has been terminated which would, in effect, temporarily postpone the vote on the main motion. When such debate is resumed, if the vote to terminate debate has been previously passed, it would simply require that the vote be taken without further debate.
VI. COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES

To facilitate accomplishment of the business of the House of Delegates, the Speaker may appoint committees and their chairs from among the Delegates and Alternate Delegates including but not limited to the following:

A. Credentials Committee:

1. To greet those attending the meeting;
2. To direct those attending to appropriate areas of seating;
3. To control the access to the floor of the House of Delegates and to monitor the doors so as to eliminate extraneous noise in the meeting;
4. To record the attendance of delegates, developing the official Credentials Committee Report; and
5. To deliver the Credentials Committee report to the House of Delegates.

B. Rules Committee:

1. To propose Rules of Procedure to the House of Delegates; and
2. To make a determination and a report to the House of Delegates regarding late and emergency resolutions.

C. Tellers Committee:

1. To count and record votes at direction of the Speaker and according to Rules of Procedure.

Affiliate members of the Society may serve as members on the Tellers Committee.

VII. NOMINATIONS

The House of Delegates, at its second session of the Annual Meeting, shall elect from its membership a committee on nominations, according to the applicable article of the Bylaws.

Two (2) immediate former presidents of the Society, and the chair of the Society's AMA delegation, shall serve as non-voting advisory members of the Nominating Committee.

The Committee shall present its recommendations to the membership in a mailing to the membership 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting. Members of the House of Delegates may make further nominations for each office at the Annual Meeting from the floor.

When applicable, one nominating speech for each candidate shall be limited to two minutes. A single second shall be by announcement only.

The Speaker of the House of Delegates shall be empowered to appoint members to fill vacancies on the Nominating Committee as they might occur.