

## **Guidelines for Preparing Petitions to Amend the SOCIETY's Constitution and/or Bylaws**

These guidelines are from the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws (C&B) to help you prepare a petition, including an Explanation, to amend the Society's Constitution and Bylaws. Contact C&B with any questions: [bylaws@acs.org](mailto:bylaws@acs.org).

### **PRELIMINARY WORK.**

- a. Proposed Changes. Use the most recent edition of the ACS Governing Documents (Bulletin 5): <http://www.acs.org/bulletin5>. Search Bulletin 5 in case other Articles or Bylaws might also need to be changed.
- b. Consult with Appropriate Committees and Staff of the SOCIETY. Consider how the proposed changes might affect other operations/areas of the Society. Before you collect signatures, consult with and provide a draft to all such committees and staff to identify potential issues.

### **PREPARING THE PETITION.**

- a. Style and Language. Indicate amendments by striking through words and punctuation to be deleted; underline and boldface words to be added. Include in the petition text from the Constitution and/or Bylaws that pertain to your petition. Use the Society's conventions, per Bulletin 5: 1) see the definitions of MEMBER vs. STUDENT MEMBER; "member" includes both categories; 2) use initial capital letters for officers, e.g. President and Councilor; 3) use official committee names, e.g. Committee on Divisional Activities (not DAC), etc. See other petitions in the Council agendas as examples.
- b. Explanation. Petitions must include a clear, complete, and concise Explanation that explains why the petition is submitted and reflects the intent of the petitioners. The Explanation is critical in the consideration of the petition by Councilors and members of the SOCIETY committees. Remember that the Explanation is not included in the Constitution and Bylaws.
- c. Consistency and Legality. Submit separate petitions for unrelated amendment(s). Send your draft to C&B at [bylaws@acs.org](mailto:bylaws@acs.org) for a preliminary review, preferably one month before the petition deadline. C&B will check if your petition is legal and consistent with the ACS Governing Documents.

### **OBTAINING SIGNATURES**

- a. The number of signatures required is not fewer than 10 voting Councilors or not fewer than 25 members of the SOCIETY, per Constitution Article XVIII. We suggest that you get a few more signatures than the required number in case one or more might be declared invalid. Getting an excessive number of signatures impedes the processing of the petition.
- b. Individuals are voting Councilors only if they hold office on the date that the petition is received by the Executive Director of the Society. Only members (not affiliates) of the Society may sign the petition. Signatures from those who are Society Affiliates, Local Section Affiliates, and Division Affiliates are not acceptable and will be considered invalid.
- c. Signatures must be submitted either on a copy of the petition or on a signature page that includes: the name of the petitioner, the same date that's put on the petition, and lines for Signature, Printed Name, Date Signed, and Yes/No if person is a voting Councilor. Blank signature pages are available from C&B: [bylaws@acs.org](mailto:bylaws@acs.org).
- d. Valid Signature. A signature will be considered valid on a petition, which includes the same date as the signature page, if it is submitted by the petition deadline via email but only if the email includes a scanned signature, or by mail or facsimile. Proxies will not be accepted.

### **SUBMITTING THE PETITION**

- a. Deadline. Valid petitions must be received by the Executive Director of the SOCIETY not less than sixteen weeks before the Council meeting at which the petition is to be presented for consideration per Constitution Article XVIII. Submit the petition and all signatures together by either email to [bylaws@acs.org](mailto:bylaws@acs.org), or by mail or fax.
- b. After Submission. C&B will finalize the title of the petition and will prepare the petition as it will appear in the Council agenda. Petitioners will receive the petition for consideration, including the preliminary reports from B&F and C&B, and the one for action with the final reports. The primary person who represents the petitioners will be invited to meet with C&B at the ACS national meeting at which the petition is up for consideration. Petitioners may submit comments or suggested changes to C&B, but not later than thirty days following the Council meeting at which the petition was presented for consideration.
- c. Financial Impact. After the petition has been submitted, C&B will contact appropriate staff to get B&F's assessment on how the proposed changes will impact the finances of the Society.