

RES 26-04 | SUPPORTING EQUALITY FOR ALL GENERAL CONFERENCE DELEGATES

SUBJECT: Supporting Equality For All General Conference Delegates
SUBMITTED BY: Jason Takagi, Richard Bentley, Israel Alvaran, Steve Poteete-Marshall, Janet Gollery McKeithen, Katharine H.H. Wingate, Mele Maka, Molly Vetter, Rod Sprott, Jeanne Roe Smith, Christy Clark, Frank Wulf, Sandie Richards, Rachel Gipson, Allison Mark, Judy Chung
ESTIMATED FINANCIAL IMPACT: NONE
SOURCE OF STAFF TIME: NONE

Whereas, ¶14 Article I.2 of the Book of Discipline states, “Delegates shall be elected in a fair and open process by the annual conferences.” and

Whereas, the constitution of the Methodist Church that evolved into the constitution of the United Methodist Church was written only 21 years after the constitution of the United States and includes many of the same political doctrines such as the separation of powers, and

Whereas, the Book of Discipline clearly envisions representative democratic governance at all levels of the church.

Whereas, in line with President Trump’s, Presidential Proclamation 10998, on January 1, 2026, the United States Department of State has suspended the issuance of B-2 visitor visas (tourist visas) to nationals from, Angola, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, all countries that General Conference delegates are expected to come from, and

Whereas, each General Conference delegate from some other countries such as Burundi, Mozambique and Zambia in order to get a visa may have to post a bond of up \$15,000 which will only be refunded upon their return to their home country, and

Whereas, General Conference is scheduled to take place on May 8-16, 2028 in Minneapolis, Minnesota with more than half of the delegates coming from outside the US, and

Whereas, an exception has been made for participants in certain major sporting events, but not for major religious events, and

Whereas, ¶163 IV.A. Church and Governments in the Book of Discipline states, “We generally affirm the independence and integrity of both institutions, and we advocate for a relationship of mutual respect in which neither institution seeks to dominate or unduly influence the other.”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the California-Pacific Annual Conference, affirms that all United Methodists worldwide should be able to elect their chosen representatives to General Conference, regardless of their status as a United States national or resident, and

THEREFORE BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, that the California-Pacific Annual Conference urges the Commission on the General Conference to look at all possibilities to ensure it is possible for all delegates to equally participate in the General Conference including having the General Conference at two sites – one in the US in Minneapolis and the other outside of the US – so that all delegates can fully participate in the General Conference regardless of their US visa status, and

THEREFORE BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, that the California-Pacific Annual Conference in line with our Social Principles calls for President Trump to allow for an exception for major religious events, like the General Conference and not impede the work of the United Methodist Church.