

MEMORANDUM REGARDING PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO NCSL RULES OF PROCEDURE

To: Legislators and Legislative Staff
From: Tim Storey, NCSL CEO
Date: July 9, 2026
Re: Proposed Amendments to NCSL Rules of Procedure

The current NCSL Rules of Procedure, as most recently amended on Aug. 6, 2025, are available at www.ncsl.org/about-us/ncsl-permanent-rules-of-procedure.

Proposed amendments to Rule II, Rule IV and Rule VII are presented below for your consideration. Additions are presented in red.

Amendments to the NCSL Rules of Procedure are proposed by the NCSL Work Group on Amendments. The amendments will be considered by the Budget Finance and Rules Committee and the full Executive Committee on July 26, 2026, and by members at the NCSL Business Meeting on July 29, 2026.

RULE II

INTRODUCTION, REFERRAL AND DISSEMINATION OF POLICY DIRECTIVES, RESOLUTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

- A) Any legislator may file a policy directive, resolution or amendments to an existing policy directive or resolution designed for consideration at the Annual Business Meeting.
- B) Policy directives and resolutions developed by the Standing Committees shall be directed at Congress, the administration, or the federal courts, and shall be related to issues that affect the states and shall be consistent with support of state sovereignty and state flexibility and protection from unfunded federal mandates and unwarranted federal preemption.
- C) Resolutions shall be used to (1) bolster a lobbying position; (2) clarify a question of ambiguity in current policy; (3) provide guidance about the specifics of pending regulatory federal decisions; or (4) provide guidance about strategy or tactics regarding a lobbying matter.
- D) There shall be memorial resolutions that do not comply with Rule II (B). Members shall file memorial resolutions with the Chief Executive Officer or designee in accordance with other provisions of these Rules. The legislator Co-Chairs of the standing committees shall refer such resolutions to the appropriate standing committee or the Executive Committee. Memorial resolutions adopted by the Executive Committee shall be placed on the appropriate calendar of the Annual Business Meeting.
- E) Policy directives, resolutions or amendments to existing policy directives or resolutions shall be filed with the Chief Executive Officer or designee at least thirty days prior to the Annual Business Meeting. The overall legislator Co-Chairs of the Standing Committees, in consultation with the Co-Chairs of the appropriate standing committee, may waive the thirty-day deadline under extraordinary circumstances. The legislator Co-Chairs of the Standing Committees shall refer such policy directives, resolutions and amendments to existing policy directives or resolutions promptly to the appropriate standing committee or committees. Each policy directive, resolution and amendment to an existing policy directive or resolutions shall be reviewed and acted upon by the committee to which it is referred.

- F) Policy directives, resolutions and amendments to existing policy directives or resolutions originating in the standing committees shall be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer or designee for referral by the legislator Co-Chairs of the Standing Committees at least thirty days prior to the Annual Business Meeting. The legislator Co-Chairs of the Standing Committees, in consultation with the Co-Chairs of the appropriate standing committee, may waive the thirty-day deadline under extraordinary circumstances. The legislator Co-Chairs of the Standing Committees shall refer such policy directives, resolutions and amendments to existing policy directives or resolutions promptly to the appropriate standing committee or committees.
- G) Standing committees shall disseminate draft policy directives, resolutions and amendments to existing policy directives or resolutions at least twenty days prior to the Annual Business Meetings. Distribution shall be to all standing committee members, members of the NCSL Executive Committee, legislative leaders of the member jurisdictions and others as determined by the legislator Co-Chairs of the Standing Committees. The legislator Co-Chairs of the Standing Committees, in consultation with the appropriate committee Co-Chairs, may waive this deadline under extraordinary circumstances.
- H) **An amendment to: (1) a policy directive, (2) resolution or (3) an amendment to an existing policy directive must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer or designee at least fifteen days prior to the Annual Business Meeting. Any legislator may submit an amendment under this paragraph. The legislator Co-Chairs of the Standing Committees, in consultation with the Co-Chairs of the appropriate standing committee, may waive the fifteen-day deadline under extraordinary circumstances. The legislator Co-Chairs of the Standing Committees shall refer amendments properly submitted under this paragraph to the appropriate standing committee or committees. Standing committees must disseminate amendments at least ten days prior to the Annual Business Meeting using the distribution procedures established in paragraph G.**

RULE IV STANDING COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

- A) There shall be standing committees and task forces of NCSL whose number and jurisdictions are determined by the Executive Committee. The standing committees and task forces (1) consider federal issues that affect states; (2) formulate policy positions on federal issues; (3) exchange information about state and federal policy matters; (4) consider and evaluate innovative approaches to state issues; (5) develop policy options and recommendations regarding state issues and legislative organization, management and procedures.
- B) The legislator officers of the Conference's standing committees, including the overall standing committee legislator officers, shall be appointed by the President and the President-elect for a term of two years. There shall be at least two overall legislator Co-Chairs, one from each of the two major political parties, as defined by the NCSL bylaws. Each year, the Staff Chair appoints one overall staff Co-Chair and at least one overall staff vice chair, and one staff Co-Chair and at least one vice chair to each standing committee. The legislative staff officers of the Conference's standing committees, including the overall legislative staff Co-Chairs and the overall legislative staff vice chairs, serve staggered terms of two years.
- C) A quorum for the adoption of policy directives and resolutions in Standing Committees shall consist of representation of appointed legislator members, or in their absence, legislator substitutes designated in writing by appointed members' presiding officers, from at least ten (10) member jurisdictions. Letters designating substitutes or new appointments shall be delivered to the appropriate legislator committee Co-Chairs no later than the beginning of the committee session at which a vote on public policy will occur. The Legislator Co-Chairs of each standing committee shall, prior to a committee vote(s) on a matter of public policy, establish the presence of a quorum.
- D) **An amendment to a: (1) policy directive, (2) resolution, or (3) amendment to an existing policy directive must be submitted to a standing committee pursuant to Rule II, paragraph H, except that an amendment may be offered with unanimous consent or if the legislator Co-Chairs of the standing committee agree that the amendment is necessary to correct a clerical error.**
- E) All voting in standing committees, subcommittees or task forces shall be by voice, except when a roll call vote is requested by two (2) member jurisdictions, or is called by the legislator Co-Chairs.

- F) On matters of public policy that place the standing committees, subcommittees, and task forces on public record, an affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the member jurisdictions who respond to the most recent quorum call is required. A state not present for the most recent quorum call can before the start of the next roll call vote request recognition from the presiding legislator chair and be recorded as present for purposes of the quorum. New quorum calls shall be conducted at the request of five (5) member jurisdictions. On all other matters, a quorum being present, action is final by majority vote of the member jurisdictions who responded to the most recent quorum call.
- G) Votes on matters of public policy shall be cast by appointed legislator members, or in their absence, by legislator substitutes designated in writing by appointed members' presiding officers. All legislators duly registered for the Annual Meeting shall be entitled to vote at the business meeting. Legislative staff shall not be entitled to vote on matters of public policy. In the event of a roll call vote, each member jurisdiction shall be entitled to cast one undivided vote. Each member jurisdiction shall select a spokesperson who will announce the vote of the delegation. Disputes on the presence of a quorum or voting procedures shall be settled by ruling of the legislator chair.
- H) Co-Chairs of the standing committees have authority to preserve order and decorum and have charge of the rooms in which the committees meet.
- I) Each standing committee, subcommittee and task force shall produce a summary of each of its meetings. Included in the summary shall be a record of its roll call votes by member jurisdiction.
- J) Standing committees, shall approve, approve with amendment, postpone, table or defeat each policy directive and resolution submitted to it.

RULE VII VOTING AT ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

- A) All action in the Annual Business Meeting shall be by voice vote except when a roll call vote is requested by not less than five member jurisdictions or is ordered by the chair.
- B) As provided in the Bylaws, on any vote that places the Conference on record in a matter of public policy, an affirmative vote of three quarters (3/4) of the member jurisdictions who respond to the most recent quorum call shall be required. A state not present for the most recent quorum call can, before the start of the next roll call vote, request recognition from the presiding legislator chair and be recorded as present for purposes of the quorum. New quorum calls shall be conducted at the request of not less than five (5) member jurisdictions. On all other matters, action is final by majority vote of the member jurisdictions who responded to the most recent quorum call. On any vote that places the Conference on record in a matter of public policy, legislative staff shall not be entitled to vote.
- C) In the event of a roll call vote, each member jurisdiction shall be entitled to cast one undivided vote. Prior to the Annual Business Meeting, each member jurisdiction shall select the spokesperson who will announce the vote.
- D) When a roll call is being taken, the member jurisdictions shall be called in alphabetical order by the Chief Executive Officer or designee. The spokesperson for the delegation shall reply by giving his or her name and then announcing the vote of the delegation.
- E) If there is a challenge by a member of a delegation as to who shall be its spokesperson or as to the announced vote, the jurisdiction shall be called upon again. If the challenger continues the challenge, the chair shall poll the delegation and shall declare that the majority of said delegation prevails.
- F) Until the chair announces the results of a vote, a jurisdiction has the right to change its vote, or to have its vote recorded if it was not recorded during the initial call of the vote, based on the most recent quorum call.
- G) Consideration of policy directives and resolutions shall be by calendar. The consent calendar shall be limited to policy directives and resolutions approved unanimously by an NCSL standing committee at the Annual Meeting. The debate calendar shall include all policy directives and resolutions passed by the NCSL standing committees without unanimity; policy directives and resolutions removed from the consent calendar by majority vote of the Steering Committee; and policy directives and resolutions removed from the consent calendar at the Annual Business Meeting at the request of three (3) member jurisdictions.
- H) All policy directives, resolutions and amendments **to existing policy directives** shall be submitted in writing, adhering to the NCSL By-Laws and Rules of Procedure, and available prior to the vote of member jurisdictions. **An amendment to a policy directive, resolution or an amendment to an existing policy directive may not be offered at the Annual**

Business Meeting unless: (1) there is unanimous consent; or (2) the chair determines the amendment is necessary to correct a clerical error.

- 1) Policy directives and resolutions that have been tabled or postponed by a committee may be brought for consideration following disposition of the debate calendar by a vote of two thirds (2/3) of the member jurisdictions who respond to the most recent quorum call on a motion to discharge the committee from further consideration. If thus brought up for consideration, the policy directives and proposed resolutions shall be voted upon under the rules governing consideration of policy directives and resolutions.