

COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendations

There are no consent recommendations.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The Committee on Bills and Overtures is one of the committees proposed by the Committee on Business to be appointed during the Assembly's first sederunt. As a way of facilitating its work, the Committee on Bills and Overtures met by conference call prior to the Assembly on Tuesday, April 26, 2016.

Book of Forms section 308 describes the responsibilities of this committee. In short, it receives documents transmitted to the Assembly, such as unreferred overtures, and prepares recommendations proposing how the Assembly might deal with them.

The committee offers the following recommendations:

The prayer of Overture No. 10, 2016, asks the General Assembly to rule any consideration of overtures relating to the approval of the celebration of marriage of same-sex couples out of order.

The Committee on Bills and Overtures notes that the 2015 General Assembly deemed in order and received for consideration a number of overtures related to human sexuality and sexual orientation, some of which made reference to same-sex relationships and marriage. Since last year's General Assembly agreed to invite the church to discuss same-sex marriage, the committee makes the following recommendation.

Recommendation No. 1 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the prayer of Overture No. 10, 2016 re declaring overtures re same sex marriage out of order (p. 29.1.1) be not granted.

Recommendation No. 2 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 11, 2016 re develop a Reformed confessional hermeneutic (p. 29.1.1–2) be referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine.

Overture No. 12, 2016, asks the General Assembly to consider a means for the dismissal of congregations that may want to withdraw from The Presbyterian Church in Canada if those congregations are unable to accept changes in doctrine or discipline.

A very similar overture was referred to the Clerks of Assembly, in consultation with the Assembly Council, the Trustee Board and the Pension and Benefits Board, by the 2015 General Assembly. Subsequently, three 2016 overtures expressing essentially the same request were also referred to the Clerks to consult with the same three bodies. Given the similarity of these overtures, the Committee on Bills and Overtures recommends that the prayer of Overture No. 12, 2016 and Overture No. 14, 2016 be answered by the response of the General Assembly to the Clerks of Assembly Rec. No. 2 concerning these previously referred overtures (see p. 7.1.2–5).

Recommendation No. 3 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 12, 2016 re policy for a congregation wishing to leave the denomination (p. 29.1.2) be answered by the General Assembly's decision on the Clerks of Assembly Recommendation No. 2, 2016.

Recommendation No. 4 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 13, 2016 re request more time for human sexuality discussion (p. 29.1.2–3) be referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries).

Recommendation No. 5 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 14, 2016 re Indigenous spirituality and defer Native Ministries Endowment Fund (p. 29.1.3–4) be referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine in consultation with the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) and the National Native Ministries Council.

Recommendation No. 6 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 15, 2016 re extending time for human sexuality responses (p. 29.1.4–5) be referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries).

Recommendation No. 7 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 16, 2016 re policy for a congregation wishing to leave the denomination (p. 29.1.5) be answered by the General Assembly's decision on the Clerks of Assembly Recommendation No. 2, 2016. (Clerks of Assembly Rec. No. 2, p. 7.1.5)

Recommendation No. 8 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 17, 2016 re develop a bereavement leave policy (p. 29.1.5–6) be referred to the Life and Mission Agency (Ministry and Church Vocations).

Recommendation No. 9 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 18, 2016 re research reasons for declining membership (p. 29.1.6) be referred to the Life and Mission Agency (Canadian Ministries) in consultation with the Assembly Council.

Recommendation No. 10 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 19, 2016 re congregational vote re sexual orientation and process for leaving the denomination (p. 29.1.6) be referred to the Clerks of Assembly.

Recommendation No. 11 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 20, 2016 re congregational vote re sexual orientation and process for leaving the denomination (p. 29.1.6–7) be referred to the Clerks of Assembly.

Recommendation No. 12 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 21, 2016 re ministry and eldership of and performing marriage of those in same gender relationships (p. 29.1.7) be referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries).

Recommendation No. 13 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 22, 2016 re preparing a statement on Indigenous Spirituality (p. 29.1.7–10) be referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine in consultation with the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) and the National Native Ministries Council.

Susan Mattinson
Convener