

1 **OVERTURE 16** from Pacific Northwest Presbytery (to CCB, OC)
2 "Amend *BCO* 25-3 on Quorums for Withdrawal"
3

4 **Be it resolved**, that the 45th General Assembly amend *BCO* 25-3 by adding a sentence to
5 increase the quorum for withdrawals (underlining for addition):
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7 25-3. The quorum of the congregational meeting shall consist of one-fourth
8 (1/4) of the resident communing members, if the church has not more than one
9 hundred (100) such members, and of one-sixth (1/6) of the resident communing
10 members if a church has more than one hundred (100) such members.
11 However, at any meeting where there will be a vote to withdraw from the
12 Presbyterian Church in America, the quorum shall be one-half (1/2) of the
13 resident communing members.
14

15 Rationale
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17 The current quorum requirement is too low for a decision as important as severing relations
18 with the denomination. With the current *BCO* quorum requirements, for any church with
19 over 100 communicant members, it is possible for 9% of the membership to take the church
20 out of the PCA – and in a congregational meeting announced with just one week’s notice.
21

22 101 members x 1/6 quorum x 51% = 9 (i.e., 9% of membership)
23 1,000 members x 1/6 quorum x 51% = 85 (i.e., 8.5% of membership)
24

25 The change would require a minimum of 26% of the membership to vote to leave.
26

27 101 members x 1/2 quorum x 51% = 26 (i.e., 26% of membership)
28 1,000 members x 1/2 quorum x 51% = 255 (i.e., 26% of membership)
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30 One example might help illustrate the unreasonable lowness of the quorum currently required
31 for a vote to leave the PCA. Our *Rules of Assembly Operations* require a quorum of at least
32 1/2 in order to make any change to the *RAO*.
33

34 Article XX - The *Rules of Assembly Operations* may be amended or
35 suspended only by a two-thirds vote of those voting, **which must also be a**
36 **majority of the total enrollment of commissioners.** (Emphasis added.)
37

38 In other words, with 1,200 enrolled GA commissioners, approval of any change would require
39 at least 600 commissioners to cast votes. (And a 2/3 majority to adopt any change.)
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41 Note - Approval of a departure motion would still only require a simple majority; just a higher
42 quorum. Our Presbytery also considered whether *BCO* 25-11 should be revised to require
43 more than a simple majority to withdraw, but we believed the quorum change would be
44 sufficient. But if the Overtures Committee believes it is also prudent to revise *BCO* 25-11,
45 our Presbytery would regard that as a germane.
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47 *Proposed to the Pacific Northwest Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 27, 2017*
48 *Adopted by a BCO 15-1 administrative commission of Presbytery, March 13, 2017*
49 *Attested by /s/ RE Howard Donahoe, stated clerk*