

1 **OVERTURE 2** from Northwest Georgia Presbytery (to CTS, OC)
2 “Encourage CTS toward Growth and Release from Assembly Oversight”
3

4 **Whereas**, on several occasions, queries have arisen (either by overtures from the lower courts
5 or from suggestions of various boards) if denominational educational institutions
6 deserve different or more specialized oversight than the Permanent Committees of the
7 PCA: and
8

9 **Whereas**, there may be valid institutional needs and opportunities among educational
10 institutions that are limited by our current oversight, which is restricted to ordained
11 officers; and
12

13 **Whereas**, other seminaries exist without oversight or support from a particular denomination
14 and have the liberty to set their own standards for membership of their boards; and
15

16 **Whereas**, prospective ministerial students presently have many educational options, and
17 removing formal oversight for one denominational seminary in no way threatens the
18 quality of ministerial education—indeed, it could help other seminaries in their
19 mission; and
20

21 **Whereas**, true liberty supports educational institutions in pursuing and adapting their mission,
22 especially if they mature to a point where they do not wish to be exclusively under
23 oversight by ordained officers; and
24

25 **Whereas**, we would not wish to restrict or hinder the true flourishing of fine faculties and
26 institutions, nor encroach on academic freedom; and
27

28 **Whereas**, Covenant Theological Seminary (CTS) was founded in 1956, has been supported
29 by PCA gifts since 1983, and is now both well established and capable of meeting its
30 operating expenses; and
31

32 **Whereas**, this libertarian option necessitates no changes in CTS personnel or operations, nor
33 does it restrict any others from freely contributing to the mission and work of CTS:
34

35 **Therefore**, the 47th General Assembly approves a plan for releasing CTS from Presbyterian
36 Church in America oversight and any accompanying restrictions, with a generous
37 financial subsidy by encouraging all Sessions to give Askings for CTS for at least the
38 next two years at the present rate. As such, when appropriate votes have been made,
39 CTS will then be released from being an agency of the PCA (as per *BCO* 14-1)
40 formally and as to any oversight, while all parties will continue to work together for
41 mutually beneficial ends and in all ways possible; and
42

43 **Further**, according to the process of *BCO* 26-2, to facilitate this, we recommend that the
44 courts of the church vote to amend the *BCO* to read as below by simply deleting the
45 reference to CTS in *BCO* 14-1.12 at the 47th General Assembly and during 2019-2020,

1 followed by a similar vote on the *RAO* and By-Laws sections at the beginning of the
2 48th General Assembly once the *BCO* is amended to make those sections consistent
3 [the relevant sections are *RAO* 4-3, 5-1(b)3, 5-2, 14-1, and Article VI-3 (which is
4 simply to be deleted) of the *Corporate By-Laws of Presbyterian Church in America*
5 (*A Corporation*)] with the amended *BCO* 14-1.12, while encouraging PCA churches
6 to continue their giving to CTS in the future as they may.

7
8 **Accordingly, we overture** to amend *BCO* 14-1.12 as follows, with the *RAO* and ByLaws to
9 conform afterwards:

10
11 12. The Assembly permanent committees are the Administrative Committee of
12 General Assembly, Committee on Christian Discipleship Ministries, Committee
13 on Mission to North America, Committee on Mission to the World, and Committee
14 on Reformed University Fellowship.

15 The Administrative Committee of General Assembly (AC) shall consist of
16 ~~twenty (20)~~ **nineteen (19)** members:

- 17 a. Eleven members in classes elected through the standard nomination and
18 election procedure,
19 b. One member each from the following program committees or agencies:
20 1. Committee on Discipleship Ministries (CDM);
21 2. Covenant College (CC);
22 3. ~~Covenant Theological Seminary (CTS);~~ . . .

23
24 and renumber the other Committees or Agencies in this section, with the
25 rest of this section remaining un-amended.

26
27 So that the 47th General Assembly amends *BCO* 14-1.12 to read:

28
29 12. The Assembly permanent committees are the Administrative Committee of
30 General Assembly, Committee on Christian Discipleship Ministries, Committee
31 on Mission to North America, Committee on Mission to the World, and Committee
32 on Reformed University Fellowship.

33 The Administrative Committee of General Assembly (AC) shall consist of
34 nineteen (19) members:

- 35 a. Eleven members in classes elected through the standard nomination and
36 election procedure,
37 b. One member each from the following program committees or agencies:
38 1. Committee on Discipleship Ministries (CDM);
39 2. Covenant College (CC)
40 3. Mission to North America (MNA);
41 4. Mission to the World (MTW);
42 5. PCA Foundation (PCAF);
43 6. PCA Retirement & Benefits, Inc. (RBI);
44 7. Reformed University Fellowship (RUF);
45 8. Ridge Haven Conference Center (RH).

1 The eleven members at large shall serve a term of four years. The chairman of
2 the Administrative Committee shall be one of its members at large.

3 Each program committee and agency shall designate its member each year at
4 the last meeting of the committee or board before the meeting of General
5 Assembly. The chief administrative officers of the program committees and
6 agencies may attend any meeting of the Administrative Committee. They shall be
7 entitled to the privilege of the floor but shall not have a vote and must be excluded
8 when an executive session is called.

9 Committee on Discipleship Ministries, Committee on Mission to North
10 America, Committee on Mission to the World, and Committee on Reformed
11 University Fellowship shall consist of fifteen (15) men divided into five classes of
12 three men each, with two men being TEs and one RE or two men being REs and
13 one TE on alternate years, elected to serve five-year terms. Committees on
14 Discipleship Ministries, Mission to North America, Mission to the World, and
15 Reformed University Fellowship shall have one ruling and one teaching elder as
16 alternates to fill any vacancy that may occur during the year.

17 Persons who have served for a full term, or for at least two years of a partial
18 term, on one of the Assembly's permanent committees or agencies shall not be
19 eligible for re-election to an Assembly committee until one year has elapsed.
20 (Exceptions may be permitted in agency bylaws approved by the Assembly.)
21

22 *Adopted by Northwest Georgia Presbytery at its stated meeting, August 18, 2018*

23 *Attested by TE P. Legree Finch, stated clerk*