

1 **OVERTURE 14** from Southern New England Presbytery (to CCB, OC)
2 “Amend *BCO* 14-1.10, 14-1.11, and 14-1.12 to Allow Non-ordained
3 Persons to serve on Committees and Boards” (Version 2)
4

5 **Whereas**, vigorous participation of women in the life of the early church is attested by the
6 New Testament: they helped select (Acts 1:14) and train (Acts 18:26) leaders of the
7 church, were prophets (Acts 21:8-9), served the church through deeds of mercy in
8 vital ways (Acts 9:36–41), were instrumental in the planting of churches (Acts 16:12–
9 15; 17:4,12) and other missionary endeavors (Acts 18:1f), and were acknowledged as
10 important leaders for the church (Rom. 16:3-4); and
11

12 **Whereas**, the Presbyterian Church in America believes Christ has called his church to be a
13 “spiritual commonwealth” (*BCO* 3-1), in which members elect godly men to be
14 ordained as elders who are given the power of jurisdiction as they act jointly in the
15 courts of the church (*BCO* 3-2); and
16

17 **Whereas**, a robustly complementarian perspective affirms the oversight of these elders and
18 the proper, vital and full expression of the gifts given by Christ to men and women for
19 his service; and
20

21 **Whereas**, as part of the calling of church leaders to “equip the saints for the work of ministry
22 for building up the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:12), sessions throughout the PCA identify
23 gifted men and women to serve on committees of the church, such as missions,
24 building, and pastoral search committees; and
25

26 **Whereas**, in contrast with a commission in the PCA, which is "authorized to deliberate and
27 conclude the business referred to it," committees are appointed by courts “to examine,
28 consider and report” to their constituting court concerning the matters that court
29 delegates to them (*BCO* 15-1) and thus do not exercise governing authority; and
30

31 **Whereas**, in accordance with this principle, Permanent Committees established by the
32 General Assembly are “to serve and not to direct any Church judicatories. They are
33 not to establish policy, but rather execute policy established by the General Assembly”
34 (*BCO* 14-1.7); and
35

36 **Whereas**, these considerations suggest there is no impediment to an unordained member in
37 good standing in the PCA serving on a Permanent Committee or Agency of the
38 General Assembly established in *BCO* 14-1.12; and
39

40 **Whereas**, the 45th General Assembly adopted the recommendation of The Ad Interim
41 Committee on Women Serving in the Ministry of the Church that stated “sessions,
42 presbyteries and the General Assembly strive to develop, recognize, and utilize the
43 gifts, skills, knowledge, and wisdom of godly women in the local, regional, and
44 national church, and particularly consider overtures that would allow qualified women
45 to serve on appropriate committees and agencies within the church”; and
46

1 **Whereas**, the 46th General Assembly answered in the negative an overture to allow non-
2 ordained members on General Assembly Agency Boards on the grounds that *BCO* 14-
3 1.11 had to be amended prior to amendment of the PCA Bylaws, which governs the
4 Agencies;

5
6 **Therefore be it resolved** to amend *The Book of Church Order* by deleting 14-1.10; by
7 amending 14-1.11 as follows (and renumbering as 14-1.10); by adding a new 14-1.11;
8 and by amending 14-1.12 as follows: [Proposed additions underlined and deletions
9 noted by strike out.]

10
11 *BCO* 14-1

12
13 ~~10. The committees are to be established on the basis of an equal number~~
14 ~~between teaching and ruling elders.~~

15
16 ~~10.~~ 10. A Nominating Committee shall be comprised of one representative
17 elected by each Presbytery in the following manner. Each Presbytery shall
18 be assigned to a class by the stated clerk based on its date of formation. The
19 members shall serve in classes of three year terms, alternating between
20 ruling and teaching elders. When necessary, unexpired terms shall be filled
21 by an elder of the same class, teaching or ruling.

22 This committee is to present all nominations for which it is responsible
23 to the next meeting of the Assembly from a slate of ~~men~~ candidates
24 nominated by the Presbyteries. Presbyteries shall utilize the nominating
25 forms provided by the stated clerk for their nominations. Each presbytery
26 may present one teaching elder, ~~and~~ one ruling elder, and, when applicable,
27 one candidate who is not an elder to fill openings that are designated for
28 members at large for each committee or agency. Any non-ordained person
29 nominated must meet the qualifications outlined in *BCO* 14-1.11.

30 In addition to nominees for expired terms, the Committee shall
31 nominate for each permanent Committee one ruling, ~~and~~ one teaching elder
32 and a member at large candidate as alternates to fill any vacancies that may
33 occur during the year. Each alternate should attend each meeting and fill
34 any vacancy necessary to meet a quorum. In addition to the new nominees
35 from the Presbyteries, alternates not assuming any vacancies during a year
36 will be automatically considered by the Nominating Committee as
37 candidates for nomination to that same committee.

38
39 11. To be qualified for nomination and election to serve on a Permanent
40 Committee or Agency as a member at large, a non-ordained candidate must
41 be a member in good standing of a Church in the Presbyterian Church in
42 America and must receive an endorsement from their Session. The
43 endorsement will consist of testimony regarding the candidate's Christian
44 character, knowledge of the Constitution and promise of faithful service to
45 the General Assembly.

1 12. The Assembly permanent committees are the Administrative
2 Committee of the General Assembly, Committee on Discipleship
3 Ministries, Committee on Mission to North America, Committee on
4 Mission to the World, and Committee on Reformed University Fellowship.

5 The Administrative Committee of the General Assembly (AC) shall
6 consist of twenty (20) members:

- 7 a. Eleven members, six elders and five members who are not elders,
8 shall be in classes elected through the standard nomination and
9 election procedure,
10 b. One member from each of the following program committees or
11 agencies:
12 1. Committee on Discipleship Ministries (CDM)
13 2. Covenant College (CC)
14 3. Covenant Theological Seminary (CTS)
15 4. Mission to North America (MNA)
16 5. Mission to the World (MTW)
17 6. PCA Foundation (PCAF)
18 7. PCA Retirement & Benefits, Inc. (RBI)
19 8. Reformed University Fellowship (RUF)
20 9. Ridge Haven Conference Center (RH)

21 The eleven elected members ~~at large~~ shall serve a term of four years.
22 The chairman of the Administrative Committee shall be one of its elected
23 ordained members ~~at large~~.

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

30 Committee on Discipleship Ministries, Committee on Mission to North
31 America, Committee on Mission to the World, and Committee on Reformed
32 University Fellowship shall consist of fifteen (15) ~~men~~ members divided
33 into five classes of three ~~men~~ members. Three classes will have one TE, one
34 RE and one member at large. One class shall have one TE and two members
35 at large and one class shall have one RE and two members at large. each,
36 ~~with two men being TEs and one RE or two men being REs and one TE on~~
37 ~~alternate years; Each class shall be~~ elected to serve five-year terms.
38 Committee on Discipleship Ministries, Committee on Mission to North
39 America, Committee on Mission to the World, and Committee on Reformed
40 University Fellowship shall have one ruling elder, ~~and~~ one teaching elder
41 and one member at large as alternates to fill any vacancy that may occur
42 during the year. A quorum for each Committees shall be eight (8) members,
43 with a majority of those present being elders. The Chairman of each
44 Committee shall be an elder.

45 Persons who have served for a full term, or for at least two years of a partial
46 term, on one of the Assembly's permanent committees or agencies shall not be

1 eligible for re- election to an Assembly committee until one year has lapsed.
2 (Exceptions may be permitted in agency bylaws approved by the Assembly).
3

4 **So that BCO 14-1.10, 14-1.11, and 14-1.12 as amended would read:**

5
6 *BCO 14-1*

7
8 10. A Nominating Committee shall be comprised of one representative
9 elected by each Presbytery in the following manner. Each Presbytery shall
10 be assigned to a class by the stated clerk based on its date of formation. The
11 members shall serve in classes of three year terms, alternating between
12 ruling and teaching elders. When necessary, unexpired terms shall be filled
13 by an elder of the same class, teaching or ruling.

14 This committee is to present all nominations for which it is responsible
15 to the next meeting of the Assembly from a slate of candidates nominated
16 by the Presbyteries. Presbyteries shall utilize the nominating forms
17 provided by the stated clerk for their nominations. Each presbytery may
18 present one teaching elder, one ruling elder, and, when applicable, one
19 candidate who is not an elder to fill openings that are designated for
20 members at large for each committee or agency. Any non-ordained person
21 nominated must meet the qualifications outlined in BCO 14-1.11.

22 In addition to nominees for expired terms, the Committee shall
23 nominate for each permanent Committee one ruling, one teaching elder and
24 a member at large candidate as alternates to fill any vacancies that may
25 occur during the year. Each alternate should attend each meeting and fill
26 any vacancy necessary to meet a quorum. In addition to the new nominees
27 from the Presbyteries, alternates not assuming any vacancies during a year
28 will be automatically considered by the Nominating Committee as
29 candidates for nomination to that same committee.
30

31 11. To be qualified for nomination and election to serve on a Permanent
32 Committee or Agency as a member at large, a non-ordained candidate must be a
33 member in good standing of a Church in the Presbyterian Church in America and
34 must receive an endorsement from their Session. The endorsement will consist of
35 testimony regarding the candidate's Christian character, knowledge of the
36 Constitution and promise of faithful service to the General Assembly.
37

38 12. The Assembly permanent committees are the Administrative Committee
39 of the General Assembly, Committee on Discipleship Ministries, Committee
40 on Mission to North America, Committee on Mission to the World, and
41 Committee on Reformed University Fellowship.

42 The Administrative Committee of the General Assembly (AC) shall
43 consist of twenty (20) members:

- 44 a. Eleven members, six elders and five members who are not elders,
45 shall be in classes elected through the standard nomination and
46 election procedure,

1 b. One member from each of the following program committees or
2 agencies:

- 3 1. Committee on Discipleship Ministries (CDM)
- 4 2. Covenant College (CC)
- 5 3. Covenant Theological Seminary (CTS)
- 6 4. Mission to North America (MNA)
- 7 5. Mission to the World (MTW)
- 8 6. PCA Foundation (PCAF)
- 9 7. PCA Retirement & Benefits, Inc. (RBI)
- 10 8. Reformed University Fellowship (RUF)
- 11 9. Ridge Haven Conference Center (RH)

12 The eleven elected members shall serve a term of four years. The
13 chairman of the Administrative Committee shall be one of its elected
14 ordained members.

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

21 Committee on Discipleship Ministries, Committee on Mission to North
22 America, Committee on Mission to the World, and Committee on Reformed
23 University Fellowship shall consist of fifteen (15) members divided into
24 five classes of three members. Three classes will have one TE, one RE and
25 one member at large. One class shall have one TE and two members at large
26 and one class shall have one RE and two members at large. Each class shall
27 be elected to serve five-year terms. Committee on Discipleship Ministries,
28 Committee on Mission to North America, Committee on Mission to the
29 World, and Committee on Reformed University Fellowship shall have one
30 ruling elder, one teaching elder and one member at large as alternates to fill
31 any vacancy that may occur during the year. A quorum for each
32 Committees shall be eight (8) members, with a majority of those present
33 being elders. The Chairman of each Committee shall be an elder.

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

39
40 **Further, be it resolved** that the Stated Clerk shall be responsible for developing the
41 nomination forms necessary to implement this process and shall be responsible
42 for converting the composition of each class as each class term expires.

43
44 *Adopted by Southern New England Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 19, 2019*
45 *Attested by /s/ TE Ron Heald, stated clerk*