

Resolution Process Update

March 19, 2010

What you need to know about the process for 2010

Background

Following last year's AGM policy sessions, it became clear that "the process" was not well understood by all participants and that improvements in clarity could be made. With this in mind the Canadian Chamber of Commerce worked with a member task force to identify how the process and the understanding of the process could be improved upon for future years.

The task force met early in 2010 and what follows are its recommendations for improvement in the process:

1 Create a picture of the resolution process – start to end

Action: this year's resolution guide will contain a flowchart which illustrates the resolution process step-by-step – from start to finish. (See flowchart in resolution guide)

2 Policy criteria need to be clearly stated

Action: Create a definitive list of the policy resolution criteria that all resolutions must meet:

1. The issue is of national interest to the business community and not a local or regional issue.
2. The issue is current, timely and requires action.
3. The resolution is complete, detailed and supported by factual information (quality).
4. The resolution deals with a federal issue, and not one in the local or provincial/territorial jurisdiction.
5. The issue is important to community and business leaders from across Canada.
6. The resolution does not align one sector, industry or region of Canada against another.

3 Committees - Expert / Board

Delegates expressed a level of concern and confusion regarding the roles of the Canadian Chamber's expert and board policy committees in the resolution process.

Action: Clearly explain the roles of the committees in policy process documents.

Expert committees:

Expert committees review the content resolutions put before them and provide commentary on the resolution.

Consider expert committees to be your "policy resolution advisors".

They do not (and cannot) turn down resolutions.

Chambers* are invited (and should) to be part of the teleconference calls when their resolutions are being discussed with the expert committees.

(*This includes staff and/or volunteers)

Policy committee of the board:

The policy committee meets to review resolutions submitted in a special session normally held in July.

The committee uses the six (6) criteria to determine if a resolution will be put forward and debated at the AGM.

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4 Resolution approved or rejected?

Concern was expressed on the need for chambers to hear on a timely basis about the status of their resolution – being accepted or rejected – for debate at the AGM.

Action: Steps have been taken to ensure that approval or rejection will be communicated in a timely fashion as indicated below:

Approved: chambers will be notified regarding their resolution's status by Chamber staff.

Rejected: chambers will be quickly notified by a member of the policy committee of the board if their resolution is turned down by the board.

5 What happens with late resolutions?

At the 2009 AGM, it was clear that more clarity was needed on late resolution submission dates and criteria. This process has been strengthened and the rules are:

Chambers can submit late resolutions (which fit the late reso criteria outlined below) to The Canadian Chamber of Commerce up to 10 business days before the AGM.

Late resos are acceptable if the issue:

1. meets the standard criteria (as identified above for the regular resolution call)
2. meets the additional criteria:
 - a. It addresses an issue that requires immediate action (i.e. it's an issue that can't wait until next year) and/or
 - b. There is an accounting of extraordinary or unforeseen circumstances that have arisen since the deadline date for the submission of regular resolutions.

A late reso will not be accepted if the submitting chamber...

1. Simply missed the earlier deadline – i.e. this is not an opportunity to skip the regular process.

6 Canadian Chamber commitment to its members

Chambers participating in the policy resolution process need to know that The Canadian Chamber of Commerce, through its work with the policy task force and on behalf of all of its stakeholders, has made a renewed commitment to our members to be open and transparent in our policy resolution process.

We encourage members to engage in the resolution process. Don't be intimidated if you've never submitted a resolution. Our resolution guide and template will be extremely useful documents for you if this is the first time that you're considering submitting a resolution or if you need a refresher.

7 Things you should know:

The policy department at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce is here to help you – should you wish to put a resolution forward on your chamber's behalf, Policy Directors can advise you and help you get your resolution to the floor for debate.

The invitation to participate in this year's process will come to you by March 26th, with a final deadline for policy resolutions to be submitted to the Canadian Chamber by June 3rd.

A special thank you to the policy task force for their work improving the resolution process for everyone's benefit.

The the task force was chaired by Gerry Macartney, London Chamber of Commerce and included: Ken Kobly, AB Chambers of Commerce; Bill Denyar, Atlantic Provinces Chamber of Commerce; Mike Watson, BC Chamber of Commerce; Viviana Iturriaga-Espinoza, FCCQ; Nancy Conrad, Halifax Chamber; Leonard Loboda, Manitoba Chambers of Commerce; Tim Creedon, Red Deer Chamber of Commerce; Kent Smith-Windsor, Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce; Nancy Healey, St. John's Board of Trade; Bruce Carter, Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce; Ann-Marie Tout, Enbridge; Cliff Sosnow, Blake, Cassels and Graydon; and Robert Redhead, Newalta Corp.