



**REMIT A, 2023**

(Clerks of Assembly Rec. No. 2, A&P 2023, p. 86, 15)

**Re:** Appointment of the General Assembly's Committee to Nominate Standing Committees

The Book of Forms codifies the obligation to respond to Remits as follows:

257. It is the right and duty of every presbytery to take its part in the legislation of the Church, by approving or disapproving of overtures transmitted by the General Assembly, in terms of the Barrier Act, 1876.

257.1 The answer of a presbytery to a remit under the Barrier Act must be in the form of an extract minute.

257.2 The answer must be simply "approve" or "disapprove". A qualified approval or an approval accompanied by any proposed amendment, must be taken as equivalent to rejection.

Section 293 details the procedure of the Barrier Act. Please be sure to include in your response, the number of members on the constituent roll at the time of your decision.

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE RE PETITION NOS. 1 and 2, 2021, Rec. SCP-006 (A&P 2022, p. 301, 27)**

**Re: General Assembly's Committee to Nominate Standing Committees**

Recommendation SCP-006, 2022 instructed the General Assembly Office, over the next three years, to take steps to ensure that the make-up of the General Assembly's Committee to Nominate Standing Committees is representative of the ethnic and cultural mix of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The current method for appointing the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees is found in the Book of Forms 288.1.

288.1 A Committee to Nominate Standing Committees, consisting of nine members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, shall be appointed by the General Assembly with members being nominated by synods from within their bounds, with one synod, every three years in rotation, nominating two members. Each synod nomination will alternate between clergy and non-clergy each time its term comes in the rotation. The convener is to be named from among the membership. Each member shall serve a three-year non-renewable term with one third of the members retiring each year.

Synods currently make nominations for the committee without knowledge of the nominees of the other synods. The Clerks of Assembly believe it would be helpful for a coordinating body to receive the nominations from synods, work to ensure that the representation sought by the 2022 Assembly is achieved as closely as possible, then present for General Assembly's consideration a slate of nominees for the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees. The Clerks of Assembly suggest that the Assembly Council be the coordinating body. While the intention of the coordinating body would be to utilize the nominations of the synods, it may be that sometimes the nominations from synods would not provide the coordinating body with the ethnic and cultural mix of nominees necessary to meet the directive of the General Assembly. The Clerks of Assembly believe it would be helpful, in these rare situations, for the coordinating body to have the ability to propose nominees from beyond those submitted by the synods. The Assembly Council would also nominate a ninth member of the committee when needed to compensate for the fact that there are only eight synods. Giving the coordinating body the ability to name this ninth nominee every third year and to name a nominee from beyond the synod nominations in rare cases would allow that body to use those nominations to fill any gaps in the representation of the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees.

The Assembly Council would encourage the nominating synods to make more than one nomination each to give the Assembly Council a wider range of options. In the letter to the synods from the General Assembly Office seeking nominations, the particular ethnic and cultural needs of the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees would be shared and appropriate nominations from the synods would be encouraged. The Assembly Council would then receive the nominations from the synods and strive to compile a list of nominees that best ensures the representation being sought. Only when it is necessary to achieve the desired makeup of this committee would the Assembly Council exercise the option of nominating from beyond the names supplied by the synods. The final list of nominees would be presented to the General Assembly for consideration as part of the Assembly Council's report. Given that the committee members are on a three-year term with one third of the members retiring each year, this would mean that in most years the General Assembly would be presented with three names for consideration.

This alternative procedure was sent to synod clerks. Feedback received from some synods expressed concern about the ability to provide multiple nominations since there are currently challenges to provide a single nomination. The convener of the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees was also notified.

A recommendation was made to the Assembly Council meeting in March 2023 and suggestions regarding further clarification were received by the Clerks. Consequently, they modified the report and resubmitted it to the Assembly Council Executive. The Executive concurred with the amendments and the proposed method to form the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees.

If the 2023 General Assembly adopts the recommendation that the Assembly Council be the body to coordinate and present the membership of the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees to the General Assembly, a remit would be sent down through the Barrier Act for approval or disapproval by presbyteries since this represents a change in the law of the church. If there is appropriate support for the change, a final motion to amend the Book of Forms as necessary would be considered by the 2024 Assembly.

Book of Forms 288.1 would be amended as follows. The bold text represents new legislation. The amended version appears in the recommendation below.

288.1 A Committee to Nominate Standing Committees, consisting of nine members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, shall be appointed by the General Assembly. ~~with members being nominated by synods from within their bounds, with one synod, every three years in rotation, nominating two members. Each synod nomination will alternate between clergy and non-clergy each time its term comes in the rotation.~~ **Synods will present candidates for the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees to the Assembly Council every three years from members within their bounds. The Assembly Council, when necessary in the rotation, will name a ninth member to the committee. The Assembly Council will prepare a slate of nominees for the consideration of the General Assembly that is representative of the membership of the denomination. In rare cases, should the need arise, the Assembly Council may choose a nominee from beyond the names presented by the synods in order to meet the General Assembly's directive for an appropriate ethnic and cultural mix on the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees.** The convener is to be named from among the membership. Each member shall serve a three-year non-renewable term with one third of the members retiring each year.

You are asked to approve or disapprove this change.