

# HOW TO WRITE A RESOLUTION

**Committee:**

## Constitution & Bylaws

**Contact Information for Questions:**

constitution&bylaws@ALAforVeterans.org or your department Constitution & Bylaws chairman

**Step-by-Step Instructions:**

- A resolution is a written, formal motion. Resolutions are used because the motion may be presented in written form with some of the reasons included in the document. If written well, the resolution makes it easier for members to consider the proposal. Importance, length and complexity of the motion, and size and formality of the assembly are major considerations in using resolutions.
- A resolution has two sections - the resolving clauses and the reasons. Resolving clauses tell the specifics of the proposal. The main reasons a motion should be adopted are included in the "Whereas" clauses. Neither section should include more clauses than are absolutely necessary. Simple, but specific is best.
- When developing a written motion or resolution, consult with members who can be of assistance to improve the wording and whose support will assist in its adoption.
- The two sections of a resolution can be written in either order, but many believe it is better to write the main motion first and then write the reasons it should be adopted. This way, you first determine what is to be done. Focus on the most crucial specifics essential in the motion. Say it in one or two sentences. A third sentence could include who is responsible and a timeline.
- Once the main motion is determined, develop three to five statements to support the adoption of it. These are worded as "Whereas" clauses. These points should be the most important and least controversial arguments for the motion. Less than three points may not make the case depending on the motion, and more than five may get too complicated and confuse the issue. Again, it is important to stay focused on the points that are strictly necessary. Leave other points for the discussion.
- When the resolution is finally written, it begins with the "Whereas" clauses and ends with the resolved clauses. *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* prescribes the proper format, capitalization and punctuation. Again, it is a good idea to consult with members who can be of assistance, as well as the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, to ensure your resolution is correctly formatted.

*See the sample resolution in Support Tools at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).*