

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

“Sub-quorum rule”

Article VI, Section C.3 (STATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE / Committee Meetings)

This section currently reads:

VI.C.3. Committee Meetings

- a. The State Executive Committee shall meet at least twice per calendar year, upon call of the Chairman at such times as the State Chairman deems necessary, or upon petition of 1/3 of the Members of the Committee, after giving 15 days written notice to all Committee Members. Twenty Five Percent (25%) of the Members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Ex-officio members do not affect the quorum. There shall be no proxy voting.
- b. All proposed resolutions to come before the Executive Committee shall be submitted at least one month in advance so that they can be distributed to the Executive Committee membership prior to its meeting. Notwithstanding the above, resolutions may be submitted on the day of the meeting, but only if, by a two-thirds majority, the members of the Executive Committee vote to consider the resolution.

Problem:

Unfortunately, the State Executive Committee often fails to achieve a quorum at its meetings. Some Members drive as long as 12 hours (round trip) to attend a meeting of the State Executive Committee, only to find that their trip was wasted, because they cannot conduct business, even uncontroversial business, due to the lack of a quorum. This discourages them from attending subsequent meetings, which increases the likelihood that those meetings, too, will fail to achieve a quorum.

The Plan of Organization requires only two meetings of the Executive Committee per year. So when a meeting fails to get a quorum, the essential business of the Party may be neglected for a long time.

Solution:

The obvious cure is to reduce the quorum requirement. However, the current quorum requirement of 25% is already quite low, and permits as few as 12.5%+1 Members to make decisions for the Party. I don't support reducing that even further. Instead, I propose adding a “sub-quorum rule” to enable the Executive Committee to do non-controversial business when attendance falls short of a quorum, by requiring **supermajority** votes.

The general idea is that if we have less than a full quorum (25%), but at least ½ of a full quorum (12.5%), then we should still be able to conduct business, but with a number of automatic “no” votes counted equal to the number of members by which we are short of a quorum.

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Proposed “sub-quorum rule” amendment to Article VI, Section C.3, cont’d

After consultation with several parliamentarians about the wording and the general approach, I am proposing the following amendment:

VI.C.3. Committee Meetings

a. The State Executive Committee shall meet at least twice per calendar year, upon call of the Chairman at such times as the State Chairman deems necessary, or upon petition of 1/3 of the Members of the Committee, after giving 15 days written notice to all Committee Members. ~~Twenty Five Percent (25%) of the Members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Ex-officio members do not affect the quorum.~~ There shall be no proxy voting.

b. All proposed resolutions to come before the Executive Committee shall be submitted at least one month in advance so that they can be distributed to the Executive Committee membership prior to its meeting. Notwithstanding the above, resolutions may be submitted on the day of the meeting, but only if, by a two-thirds majority, the members of the Executive Committee vote to consider the resolution.

c. Normal quorum. The normal quorum for the transaction of business shall be Twenty Five Percent (25%) of the regular (non-ex-officio) Members. Ex-officio members do not affect the quorum.

d. Sub-quorum. Business may be transacted with fewer than 25% of regular Members present provided that: to be approved, main motions must have an affirmative vote that exceeds the maximum negative vote which would have been possible were 25% of the regular Members present. That is, the number of regular Members by which the meeting is short of having 25% present shall be added to the actual negative vote, to produce the effective negative vote.

Advantages:

- 1) This change will have no effect at all on meetings which have a full 25% quorum.
- 2) This change will enable the State Executive Committee to conduct the essential business of the Party when short of a quorum.
- 3) Unlike simply reducing the quorum requirement, this change will not increase the risk that a small, unrepresentative faction could make decisions with which most Executive Committee Members would disagree. It won't reduce the minimum number of Members needed to make decisions on behalf of the Party.
- 4) This change will greatly reduce the risk that Members from far away might drive great distances only to find that their trip was wasted because there isn't a quorum.
- 5) The language of this amendment has been carefully crafted, and vetted by expert parliamentarians.

I urge you to support this change, for the good of the Party.

Respectfully submitted,

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