



# MEDICAL STUDENT REGIONAL DELEGATE GUIDE

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## **PART I: History and Status of Regional and Alternate Delegates**

At the 2000 AMA Interim Meeting, the AMA House of Delegates (HOD) adopted the recommendations of [BOT Report 19](#), which increased medical student representation in the AMA House of Delegates (HOD). At the 2001 Annual Meeting, the MSS Assembly adopted the recommendations of [Governing Council Report A](#), “Medical Student Representation in the AMA House of Delegates: Regional Delegate Elections,” which provided recommendations on the election process of the MSS Regional Delegates. The first Regional Delegates and Alternate Delegates were elected at the 2001 Interim Meeting and began service on their respective state delegations at the 2002 Annual Meeting.

### **Current Representation**

Regional Delegates are allocated to each region at a rate of one Delegate per 2,000 student members in the region. The number of Delegates allocated to each region in a given calendar year is determined using the most recent year-end membership numbers. Because RDs/ADs are elected in November of each year at the MSS Interim Meeting, the most recent numbers available are those from two years before the year in which the RDs/ADs will actually serve. For example, the number of allocated Delegates for 2009 was determined using Year-End (YE) 2007 membership figures.

There are currently 20 Regional Delegates and 20 Regional Alternate Delegates to the HOD ([see current roster](#)). For 2010, there will also be 20 Regional Delegates and 20 Regional Alternate Delegates elected to serve in the HOD, elected by their Regions at the 2009 MSS Interim Meeting.

### **The Medical Student Regions and their delegate allocations for 2009 are as follows:**

Region 1 (WA, OR, CA, NV, UT, CO, AZ, NM, MT, ND, SD, ID, WY, AK, HI)	2
Region 2 (MN, WI, NE, IA, MO, IL)	3
Region 3 (KS, TX, OK, AR, LA, MI)	3
Region 4 (FL, GA, AL, SC, NC, TN, PR)	3
Region 5 (MI, IN, OH, KY, WV)	3
Region 6 (VA, MD, DC, DE, NJ, PA)	3
Region 7 (ME, VT, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY)	3
<hr/>	
Total	20

## **PART II: Regional Delegate and Alternate Delegate Responsibilities**

### **Regional Delegates**

- 1) Regional Delegates (RDs) are expected to attend *both* the Annual and the Interim AMA House of Delegates meetings and stay *for the duration of each meeting*. Delegates are also encouraged to attend the MSS Assembly before each meeting, if their schedule permits, in order to facilitate communication with the students in their region (please see below for tips on getting permission to miss classes/clerkship days).
- 2) At the HOD, RDs are expected to attend the MSS Testimony Writing session just prior to the opening of the HOD.
- 3) RDs should also attend one or more HOD Reference Committees. If they are not assigned to a Reference Committee by their state delegations, the MSS Delegate and Alternate will help each find the Reference Committee where they will be most needed.
- 4) RDs should read the Mini Brick prior to each House of Delegates meeting. This report will contain background info, MSS policy, HOD policy, pros/cons, and our MSS's position on each resolution.
- 5) RDs should attend *all* MSS Caucus meetings each evening. And, though RDs are elected by the students of their regions, RDs sit with their state delegations and should be afforded all privileges and responsibilities of a member of that delegation. When permitted by the state, RDs are expected to attend all of their state caucuses during the HOD. Rarely, an obligation to their state delegation may conflict with an obligation to the MSS; in these cases, RDs' official primary responsibility lies with their state delegations, but you'll be expected to use good judgment and attend as many MSS activities as possible.
- 6) RDs are elected as representatives of the students in their regions to the AMA House of Delegates. Like any elected representative, they are expected to keep in touch with their constituents, updating them on decisions made by the AMA House of Delegates as well as informing them of upcoming issues that will be debated (AMA region listservs can be effective for this). RDs should get feedback from the students in their regions as to how they should vote on resolutions, especially those pertinent to medical students. RDs are *not* required to vote with their states, and our MSS encourages RDs to consider supporting the MSS position as long as it is not in conflict with a region position on a resolution.
- 7) RDs are expected to actively participate in the Regional Delegate listserv. This means reading *all* e-mails sent out by the MSS Delegate, MSS Alternate Delegate, MSS Staff, and fellow RDs/ADs. Periodically, the MSS Delegate and Alternate Delegate may send out requests for specific information. Please reply to these by the given deadline.
- 8) *RDs are expected to actively participate in the recruitment and training of new leadership from their regions.* This means encouraging students to run for the RD position in September/October, aiding in the RD training held at the Interim MSS Assembly meeting, and actively transitioning to new RDs.

## Alternate Delegates

- 1) Regional Alternate Delegates (ADs) are expected to participate in all of the above activities including, but not limited to, attending the entire HOD meeting, testimony writing, at least one Reference Committee, their regional meetings, and *all* MSS caucuses.
- 2) ADs are expected to attend *all* state caucuses with *their home states* (not the RD's) unless they conflict with MSS Caucuses.
- 3) ADs should be prepared to step in for RDs at any time during the HOD session. When the RD is absent, the AD is expected to sit with *their own* state delegation (*not* that of the RD).

## **PART III: Structure of the AMA House of Delegates**

The AMA House of Delegates is a complicated amalgam of various constituencies. The two largest constituencies are the State Delegations (who RDs/ADs will be seated with), and the Specialty Delegations, which include representatives from the specialty societies, such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Physicians, etc. There are also six sections, each represented by a single Delegate and Alternate in the HOD: the International Medical Graduate (IMG) Section, the Organized Medical Staff Section (OMSS), the Section on Medical Schools (SMS), the Young Physicians Section (YPS), the Resident and Fellow Section (RFS), and the Medical Student Section (MSS). Finally, there are a small number of delegates representing minority medical societies and the armed forces.

Similar to the AMA-MSS, resolutions are submitted to the AMA HOD by state delegations (Ohio, New York, etc.), specialty society delegations (American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Physicians, etc.), and Sections of the AMA (Medical Student Section, International Medical Graduates Section, etc.). Individual AMA Delegates may also submit resolutions to the AMA HOD, but this is quite rare. For the Annual Meeting, all resolutions received by the Resolution Submission Deadline are included as *official* Items of Business at the AMA HOD. ***For the Interim Meeting, resolutions are first reviewed by the Resolutions Committee to determine if they are “advocacy-related” or urgent. Only advocacy related or urgent resolutions are accepted as Items of Business at the Interim AMA HOD.***

After being accepted as Items of Business, resolutions are assigned to various Reference Committees (RCs). RCs are generally composed of a group of 5-7 AMA HOD Delegates/ADs, with one alternate. At the RC hearings, which take place on the Sunday of the AMA HOD meeting, these RC members will hear testimony on the specific resolutions assigned to their RC. *RDs and ADs are eligible to serve on an RC – ask the MSS Delegate/Alternate Delegate how to sign up **one meeting ahead of time.***

After hearing all of the testimony, each RC meets in a closed session where they discuss each resolution assigned to each committee. They will then formulate the RC report, which will usually make one of the following four recommendations for each resolution (though often they will combine similar resolutions together and make one recommendation regarding all of them):

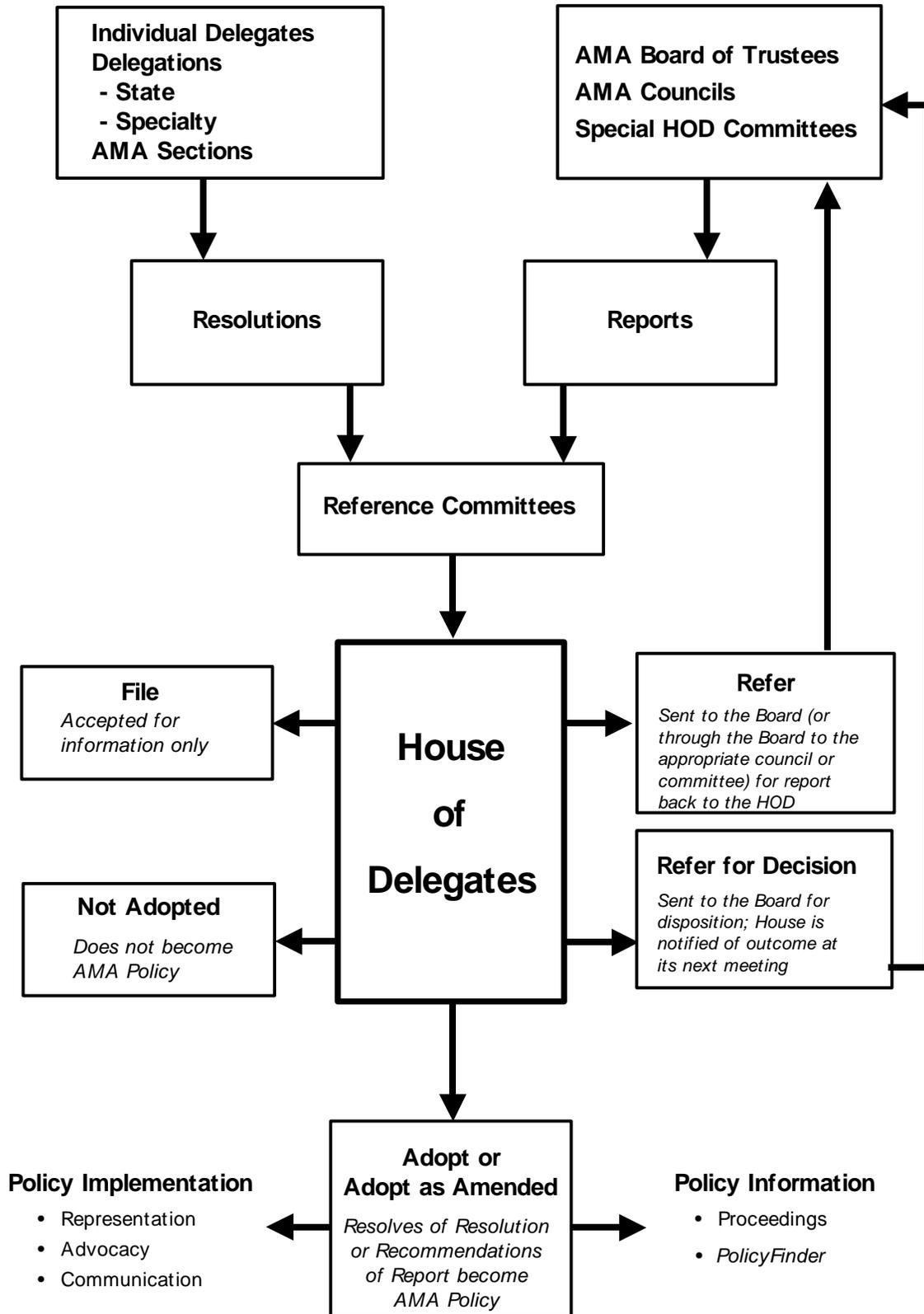
- 1) Recommended for Adoption
- 2) Recommended for Not Adoption
- 3) Recommended for Adoption with Substitution, Addition, or Deletion (the RC will provide specific substitution language)
- 4) Recommended for Referral (usually to Board of Trustees)

These RC reports will then be forwarded to the entire AMA HOD as a Consent Calendar. The Speakers will give individual AMA Delegates a chance to “extract” items from the Consent Calendar. Any AMA Delegate can extract a resolution from the Consent Calendar. After items have been extracted, the AMA HOD will vote to approve the remainder of the Consent Calendar. Finally, they will debate and vote on each of the extracted items, which may be amended multiple times on the floor of the HOD before a final vote.

The conduct of the HOD is governed by The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure by Alice Sturgis. For parli pro at a glance, review this [chart](#).

Please see the next page for a diagram of what we just reviewed.

# How AMA Sets Policy



## PART IV: Giving Testimony at the HOD

As Regional Delegates and Alternates, you will have many opportunities to give testimony, both at Reference Committees and on the floor of the AMA House of Delegates. The suggestions below are specific to giving testimony at RCs, but many of them will also be applicable to testimony given at the HOD itself. Testimony at RCs is especially important, since a favorable RC report makes it much, much easier to get a resolution passed by the AMA and an unfavorable report makes it far more difficult to get a resolution passed by the HOD. Your goal is to ensure that resolutions we support are recommended by the RC for adoption and resolutions we oppose are recommended by the RC for not adoption.

The testimony you will give on behalf of the MSS will be written by our Delegate, Alternate Delegate and MSS House Coordinating Committee. The keys to effective testimony are being confident, giving a brief background, keeping it short, making it no more than 3 arguments long, and writing it down (and rehearsing it). MSS testimony will be in the following format:

- a) “Thank you Mr./Madam Chair.”
- b) “Joe Student, speaking on behalf of the Medical Student Section in support of/opposition to this resolution.”
- c) (Give brief summary of the issue.)
- d) List arguments for support of/opposition to the resolution—limited to 3 arguments.
- e) Finish with a concluding sentence.

As an RD/AD, you may give testimony as an individual, but you ***must, must*** say that you are speaking on behalf of ***yourself*** and you may ***not*** say that you are speaking on behalf of students unless given ***explicit*** permission to do so by the MSS Delegate.

## PART V: Getting Time Off to Attend the HOD

Most medical schools want to support their students’ professional development, and they typically understand that this includes not only classes but also being involved in professional activities such as the AMA. However, taking multiple days off to attend an HOD meeting, especially during 3<sup>rd</sup> year, often can be difficult. However, if RDs/ADs follow these tips, it will likely be easier:

- 1) Contact the instructor of the classes you will be missing, or the director of the clerkship you will be on, at least a few months before the meeting. Even if you have not yet started the clerkship or the particular class and have not met the instructor or clerkship director, it is still better to contact them well in advance of the meeting.
- 2) When you contact them, be as polite as possible. Let them know that you serve as a Delegate to the American Medical Association and give them the specific days of the class or clerkship that you will have to miss in order to attend the AMA House of Delegates. Explain the importance of the meeting if the instructor or clerkship director is not familiar with the AMA.
- 3) It will often help if you offer to make up missed work, especially with a clerkship. For instance, if you will be missing a call night, you can offer to make it up earlier in the clerkship. If you will be missing a quiz or a test, you can offer to take it a few days earlier.
- 4) For third-year students, after you have received permission, make sure to let the clerkship director’s administrative assistant (who actually handles most of the day-to-day functions of running the student clerkship) know about it. You can let him or her know by copying them in all e-mails you send to the clerkship director.

- 5) When you actually start the clerkship, politely remind the clerkship director on the first day (at your orientation, for instance) of the specific days you will be missing later in the clerkship.
- 6) If you have questions or difficulties, please don't hesitate to contact your MSS Delegate or Alternate. If your instructor/clerkship director is hesitant to give you the time off, we can get a letter sent to them from the AMA explaining why you are needed at the HOD.

## **PART VI: Dates for 2009-2010 MSS Assembly and AMA House of Delegates**

<b>House of Delegates</b>	<b>MSS Assembly</b>
<b>House of Delegates Annual Meeting</b> <u>2009 June 13-17 Chicago, IL</u> 2010 June 12-16 Chicago, IL	<b>MSS Assembly Annual Meeting</b> <u>2009 June 11-13 Chicago, IL</u> 2010 June 10-12 Chicago, IL
<b>House of Delegates Interim Meeting</b> 2009 November 7-10 Houston, TX 2010 November 6-9 San Diego, CA	<b>MSS Assembly Interim Meeting</b> 2009 November 5-7 Houston, TX 2010 November 4-6 San Diego, CA

## **PART VII: Supplemental Material from the AMA**

[AMA HOD Web page](#)

[AMA's Delegate Guide](#)

[Procedures of the HOD](#)

[Information for Delegates and Societies](#)

[House of Delegates Meeting Archives](#)

## **Appendix 1: AMA MSS Delegate and Alternate Delegate Responsibilities**

### **DELEGATE**

- 1) Duties Specific to the AMA House of Delegates:
  - a) The Delegate shall act as the primary voice of the AMA Medical Student Section at the AMA House of Delegates, with the authority to represent the Section in discussions with various state and specialty society delegations and when testifying on the floor of the House of Delegates and at Reference Committee hearings.
  - b) The Delegate is required to represent the policies of the AMA Medical Student Section in his/her testimony. He/she will be the final arbiter of AMA policy on a given HOD issue.
  - c) The Delegate will represent the AMA MSS on the Resolutions Committee of the AMA HOD.
- 2) Year-Round Duties
  - a) The Delegate will be in charge of gathering information and developing testimony both on MSS resolutions being forwarded to the AMA HOD and on all other AMA resolutions on which the MSS has policy. The Alternate Delegate and the House Coordinating Committee will assist the Delegate in this role.
  - b) The Delegate shall be in charge of reporting back to the AMA MSS Governing Council and the AMA MSS about important issues that have been voted on (or will be voted on) by the AMA House of Delegates, especially those concerning medical students.
  - c) The Delegate shall be in charge of following up on both resolutions adopted by the AMA MSS and on resolutions affecting medical students that have been adopted by the AMA HOD, ensuring that they are acted upon in a timely manner.
  - d) The Delegate shall assist the Alternate Delegate in the tasks of encouraging, training, supporting, and coordinating both Regional Delegates and House Coordinating Committee members.
  - e) The Delegate shall perform any other general duties required of members of the Governing Council, including sitting on GC subcommittees or helping in the encouragement and selection of student leaders.

### **ALTERNATE DELEGATE**

- 1) Duties Specific to the AMA House of Delegates
  - a) The Alternate Delegate shall be the point person in charge of coordinating testimony and other actions of AMA Regional Delegates and House Coordinating Committee members at the AMA HOD.
  - b) The Alternate Delegate shall be the sole mediator between the Delegate and other MSS leaders while the House of Delegates is in session.
- 2) Year-Round Duties
  - a) The Alternate Delegate shall take primary responsibility for recruiting, training, supporting, and coordinating AMA Regional Delegates. This should be a year-round process.
  - b) The Alternate Delegate shall take primary responsibility for the oversight of the House Coordinating Committee (HCC) and the production of the Mini and Micro Bricks.
  - c) The Alternate Delegate will be available as a resource to medical students throughout the year in terms of preparing and advocating for resolutions and policy.

## **Appendix 2: Responsibilities of the House Coordinating Committee**

### **HCC CHAIR**

#### Committee Set-Up

- HCC Chairs are responsible for communication with and coordination of the HCC via the HCC listserv.
- They are to work closely with the MSS Delegate and Alternate Delegate to develop a timeline for completion of HCC duties and should share this timeline with the HCC.

#### Reference Committee Assignments

- The HCC Chairs are responsible for assigning HCC members to HOD Reference Committees and to resolutions within these Reference Committees to review.
- They should, when possible, try to accommodate HCC member preferences of which Reference Committee to which they wish to be assigned.
- Every effort should be made to pair more experienced with less experienced HCC members when making Reference Committee assignments.
- In general, HCC chairs should not be assigned to specific Reference Committees in order to allow them the flexibility to move between Reference Committees at the meeting and, thereby, be most available to address any questions or problems that arise during the Reference Committee hearings.

#### HCC RC Notes Preparation

- After Reference Committee assignments are made, the HCC Chair should work with the MSS Alternate Delegate to ensure that all HCC members are familiar with the proper note-taking format.
- HCC chairs should allocate specific resolutions within a Reference Committee for review to HCC members. (e.g. – even-numbered resolutions to senior member, odds to junior member, etc.).
- HCC chairs should make themselves available to the HCC members should any questions or problems arise during preparation of their notes.
- HCC notes should be e-mailed to our MSS Policy Analyst, Keith Voogd, our MSS Delegate and Alternate Delegate and our HCC Chairs, who will then ensure that they are printed in time for the subsequent MSS Caucus. If HCC members fail to prepare these reports, the HCC Chair is ultimately responsible for preparing them himself/herself.

#### Testimony Preparation

- HCC Chairs are responsible for assisting the MSS Delegate and Alternate in identifying those HOD resolutions on which the MSS should testify.
- HCC Chairs should then divide those resolutions among HCC members so that testimony can be prepared and submitted to the HCC Chairs and, subsequently, to the MSS Delegate and Alternate Delegate at least 1 week prior to the meeting.

#### General Meeting Responsibilities

- HCC Chairs are expected to stay throughout the entire MSS and HOD meetings and to be present during all HOD sessions and all MSS Caucuses.
- The HCC Chairs are responsible for assisting the MSS Delegate and Alternate in coordinating the HCC testimony writing session and all MSS Caucuses.

#### Testimony Writing

- HCC Chairs should oversee the testimony writing session.
- HCC Chairs should create a list of resolutions, in collaboration with the MSS Delegate and Alternate, on which the MSS will be testifying.
- HCC Chairs should ensure that the HCC members from each Reference Committee are overseeing testimony writing for these resolutions.
- HCC Chairs should ask for submission of all prepared testimony to them for review and should review all submitted testimony.

### Reference Committee Hearings

- HCC Chairs will oversee the coordination of testimony within HOD Reference Committees and will ensure that HCC members or delegates are present in each Reference Committee to deliver such testimony.
- HCC Chairs should be available to HCC members during HOD reference committee hearings should questions or problems arise.

### HOD Sessions

- HCC Chairs are responsible for assisting the MSS Delegate and Alternate in communicating with Regional Delegation Chairs during the HOD in order to provide a bi-directional flow of information between the RDs and the MSS Delegate and Alternate.
- At the HOD, HCC Chairs will assist the MSS Alternate Delegate in serving as the liaison between RDs and the MSS Delegate.

### MSS Caucuses

- HCC Chairs will work with the MSS Delegate and Alternate in the preparation of daily updates for distribution to the RDs at the daily MSS caucuses during the HOD.
- HCC Chairs should be present at all MSS Caucuses and should assist the MSS Delegate and Alternate in running the caucuses when needed.

## **HCC MEMBERS**

### Committee Set-up

- HCC members are responsible for reading ***all*** e-mails received over the HCC listserv and responding to all e-mails in a timely manner.
- HCC members are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the HCC guide outlining their responsibilities on the HCC.
- Reference Committee preferences must be submitted by the deadline outlined by the HCC Chairs.

### HCC Mini and Micro Brick Preparation

- HCC members are responsible for reviewing and preparing reports for RDs on assigned resolutions in their Reference Committees prior to the meeting to distribute to RDs.
- Reports should be submitted by the deadline outlined by HCC Chairs.
- While reviewing the resolutions within their assigned Reference Committees, HCC members should identify those resolutions on which the MSS will want to testify, including those regarding student issues or on topics on which the MSS has strong policy or has identified as top priorities.

### Testimony Preparation

- HCC members should work closely with authors of MSS resolutions going to the HOD in formulating the testimony on these resolutions being forwarded.
- Additionally, HCC members are responsible for preparing testimony and talking points on HOD resolutions on which the MSS has policy and wants to make a statement.

### General Meeting Responsibilities

- HCC members are expected to attend ***all*** HCC meetings, testimony writing, and regional delegate training, and should be able to stay through the ***entire*** HOD.

### HCC Report Presentation

- HCC members should become the “expert” on their assigned resolutions so that the MSS Delegate or RDs can seek them out with any questions regarding that issue.
- HCC members are expected to present their resolution report to the HCC and RDs during the first HCC meeting or other appointed time.

### Testimony Writing

- HCC members should coordinate the preparation of testimony for all resolutions within their Reference Committee on which the MSS is going to testify.
- HCC members should work with resolution authors to ensure that testimony is prepared and submitted appropriately and that students are prepared to testify in Reference Committee hearings.
- All prepared testimony should be submitted to HCC Chairs and the MSS Delegate and Alternate Delegate.
- HCC members should ensure that all prepared testimony is assigned to a specific student to be presented during Reference Committee hearings.

### Reference Committee Hearings

- During Reference Committee hearings, HCC members are responsible for coordinating the presentation of testimony within their assigned Reference Committees, including coordinating Regional/Alternate Delegates or other MSS members to testify on specific resolutions (this will almost always be decided ahead of time as outlined above).
- HCC members, when appropriate, should also testify on MSS resolutions in their Reference Committees.
- During Reference Committee hearings, HCC members should be available in a set location so that RDs and other MSS members can easily locate them if questions or problems arise.
- HCC members are expected to be present throughout the hearings of their assigned Reference Committees and to listen closely to testimony, take notes, and be prepared to report back during the MSS Caucus to the Delegate and Alternate, the HCC, and RDs on the discussion that took place.

### MSS Caucuses

- HCC members are expected to attend *all* MSS Caucuses and be prepared to report on the discussion that took place within their Reference Committees on all assigned resolutions.