

# Proposed Bylaws Amendment

## Speaking in the Name of the Society

Proposed amendments to the Society's Bylaws must be recommended by the Council and approved by the membership. To gain membership approval, an amendment must have an affirmative vote of two-thirds of those voting in a ballot in which at least ten percent of the members vote. The complete Bylaws can be viewed at [www.ams.org/bylaws.html](http://www.ams.org/bylaws.html). The Bylaws are also published in this, the September 2019, issue of the *Notices*, p. 1264.

The Bylaws give the Council limited authority to speak in the name of the Society but only after following the procedure prescribed in Article IV, Section 8:

### Article IV

#### Council

**Section 8.** The Council shall also have power to speak in the name of the Society with respect to matters affecting the status of mathematics or mathematicians, such as proposed or enacted federal or state legislation; conditions of employment in universities, colleges, or business, research or industrial organizations; regulations, policies, or acts of governmental agencies or instrumentalities; and other items which tend to affect the dignity and effective position of mathematics.

With the exception noted in the next paragraph, a favorable vote of two-thirds of the entire membership of the Council shall be necessary to authorize any statement in the name of the Society with respect to such matters. With the exception noted in the next paragraph, such a vote may be taken only if written notice shall have been given to the secretary by the proposer of any such resolution not later than one month prior to the Council meeting at which the matter is to be presented, and the vote shall be taken not earlier than one month after the resolution has been discussed by the Council.

If, at a meeting of the Council, there are present twelve members, then the prior notification to the secretary may be waived by unanimous consent. In such a case, a unanimous favorable vote by those present shall empower the Council to speak in the name of the Society.

The Council may also refer the matter to a referendum of the entire membership of the Society and shall make

such reference if a referendum is requested, prior to final action by the Council, by two hundred or more members. The taking of a referendum shall act as a stay upon Council action until the votes have been canvassed, and thereafter no action may be taken by the Council except in accordance with a plurality of the votes cast in the referendum.

The January 15, 2019 Council considered a modification to this procedure intended to permit the AMS to react quickly to speak in the name of the Society in the case of human rights or other urgent concerns. For an account of the motivation for the proposed change and the ensuing discussion, see Item 6.1 of the January 2019 Council Minutes: [www.ams.org/council-minutes0119.pdf](http://www.ams.org/council-minutes0119.pdf).

The January 15, 2019 Council recommended that the following change to Article IV, Section 8 of the Bylaws be put before the membership for a vote (changes highlighted in bold italics).

### Article IV

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**Section 8.** The Council shall also have power to speak in the name of the Society with respect to matters affecting the status of mathematics or mathematicians, such as proposed or enacted federal or state legislation; conditions of employment in universities, colleges, or business, research or industrial organizations; regulations, policies, or acts of governmental agencies or instrumentalities; and other items which tend to affect the dignity and effective position of mathematics.

*With the exceptions noted in the next two paragraphs, a favorable vote of two-thirds of the entire membership of*

the Council shall be necessary to authorize any statement in the name of the Society with respect to such matters. With the exception noted in the next paragraph, such a vote may be taken only if written notice shall have been given to the secretary by the proposer of any such resolution not later than one month prior to the Council meeting at which the matter is to be presented, and the vote shall be taken not earlier than one month after the resolution has been discussed by the Council.

If, at a meeting of the Council, there are present twelve members, then the prior notification to the secretary may be waived by unanimous consent. In such a case, a unanimous favorable vote by those present shall empower the Council to speak in the name of the Society.

*If the president and the secretary agree that a statement in the name of the Society is urgently needed and waiting for the next meeting of the Council would greatly reduce the impact of the statement, then the secretary shall communicate the proposed statement to the Council (making a good-faith effort to reach all members) and hold a vote, allowing at least one day for votes to be received after the communication. If favorable votes are received from at least two-thirds of the entire membership of the Council, and no more than two votes against it are received, then the statement will be made in the name of the Society. Actions taken under this procedure shall be reviewed by the Council at its next meeting, where a favorable vote of two-thirds of the entire membership of the Council shall be necessary to keep such a statement in place.*

The Council may also refer the matter to a referendum of the entire membership of the Society and shall make such reference if a referendum is requested, prior to final action by the Council, by two hundred or more members. The taking of a referendum shall act as a stay upon Council action until the votes have been canvassed, and thereafter no action may be taken by the Council except in accordance with a plurality of the votes cast in the referendum.

**AMS members who renew their membership by October 1, 2019 will receive 13 AMS Points.\***

**Renew as a Life member and receive 26 AMS Points!**

**Nonmembers who join the AMS by October 1, 2019 will also receive 13 AMS Points.\***

\*Excludes affiliate members and nondues-paying members.