



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PARLIAMENTARIANS®

Resolution to Rescind the Action of the 20th NAP Convention in October 1975 Discouraging the Use of the Term “Chairperson”

Whereas, The 20th NAP Convention in October 1975 adopted a resolution discouraging the use of the term “Chairperson;” and

Whereas, At that time NAP’s parliamentary authority was the 7th Edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*; and

Whereas, Since that time four additional editions of RONR have been published; and

Whereas, The current edition of RONR now recognizes that the term “Chairman” while completely appropriate is not the only term used to address persons presiding who are not presidents or vice-presidents:

A person presiding at a meeting who has no regular title or whose position is only temporary is addressed as "Mr. [or Madam] Chairman" by long-established usage. Several variations of this form—such as "chairperson" or "chair"—are now frequently encountered, however, and may be in use as the general practice in particular assemblies. (RONR 11th Edition, Page 23, lines 11-17);

and

Whereas, Language usages changes over time, which fact has been acknowledged in the current edition of RONR; and

Whereas, Parliamentarians work with numerous organizations that prefer the use of the terms other than “Chairman;” and

Whereas, The 1975 resolution no longer correctly states what is given on this matter in the 11th Edition of RONR; and

Whereas, The 1975 resolution indicates that “organizations and parliamentarians of the National Association of Parliamentarians must use the term Chairman;” and

Whereas, This proscription goes beyond what is required in the current edition of RONR and now causes confusion when NAP members serve clients and insist on the use of the term “Chairman” because the 1975 resolution requires them to do so; and

Whereas, It is not the role of the National Association of Parliamentarians to bind its members in the exercise of their independent judgement on how language should be used when serving clients and organization; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the 2017 NAP Convention does hereby rescind the action of the 20th NAP Convention in October 1975 entitled “Discourage the Use of the Term Chairperson;” and

Resolved, That NAP members be encouraged to follow the rules outlined in the current edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* and be free to assist organizations and clients in using the terms that these groups feel best suit the needs of their particular assemblies.

Adopted by the NAP 41st convention, September 10, 2017