
49TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OVERTURES

Preliminary, Personal Assessments by Dr. David F. Coffin, Jr.

PLEASE NOTE:

For the sake of conscience, a word of explanation about this review: I prepare these materials for myself, as a discipline to help me reflect on the business of the Assembly beforehand, and also, so that in the press of Assembly business on the floor, I can quickly reorient myself to the issues. In no sense is this material prepared for the purpose of encouraging a party spirit, or a pre-committed voting bloc. Although these views reflect my current convictions, I am not even sure that I will vote as specified, because I am committed to listening to the debate, and if compelling arguments are set forth contrary to my current views, to change my position in light of our deliberations.

I hope that all can agree that such a stance is essential to the functioning of the deliberative Assembly that biblical Presbyterianism sets forth, as liable to direction both through reasoned, biblical argument and by the immediate work of the Holy Spirit. The only reason I distribute this material is because it has proven helpful to others to stimulate their prayerful reflections in preparation for the debate.

Finally, I note that I am a member of the Standing Judicial Commission of the General Assembly. According to the requirements of the “Operating Manual of the Standing Judicial Commission” (OMSJC), I am committed to “perform the duties of [my] office with impartiality and shall be diligent to maintain the impartiality of the Commission” (OMSJC 2.10). Thus I am not permitted to make “any public or private statement that might reasonably be expected to affect the outcome of a pending matter or impending matter in any court of the church” (OMSJC 2.5). That notwithstanding, I am permitted to “make public or private statements in the course of [my] duties as a presbyter . . . with respect to biblical teaching, confessional interpretation, the principles of the form of government and discipline. . . .” (OMSJC 2.6). Nothing I have said in this review is intended to intimate, hint, or suggest which party should prevail in any case that might come before me under our current BCO, or under any proposed amendments, should they be adopted.

You are free to distribute my summary as you will, but only with the above disclaimer attached. I should note: the intelligibility of my terse comments depends upon one having read carefully the overture in question! Find the full text of the overtures at: <https://pcaga.org/resources/#overtures/> So too, space limits anything but direct speech, so please forgive a dearth of polite expression in what follows.

OVERTURE STATISTICS

- 7 Overtures forwarded from the 48th General Assembly.
- 42 Overtures submitted to the 49th General Assembly.
- 25 Overtures referred to CCB for advice (thus far).
- 28 Overtures to amend the BCO.
- 4 Overtures to amend the RAO
- Overtures 4 and 5 were vacated by the sending Presbytery.
- 3 Overtures referred to AC Committee of Commissioners.
- 1 Overture referred to IRC Committee of Commissioners.
- 1 Overtures referred to MNA Committee of Commissioners.
- 7 Overtures forwarded from 48th referred to OC and 30 Overtures to 49th referred to OC = 37 Overtures to OC.
- 6 BCO 34-1 original jurisdiction requests to SJC.

OVERTURES FORWARDED FROM THE 48TH GA

#	SUBJECT	POSITION	PRESB	COC
19	Amend BCO 38-1 & 42-2 to Allow Appealing a Censure in a Case without Process	AFFIRMATIVE The current language of the provision denies the subject of the proceeding due process in that the remedies available with respect to a successful complaint are considerably narrower than those for a successful appeal. The proposed amendment wisely corrects this significant defect.	Pacific Northwest	OC

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		<p>The remedy for CCB's concern about conflict is to answer Overture 34 in the negative!</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. "CCB notes that if the amendments proposed by Overture 19 and Overture 34 are both adopted, they would be in conflict regarding the right of appeal or the right of complaint." <i>Commissioner Handbook (hereinafter CH)</i>, 283, item L (unless otherwise noted, the CCB vote was unanimous).</p>		
20	Amend BCO 31-10 and 33-4 on Pre-trial Non-Disciplinary Suspensions	<p>AFFIRMATIVE</p> <p>The case for the change is well made by Rationale. A more felicitous phrasing for BCO 31-10 would be: "When a member of a church court is under process, <u>by a three-fourths (3/4) majority</u> all his official functions may be suspended at the court's discretion; but this shall never be done in the way of censure." A more felicitous phrasing for BCO 33-4 would be: "When it is impracticable immediately to commence process against an accused church member, the Session may, if it thinks the edification of the Church requires it, <u>by a three-fourths (3/4) majority</u> prevent the accused from approaching the Lord's Table until the charges against him can be examined."</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, 284, item M.</p>	Pacific Northwest	OC
21	Amend BCO 42-6 on Vote Required for Maintaining Censure during an Appeal	<p>AFFIRMATIVE</p> <p>The case for the change is well made by Rationale. A more felicitous phrasing for BCO 42-6-10 would be: "Notice of appeal shall have the effect of suspending the judgment of the lower court until the case has been finally decided in the higher court. However, the court of original jurisdiction may, for sufficient reasons duly recorded, <u>by a two-thirds (2/3) majority</u> prevent the appellant from approaching the Lord's Table, and if an officer, prevent him from exercising some or all his official functions, until the case is finally decided (cf. BCO 31-10; 33-4). This shall never be done in the way of censure."</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, 284, item N.</p>	Pacific Northwest	OC

#	SUBJECT	POSITION	PRESB	COC
34	Amend BCO 38-1 re Confession Timing for Case Without Process	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>The proposal evidences a failure to understand the historical rationale of a case without process, thus making it the virtual equivalent of a guilty plea after being charged by a court. The amendment undermines the distinctive element in the provision, i.e., that the person has voluntarily come forward and made is his offence known to the court.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. “CCB notes that if the amendments proposed by Overture 19 and Overture 34 are both adopted, they would be in conflict as to the right of appeal or the right of complaint.” <i>CH</i>, 286, item X.</p>	Pacific Northwest	OC
35	Amend BCO 38-1 re Counsel for Case Without Process	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>This allowance is inconsistent with the idea of a case without process. To allow formal representation introduces process. The error of a presbytery alleged to have occasioned the proposal was self-evident. The <i>BCO</i> does not need to be amended whenever one acts foolishly.</p> <p>See the “General Note” on pages 44-45 for a collation of all the <i>BCO</i> 38-1 proposals.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, 286, item Y.</p>	Pacific Northwest	OC
40	Amend BCO 32-13 and 35-5 to Allow Victim Protection Provisions	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>In the main, this well-prepared overture, seeks adjustments to our procedures that are deeply informed by compassion, and a desire for justice. That being said, it is impossible to imagine a procedure, such as written testimony, that allows a reasonable path for cross-examination, since an essential element of cross-examination is for the judges to be able judge, firsthand, the credibility of the witness.</p> <p>Further, it is not wise policy to have the same language appear in three different places in the <i>BCO</i>, while the language proposed gives too much discretion to the court, to the diminishment of due process for the accused.</p> <p>Attached is a proposed substitute that attempts to rid the Overture of the needless redundancy, while accomplishing a less radical form of the “reasonable accommodations” sought.</p>	Tennessee Valley	OC

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		NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i> , 286, item AA.		
41	Amend <i>BCO</i> 35-1 to Expand Potential Witness Eligibility	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>In our courts, a person is called to testify, before God, as to the facts, facts that we may have no other access to except for his testimony. If he does not believe that he is accountable for what he says, this diminishes profoundly the probative character of the testimony. Beyond this assurance, we have nothing more than, “this is true, unless you can find me out”. Yet a church court does not have the power of the courts of the state to investigate and enforce a penalty for perjury discovered.</p> <p>Further, as we believe that all professed unbelievers are dead in sin, we must believe them to be prone to deception. Thus, their testimony, <i>per se</i>, has no probative value. Our current rule is the equivalent of requiring that a witness believes that there is such a thing as truth, and that we will be accountable to One who is the truth for what we say. To say that we should be willing to hear from a person who does not believe that there is such a thing as truth, and who does not believe that they are accountable for what they say, strikes me as a counsel of confusion.</p> <p>The cases imagined by the Overture could have been true in the 19th Century. Yet our Forefathers were persuaded that, since we cannot read the heart, credible witnesses, before our courts, must at least believe that God can do so, and will judge them accordingly. I see nothing that has changed since then, and thus there is no reason to adjust our standards.</p> <p>Finally, no person who believes not in God or retribution could submit to the required oath of <i>BCO</i> 35-6 (the exception allowed was carved out for the God-fearing who supposed that the Scripture forbids taking an oath of that sort).</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. “CCB notes that adopting Overture 41 would create the possibility of a witness being qualified, but refusing to take the vow outlined in <i>BCO</i> 35-6.” <i>CH</i>, 286, item BB.</p>	Tennessee Valley	OC

OVERTURES SUBMITTED TO THE 49TH GA

#	SUBJECT	POSITION	PRESB	COC
1	Docket Overtures Committee Report as a GA Order of the Day	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>Such a resolution would have no force beyond the 49th General Assembly. If this is to be done, it must be by amending the RAO. See CH, p. 331, recommendation 3.</p>	Palmetto	AC
2	Amend BCO 22-3 to Allow Assistant Pastors to file Complaints against Sessions	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>The proposal is in conflict with the qualification to file a complaint found in BCO 34-1: “make complaint against any action of a court to whose jurisdiction he is subject. . . .”</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. CH, p. 301, item A.</p>	Tennessee Valley	CCB, OC
3	Withdraw from the National Association of Evangelicals	<p>AFFIRMATIVE</p> <p>The Overture’s argument is sound and its solution is well adapted to its end.</p> <p>However, there is more to be said. The NAE’s own statement of the principal benefits of membership lists: 1) “Use of the NAE member logo, which gives you the credibility of a national organization”; 2) “Public affirmation of the NAE Statement of Faith, the gold standard of evangelical belief in America since 1942”; 3) “A recognized voice in Washington championing evangelical concerns and providing a source of information on critical issues facing our nation”.</p> <p>The PCA does not need such “benefits”. 1. The PCA has sufficient credibility as a <i>branch of the church</i> of the Lord Jesus Christ. 2. In the Westminster Standards the PCA has an excellent statement of faith (all that glitters is not gold). 3. The PCA does not need a voice in Washington championing political concerns that would not even be permitted as a subject of discussion before its councils, let alone be adopted as positions.</p>	Pee Dee	IRC
4	Vacated			
5	Vacated			
6	Amend BCO 31-10 and 33-4 Regarding Suspensions during Process or Delay	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>The Overture’s arguments are interesting, but, at crucial points, implausible. See, by way of contrast, the argument of Overture 20, forwarded by the 48th GA. If a three-quarters majority is</p>	Nashville	CCB, OC

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		<p>deemed too steep, I would be content with two-thirds.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 301, item B.</p>		
7	Amend <i>BCO</i> 42-6 Regarding Suspending Judgment during Appeal	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>The Overture's arguments are interesting, but, at crucial points, implausible. See, by way of contrast, the argument of Overture 21, forwarded by the 48th GA.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 302, item C.</p>	Nashville	CCB, OC
8	Amend <i>BCO</i> 33-1 and <i>BCO</i> 34-1 Establishing Percentage Threshold for Original Jurisdiction Requests	<p>AFFIRMATIVE</p> <p>I would prefer striking everything but the first sentence in each provision. I think we ought to have known, but now experience has clearly taught, that this provision turns a judicial process into a political process and the <i>essential due process</i> is thereby lost. Further, the current provision, at least in some instances, would violate the principle against double jeopardy. I am now persuaded that <i>BCO</i> 40 provides ample remedy for a wandering lower court.</p> <p>That being said, I have no hope to see this in my lifetime, and the current provision is so utterly useless to any good end, I fully support this partial mitigation.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 302, item D. 7-1-0</p>	Houston Metro	CCB, OC
9	Amend <i>BCO</i> 34-1 to Establish Percentage Threshold for Original Jurisdiction Requests	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>Overture 8, addressing the same subject, is the more comprehensive of the two, and thus to be preferred.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 302, item E. 7-1-0</p>	Calvary	CCB, OC
10	Restructure Boundary of the Presbytery of Southwest Florida	<p>AFFIRMATIVE, if approved by Committee of Commissioners.</p> <p>There is no recommendation, as yet, from CMNA in <i>CH</i>.</p>	Southwest Florida	MNA

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11	Amend BCO 25-2.e and Add a New Item BCO 25-2.f, New Percentage Threshold for Calling Large Church Congregational Meetings	<p>UNDECIDED</p> <p>I can't really do math, but I will listen intently to the debate!</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 302, item F.</p>	Korean Capital	CCB, OC
12	Amend BCO 16 by Adding a New Paragraph BCO 16-4 with Wording from the Report of the Ad Interim Committee on Human Sexuality	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>I am on record that "In my estimation, [The Human Sexuality Report] is an outstanding piece of work, perhaps the most cogent and useful GA study I have ever read." That being said, I oppose the introduction of any "identity" language into the BCO. Such terms are not used in the ESV, our Confessional Standards, nor in our BCO. In popular culture the terms have come to have a meaning quite contrary to their original sense. In the past, <i>what I am</i>, was in view. Today, it is <i>who I want to be</i>. The objective God-created order has been completely swept away by an autonomous and sovereign subjectivism, in a continuous creation of myself. I absolutely oppose giving a foothold to the identity politics that is so corrupting our culture. I think we will rue the day we introduce such sociological mumbo-jumbo into our governing standards. I want us to speak of who I <i>am</i> in Christ, not who I <i>identify</i> as!</p> <p>Further, the use of quotation marks, without attribution would be highly ambiguous in provisions of church law and would certainly cause confusion if the provision were latter to be amended.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 302, item G.</p>	Hills & Plains	CCB, OC
13	Petition United States Government to End Abortion	<p>AFFIRMATIVE</p> <p>An historical note:</p> <p>"What is foeticide?" "The destruction of an unborn child. The deliverance of the O. S. Assembly in 1869, reaffirmed by the Assembly of 1874, speaks of this crime as well as of divorce: 'Nor can we shut our eyes to the fact that the horrible crime of infanticide, especially in the form of destruction by parents of their own offspring before birth, also prevails to an alarming extent.' The Assembly regards this 'with abhorrence, as a crime against God and against nature; and as the frequency of such murders can</p>	Ascension	OC

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		<p>no longer be concealed, we hereby warn those that are guilty of this crime that except they repent they cannot inherit eternal life.’ ‘All who seek to avoid the responsibilities and cares connected with bringing up children not only deprive themselves of one of the greatest blessings of life, and fly in the face of God’s decrees, but do violence to their own natures, and will be found out of their sins even in this world.’” [<i>Presbyterian Digest</i>, pp. 99, 100].</p> <p>From: <i>What is Presbyterian Law As Defined By the Church Courts?</i> J. Aspinwall Hodge. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1899, pp. 106-107.</p>		
14	Change the Composition of the SJC by Amending BCO 15-4 and RAO 17-1; Amend OMSJC 5.1 and 6.1	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>Simply noted, from long experience, the size of the proposed Commission would make its work impossible.</p> <p>For meditation: From a report from one of the most highly regarded thinkers on Presbyterian polity in the 19th century. “Commissioners were present from all our Presbyteries excepting the remotest ones. The number in attendance was one hundred and thirty-eight. We must soon begin to guard against the Assembly getting to be too numerous and unwieldy a body.” “Rev. John B. Adger’s Report on ‘The General Assembly at New Orleans’” (PCUS, 1877): July 1877, p. 536.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 303 item H.</p>	Westminster	CCB, OC; to SJC for OMSJC only
15	Amend BCO 7 to Disqualify from Office Men Identifying as Homosexual	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>See discussion of Overture 12.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 303, item I.</p>	Westminster	CCB, OC
16	Amend BCO 25-2 to Require Annual Congregational Meeting and Reporting Standards	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>There might be something to the idea of requiring a stated annual meeting of a congregation, but the terms proposing the business of such a meeting are fatally lacking in specificity. What is it to “consider” the affairs of the congregation (motions offered from the floor)? What is “a presentation of the terms of call”? In any case, I expect most reasonably well-ordered congregations already have an annual meeting for such purposes (my memory is that in</p>	TE Ted Lester	CCB, OC

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		<p>some states where churches can be incorporated an annual meeting is required by law).</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 303-04, item J.</p>		
17	Amend BCO 32-3 to Require Open Proceedings for Trials	<p>AFFIRMATIVE</p> <p>In my judgment this proposal is a clear corollary of Preliminary Principle 8, “Since ecclesiastical discipline must be purely moral or spiritual in its object, and not attended with any civil effects, it can derive no force whatever, but from its own justice, <i>the approbation of an impartial public</i>, and the countenance and blessing of the great Head of the Church [emphasis added].”</p> <p>I suggest that “with open doors,” be replaced by “in open session” and that “with closed doors,” be replaced by “in closed session.”</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 304, item K.</p>	TE Ted Lester	CCB, OC
18	Amend RAO 3-2 by Adding an Administrative Responsibility for the Stated Clerk’s Office Regarding the Processing of Allegations.	<p>AFFIRMATIVE</p> <p>The rationale is well-argued and persuasive. This presents what perhaps will be a modest help at correction.</p> <p>However, I am concerned about the use of “ordinarily” in the second sentence, and its use again in the last sentence. This introduces considerably ambiguity in the provision, both for the one seeking to comply and the one providing oversight. Does it mean “most of the time,” or, perhaps “unless there is good reason to do otherwise”. How will there be a record and thus accounting for the judgments? This Overture could profit from further labor.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 304, item L. 7-1-0.</p> <p>NOTE: AC recommends that it be answered in the negative. <i>CH</i> p. 332, item 5.</p>	Pacific Northwest	CCB, AC
19	Amend BCO 15-2 Regarding Presbytery Commission Membership and Quorum	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>I do not see the conflict alleged, nor do I see here a solution.</p>	Northwest Georgia	CCB, OC

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		NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i> , p. 304, item M.		
20	Amend <i>BCO</i> 16 by Adding Paragraph 16-4 on Qualifications for Ordination	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>See discussion of Overture 12.</p> <p>Further, <i>BCO</i> 16 addresses “Church Orders – The Doctrine of Vocation.” The proposed paragraph does not, and thus is out of place in this chapter.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS/IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 305, item N.</p>	Northwest Georgia	CCB, OC
21	Amend <i>BCO</i> 43-2 and 43-3 Regarding Timing for Considering a Complaint [Note: Title revised 4-12-22]	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>I do not see how the solution is relevant to the problem described in the argument.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS AMBIGUOUS. <i>CH</i>, p. 305, item O.</p>	Northwest Georgia	CCB, OC
22	Amend <i>RAO</i> 3-2.h, Making Statistical Data Digitally Accessible	<p>AFFIRMATIVE</p> <p>As amended by AC, <i>CH</i> p. 331-332, item 4.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 305, item P. CCB finds that the AC response to the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 331-332, item 4.</p>	Northwest Georgia	CCB, AC
23	Amend <i>BCO</i> 16 by Adding Paragraph 16-4 on Qualifications for Ordination	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>See discussion of Overture 12.</p> <p>Further, <i>BCO</i> 16 addresses “Church Orders – The Doctrine of Vocation.” The proposed paragraph does not, and thus is out of place in this chapter.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 305 item Q.</p>	Southeast Alabama	CCB, OC
24	Amend <i>RAO</i> 11-2 and 11-10 to Clarify Who May Submit an Overture	<p>AFFIRMATIVE</p> <p>The problem is real, the solution is sound.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 306, item R.</p>	Houston Metro	CCB, OC

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25	Amend BCO 15-1 and 15-3 to Clarify Role of Presbytery Commission	<p>AFFIRMATIVE</p> <p>Such an amendment was the desire of the Ad Interim Committee on Judicial Procedures when its proposals were adopted in 1996. However, the Ad Interim Committee's report and recommendations with respect to General Assembly procedures had already grown nearly unwieldy and thus the matter of Presbytery was put off. At long last, this proposal would allow for (but not require) Presbyteries to appoint true commissions, in the lexical and historical Presbyterian use of the term, thus providing consistency in our judicial procedures and bringing presbytery proceedings more nearly in accord with PP 8.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 306, item S.</p>	Houston Metro	CCB, OC
26	Statement On Political Violence	<p>AFFIRMATIVE</p> <p>A fine, thoughtful, balanced, biblically faithful and historically nuanced expression of Christian calling in our fractured, and often frenzied, culture.</p> <p>I have heard some suggestion that the adoption of this Overture would violate the doctrine of the Spirituality of the church. Having spent a good bit of my academic career studying the origin, development, and practices that grew out of that doctrine, I can testify that I see nothing whatsoever in its wholesome teaching violated in the statement or its resolutions.</p> <p>To see more on this latter subject, see: https://www.newhopefairfax.org/files/spiritualityofchurchreadings.pdf</p>	Potomac	OC
27	Amend BCO 15-1 and 15-3 To Clarify Role of Presbytery Commission	<p>AFFIRMATIVE</p> <p>See Overture 25.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 306, item T.</p>	Potomac	CCB, OC
28	Amend BCO 8-7 by Adding Chaplain Endorsement Requirements and Recommendations	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>The Overture makes a very good case for why it would be wise for PCA chaplains to be endorsed through PRCCMP, but it does not show why it should be <i>required as a matter of church law</i>. If there is to be such a paragraph added, the whole section should be renumbered, as the paragraphs treat distinct subjects.</p>	Pittsburgh	CCB, OC, and to MNA for advice

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		NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i> , p. 306, item U. See <i>BCO</i> 11-4 and 13-9.		
29	Amend <i>BCO</i> 16 by Adding 16-4 Regarding Qualifications for Church Office	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>This version is the best of the offerings on this subject. Yet, an objection remains: <i>BCO</i> 16 addresses “Church Orders – The Doctrine of Vocation.” The proposed paragraph does not, and thus is out of place in this chapter.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 306, item V.</p>	Pittsburgh	CCB, OC
30	Amend <i>BCO</i> 6-5, 20-3, 25-1, and 24-3, Allowing Congregations to Establish Voting Age Restrictions	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>I think that both our doctrine and common sense should lead to the conclusion that, though we may have, and desire, young children who profess their faith, our rules should govern under what circumstances they are permitted to exercise their rights as church members. We profess that children born into a covenant family are members of the church by birthright. But we rightly say that they cannot exercise all the rights of membership apart from maturation.</p> <p>That being said, I don’t think the language the Overture proposed accomplishes what is required. More work on the matter may well bear fruit.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment Internally inconsistent and vague while also in conflict with <i>BCO</i> 25-7. <i>CH</i>, p. 307 item W.</p>	Pittsburgh	CCB, OC
31	Amend <i>BCO</i> 21-4 and 24-1 by Adding Paragraphs Regarding Requirements for Ordination	<p>NEGATIVE</p> <p>This Overture proposes language to be added to the provisions setting forth requirements for ordination of church officers that is similar to the proposal that prevailed at the 48th GA but failed to reach the requisite support of the presbyteries. The revision is improved considerably, but it needs further adjustment.</p> <p>First, in an examination for office, with respect to personal character, the court is directed to give “specific attention to potential notorious concerns.” I will pass over the mystery as to what the difference is between “specific attention” and regular old “attention” because there is a more significant problem evident in these terms. The phrase “potential notorious concerns” is problematic for a rule to give guidance to an examination. It seems the court</p>	Pittsburgh	CCB, OC

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		<p>would be required to give attention to concerns that have the capacity (potential) to become well known for some bad quality (notorious). Thus, the court would be required to judge a candidate based on speculation as to what might be the case. That strikes me as a peculiar requirement, as it is hard to see how potential notoriety is, fairly, a relevant concern in this context.</p> <p>The revision eliminates the older proposal's somewhat random exemplifying lists of bad behavior and discards the requirement that candidates not be known for their remaining sinfulness. However, it still confuses, what I take to be wholesome, pastoral advice, with respect to future behavior, with examination requirements. How would one pass such a test?</p> <p>NOTE: CCB finds that the proposed amendment IS NOT in conflict with other parts of the Constitution. <i>CH</i>, p. 307, item X. 6-1-1</p>		
32	Amend RAO 8.4 to Add an Item to the Annual Report of the GA Nominating Committee	<p>AFFIRMATIVE</p> <p>It makes sense that, if the boards of Covenant College, Covenant Seminary, PCA Foundation, RBI and Ridge Haven can recommend nominees (see PCA Corporate Bylaws, Article VI), the Assembly should know who the recommended nominees are.</p> <p>NOTE: CCB has not yet given advice concerning this Overture. Check the Supplement.</p>	Tennessee Valley	CCB, OC
33	Use Human Sexuality Report for Study, Examination, and Conciliation Similar but not identical to 34 & 35.	ANSWER BY REFERENCE TO ACTION ON OV. 34	Nashville	OC
34	Use Human Sexuality Report for Study, Examination, and Conciliation Similar but not identical to 33 & 35.	<p>AFFIRMATIVE, as amended</p> <p>As to the resolutions, the Overture should be amended to strike item B: Why pick out one part of the very fine report to underline? It is hardly the most important, or obviously most in need of reinforcement. Resolutions A., C., and D. comprehend sufficient encouragements to help insure the PCA profits from the excellent work.</p>	Metro Atlanta	OC
35	Use Human Sexuality Report for Study, Examination, and Conciliation Similar but not identical to 33 & 34.	ANSWER BY REFERENCE TO ACTION ON OV. 34	North Florida	OC

#	SUBJECT	POSITION	PRESB	COC
36	BCO 34-1 Request to Assume Original Jurisdiction over TE Greg Johnson On this subject-matter see also overture 37	NO COMMENT As I am a member of the SJC which must prepare a response to the BCO 34-1 request, it is inappropriate for me to express an opinion at this time.	SE Alabama	SJC
37	BCO 34-1 Request to Assume Original Jurisdiction over TE Greg Johnson On this subject-matter see also overture 36	NO COMMENT As I am a member of the SJC which must prepare a response to the BCO 34-1 request, it is inappropriate for me to express an opinion at this time.	Grace	SJC
38	Request for SJC to Assume Original Jurisdiction in CIP matters re Dan Herron	NO COMMENT As I am a member of the SJC which must prepare a response to the BCO 34-1 request, it is inappropriate for me to express an opinion at this time.	Chesapeake	SJC
39	Request for SJC to Assume Original Jurisdiction in CIP matters re Dan Herron	NO COMMENT As I am a member of the SJC which must prepare a response to the BCO 34-1 request, it is inappropriate for me to express an opinion at this time.	Northern California	SJC
40	Request for SJC to Assume Original Jurisdiction in CIP matters re Dan Herron	NO COMMENT As I am a member of the SJC which must prepare a response to the BCO 34-1 request, it is inappropriate for me to express an opinion at this time.	N New England	SJC
41	Declare Critical Race Theory Flawed	NEGATIVE The Overture is replete with philosophical, political, historical, and sociological judgements that are beyond the prerogatives and proficiency of the Assembly.	Session of Bethel Christian Church- Chicago	OC
42	Forbid TE and RE Participation in "Political Groups"	NEGATIVE The Overture begs the question (i.e., fallaciously assumes what ought to be proven): I doubt there are any officers in the PCA who cheerfully grant, "I participate in secretive and exclusive political groups for the purpose of influencing or manipulating the church courts according to a particular agenda" and would find their behavior reformed by such a declaration.	Session of Bethel Christian Church- Chicago	OC