

Forward Independence State Party Bylaws

Companion Bylaw to Article 1 – Name

Reserved for future use.

Companion Bylaw to Article 2 – Objective

Reserved for future use.

Companion Bylaw to Article 3 – Membership

Reserved for future use.

Companion Bylaw to Article 4 – State Convention

Bylaw 4.1 – Standing Rules for State Conventions

Bylaw 4.1.01 – Requirement to Adopt Standing Rules

Each regular or special session of the Forward Independence State Convention shall adopt Standing Rules to govern its operations, consistent with the Constitution and these Bylaws. The adoption of Standing Rules shall be the first item of substantive business following the credentialing report.

Bylaw 4.1.02 – Minimum Required Standing Rules

The Standing Rules adopted by the Convention must include, at minimum:

- The procedure for delegate credential challenges and resolutions;
- The process for nominations and floor recognition;
- The voting method for contested endorsements and officer elections (e.g., paper ballot, ranked-choice if required);
- Time limits for debate and speaking privileges;
- The process for proposing and amending resolutions or platform planks.

Bylaw 4.1.03 – Presiding Officers and Temporary Chair

Unless otherwise provided in the Call or by prior vote of the State Executive Committee, the Convention shall begin under the chairperson designated by the Forward Independence State Co-Chairs or their designee. That person shall serve as Temporary Chair until the Convention adopts its Standing Rules and formally elects or confirms a Presiding Officer.

Bylaw 4.1.04 – Parliamentarian

Each State Convention shall include a designated Parliamentarian to advise on procedural matters, who may be appointed by the State Executive Committee or the Presiding Officer, and confirmed by the Convention by simple majority.

Bylaw 4.1.05 – Virtual and Hybrid Sessions

All State Convention sessions may be held in-person, virtual, or hybrid, provided:

- Notice and access instructions are provided to all credentialed delegates in compliance with the Constitution;
- A quorum is established consistent with Article 4, Section 2;
- Voting and credentialing procedures permit fair participation of remote delegates.

Bylaw 4.2 – Delegate Credentialing and Disputes

Bylaw 4.2.01 – Delegate Credential Report Requirement

Prior to any voting during the State Convention a Report of the credentialed State Delegates shall be accounted and announced at the Convention to the State Delegates. This Report must be approved by a majority vote of the State Delegates before any voting shall occur. This shall contain:

- All credentialed State Delegates by name and Congressional District;
- Any delegate vacancies;
- Any contested delegate seats or challenges received prior to the State Convention Call to Order.

Bylaw 4.2.02 – Advance Submission of Challenges

Credential challenges must be submitted in writing to the State Party Secretary no fewer than five (5) days prior to the start of the Convention whenever practicable. Challenges submitted after that deadline may only be considered with a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Convention or as required by law.

Bylaw 4.2.03 – Challenge Resolution Procedure

If a delegate's eligibility is challenged:

- The challenged delegate shall be allowed to speak briefly in their defense;
- The Credentials Committee (or temporary panel appointed by the Presiding Officer) shall recommend a resolution;
- The Convention shall decide the challenge by majority vote, with the challenged delegate abstaining.

Bylaw 4.2.04 – Alternates and Vacancy Filling

Where a Congressional District has designated alternates:

- Alternates may be seated only if a credentialed state delegate from that Congressional District is absent;
- The credentialed State Delegates shall prioritize alternates in the order designated by the Congressional District.

If no Alternate is available, the State Convention may vote to fill delegate vacancies by this enumerated process:

1. Starting with Congressional District 1 and finishing with the last number of Congressional Districts the state of Minnesota currently has, shall hold

individually by Congressional District have their CD Co-Chairs ask the other members of the State Convention if there is anyone who wishes to be a State Delegate (and by association, a Congressional District Delegate) from this day until the final day of the vacancy office's term.

2. There shall also be list resolutions to fill delegate vacancies, by the respective Congressional District Officers, that have been delivered to the State Secretary, State Director of Party Affairs, or State Executive Director any time prior to the start of the State Convention.
3. The combination of the select Party members in FI Bylaws 4.2.04-1 & 4.2.04-2 shall be the nominations for elevation to delegate office for votes.
4. Before voting or during part one (1) of this enumeration, each nominee shall provide evidence of their legal name and voter registered address and any other membership requirements as provided in the FI Constitution to verify the member's residency status in relation to their correct Congressional District nomination to the correct person(s) tasked with credentialing duties.
5. Any introductions or speeches and their time limitations shall exist in the Standing Rules.

Bylaw 4.2.05 – Credentials Committee Formation

The State Executive Committee may, but is not required to, form a Special Committee for credentialing of for this State Convention and/or the State Central Committee prior to annual State Convention and following State Central Committee. In the absence of such a committee, the Convention may elect a temporary Credentials Panel at the time of convening at the assistance of the State Secretary.

Bylaw 4.3 – Convention Quorum and Voting Procedures

Bylaw 4.3.01 – Quorum Calculation

Quorum for all regular, special, or emergency sessions of the State Convention shall be as defined in the Constitution (Article 4, Section 2). For clarity:

- A quorum is established when at least one (1) State Party Officer is present, at least three (3) members in total are present, and at least fifty percent (50%) of all credentialed State Delegates are in attendance (virtually or physically).
- The quorum shall be declared after the Report of the credentialed State Delegates is approved, and shall be reconfirmed as needed before key votes.

Bylaw 4.3.02 – Voting Rights

Only duly credentialed State Delegates may vote on matters before the State

Convention. Each delegate is entitled to one (1) vote and must be present (in-person or virtually) to cast it. No proxy voting is permitted.

Bylaw 4.3.03 – Voting Methods

Votes at the State Convention may be conducted by:

- Voice vote;
- White Ballot vote (show of hands or standing);
- Roll-Call vote by Congressional District;
- Secret ballot (required for contested endorsements and officer elections);
- Secure electronic voting, where permitted and preapproved.
 - *Standing Rules must specify the default voting method for each category of decision.*
- Hybrid-vote, defined as votes taken from both hard copies and digital copies shall be permitted and pre approved.
 - *Standing Rules must specify this optional default voting method for each category of decision.*

Any vote involving three (3) or more choices or options must be decided by Ranked Choice Voting.

Bylaw 4.3.04 – Ranked Choice Voting for Endorsements

In any contested endorsement vote involving three (3) or more candidates, Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) shall be used as the default method unless otherwise specified in the Standing Rules. The State Convention shall use a method that ensures transparency and accuracy in tabulation.

Bylaw 4.3.05 – No Endorsement Option

All ballots for endorsements must include the option “No Endorsement.” A vote for No Endorsement shall be tallied and reported alongside all candidate totals.

Bylaw 4.3.06 – Public Disclosure of Results

After any endorsement vote or officer election, the total number of ballots cast and the vote count for each candidate or option shall be announced to the Convention and recorded in the official minutes.

Bylaw 4.4 – State Convention Agenda and Resolutions

Bylaw 4.4.01 – Convention Agenda Preparation

The proposed agenda for each regular or special session of the State Convention shall be developed by the State Executive Committee or its designee and included in the official call. Once convened, the Convention may adopt, amend, or reorder the agenda by majority vote.

Bylaw 4.4.02 – Priority of Business Items

The following business items, if included on the agenda, shall be considered in this order unless altered by vote:

1. Adoption of Standing Rules
2. Credentialing Report and Quorum Verification
3. Election of Convention Officers or Presiding Chair (if needed)
4. Endorsement of Candidates for Statewide Office
5. Consideration of Platform Planks or Resolutions
6. Election of State Party Officers (as applicable)
7. General Member Comment or Additional Business

Bylaw 4.4.03 – Submission of Resolutions and Platform Planks

Members or committees wishing to submit platform planks or resolutions for consideration shall:

- Submit them to the State Party Secretary or designated Platform Committee no fewer than forty-five (45) days before the State Central Committee or State Convention where the call will indicate that the platform will be a business item;
- Use the standard format provided by the Party, including a title, summary, and resolved clause(s).

Late resolutions may be considered only by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Convention.

Bylaw 4.4.04 – Consolidation and Grouping

The Convention's designated Platform or Resolutions Committee may consolidate, reword, or group similar items for efficiency, provided that the original intent is preserved. Members submitting resolutions shall be informed of any such changes.

Bylaw 4.4.05 – Adoption Thresholds

Unless otherwise stated in the Constitution:

- Platform planks and general resolutions shall require a simple majority vote for adoption;
- Amendments to the Party Constitution shall require approval and ratification under Article 15;
- Endorsements shall follow the procedures and thresholds in Article 11 and its companion Bylaws.

Bylaw 4.4.06 – Filing of Adopted Actions

All actions of the Convention, including adopted resolutions, endorsements, and officer elections, shall be recorded in the official minutes and filed with the State Party Secretary or Deputy within seven (7) days of adjournment.

Companion Bylaw to Article 5 – State Central Committee

Bylaw 5.1 – Organization and Authority

Bylaw 5.1.01 – Authority Between Conventions

The Forward Independence State Central Committee (SCC) shall exercise governance authority on behalf of the Party between sessions of the State Convention, in accordance with Article 5 of the Constitution.

All decisions of the SCC must be recorded in formal minutes and filed with the State FI Secretary.

Bylaw 5.1.02 – Powers to Adopt or Amend Bylaws

The SCC may adopt, amend, or repeal State Party Bylaws by a majority vote at any regular or special meeting, provided the proposed language is included in the official meeting notice distributed at least 22 days in advance.

Bylaw 5.1.03 – Resolution Procedures

The SCC may adopt formal resolutions, including platform additions, by majority vote. The text of any proposed resolution shall be:

- Circulated with the meeting agenda when feasible;
- Permitted from the floor at the discretion of the Chair or by vote of the body.
Adopted resolutions shall be appended to the official meeting minutes.

Bylaw 5.1.04 – Appeal Logistics

Appeals brought to the SCC under Article 14 - Section 2 - Subvision 8 of the FI Constitution shall be:

- Submitted in writing to the State Party Secretary;
- Added to the next scheduled SCC agenda unless a special meeting is called;
- Given precedence over all other new business on that agenda.
The SCC may affirm, amend, or reverse the original decision by majority vote, except where a higher threshold is specified.

Bylaw 5.1.05 – SCC Voting Rights

All members of the SCC, including ex-officio members, shall have full voting rights unless specifically limited by the Constitution or these Bylaws. No member may vote more than once on any question, even if serving in multiple roles.

Bylaw 5.2 – Election of Directors and Officers

Bylaw 5.2.01 – Election Timing

Unless otherwise specified in the Constitution, the election of State Party Directors and other officers by the State Central Committee shall occur at the first regular meeting of the SCC held in the applicable calendar year.

The Call for such meeting shall include:

- A list of offices to be filled;
- The eligibility criteria;
- The nomination procedure.

Bylaw 5.2.02 – Nominations Process

Nominations for each Director or officer position may be:

- Submitted in writing to the State Party Secretary prior to the meeting;
 - Made from the floor during the meeting, prior to the vote;
 - Seconded verbally or in writing by any SCC member.
- The presiding officer shall call for final nominations before closing each ballot.

Bylaw 5.2.03 – Voting Procedure

Each election shall be conducted by secret ballot unless the position is uncontested.

- If only one nominee is presented, a motion for a white ballot (unanimous approval) shall be in order and may be adopted by a majority vote.

If two or more nominees are presented, the SCC shall vote by ranked choice or plurality ballot, as specified in the meeting rules.

- Results shall be reported with the vote totals and recorded in the minutes.

Bylaw 5.2.04 – At-Large State Executive Committee Officers

Bylaw 5.2.04.01 – Existence

The State Central Committee may elect up to six (6) At-Large Officers for the State Executive Committee.

Bylaw 5.2.04.02 – Elections

- One half (50%) of the At-Large members shall be elected at the 1st regular meeting of the SCC held in the even-number calendar year and the second half (50%) in the odd-number calendar year.

- Ranked Choice Voting must be used for a singular office or as a full slate for multiple offices. Every candidate must win a majority to be appointed.

Bylaw 5.2.04.03 – Term of Office

The term of office for each individual elected by the SCC shall begin fifteen (15) days after the meeting in which the election occurred and shall end fourteen (14) days after the next applicable election, unless otherwise specified in the FI Constitution.

Bylaw 5.2.04.04 – Vacancies

If a vacancy occurs between elections:

- The SCC may elect a replacement by majority vote at a regular or special meeting;
- The office may be temporarily filled by resolution of the State Executive Committee, consistent with constitutional provisions for pro tem appointments;
- The person appointed pro tem shall immediately yield the position upon election of a permanent officer by the SCC.

Bylaw 5.2.04.05 – Responsibilities, Powers, & Duties

Reserved for future use.

Bylaw 5.4 – Formation and Oversight of Local Units and Committees

Bylaw 5.4.01 – Formation by Resolution

The State Central Committee (SCC) may form or certify any county, regional, political subdivision, administrative unit, or constituency committee by resolution, provided:

- The unit's geographic or constituency boundaries are clearly defined;
- A minimum of three (3) eligible Forward Independence members reside or participate in that area or community;
- The proposed unit has a Chair and Treasurer identified, or intends to elect such officers within 45 days.
The resolution must state whether the committee is permanent, provisional, or ad hoc.

Bylaw 5.4.02 – Certification Requirements

To be certified as an active Party unit, the committee must:

- Adopt governing bylaws consistent with the FI Constitution and FI Bylaws;

- Submit a list of officers, contact information, and meeting schedule to the State FI Secretary;
- Open and maintain a separate bank account if the committee intends to raise or disburse funds.

Certification shall be valid for two years, unless earlier revoked or renewed.

Bylaw 5.4.03 – Deactivation or Revocation

The SCC may deactivate or revoke certification of any unit or committee by majority vote if:

- The unit fails to meet organizational or reporting requirements;
- There is sustained inactivity (no meetings or reports for 12+ months);
- There is evidence of misconduct, financial mismanagement, or violation of Party rules.

The affected unit shall receive written notice and a reasonable opportunity to respond before a final vote is taken.

Bylaw 5.4.04 – Reporting Obligations

All certified units must provide:

- An annual written report to the SCC summarizing activity, finances, and officer status;
 - Copies of any meeting minutes or bylaws revisions upon request;
 - Immediate notice of any officer resignation, vacancy, or removal.
- Failure to report may trigger a compliance warning or review.

Bylaw 5.4.05 – Provisional Units and Interim Oversight

If a geographic or constituency unit lacks the organizational capacity to function independently, the SCC may:

- Appoint a temporary organizing team or liaison;
 - Place the unit under the administrative care of the relevant Congressional District Committee;
 - Set a timeline for formation and certification.
- These measures shall expire once the unit meets certification standards.

Bylaw 5.5 – Miscellaneous Powers and Duties

Bylaw 5.5.01 – At-Large Executive Committee Members

The State Central Committee shall elect At-Large Officers for the Forward Independence State Executive Committee as provided in the FI Constitution and FI Bylaws. The process shall follow the nomination, election, and vacancy procedures outlined in Bylaw 5.2 unless otherwise specified.

Bylaw 5.5.02 – Executive Committee Oversight

The SCC may review any action or decision of the State Executive Committee and, by majority vote:

- Reaffirm the decision;
 - Amend or reverse the decision;
 - Issue guidance for future actions.
- Such review shall not retroactively invalidate any lawful action already taken unless expressly stated in the motion.

Bylaw 5.5.03 – Officer Removal Confirmation

If the State Executive Committee removes a Party officer under constitutional authority, that removal shall be reported to the SCC.

The SCC shall vote to confirm, reverse, or amend the removal action at its next regular or special meeting.

- A simple majority is required to confirm the removal;
- A two-thirds (2/3) vote is required to overturn it and reinstate the officer.

Bylaw 5.5.04 – Other Director Positions

In addition to positions specified in the Constitution, the SCC may establish and fill additional Director positions by resolution, provided:

- The duties of the new role are clearly stated;
 - The term of office aligns with those of other Directors unless otherwise specified;
 - The position does not duplicate or conflict with existing roles.
- All such Directors shall report to the State Executive Committee unless another reporting line is stated in the resolution.

Bylaw 5.5.05 – Platform Ratification and Publication

Upon approval or reaffirmation of any platform plank, the SCC shall:

- Direct the Party Secretary to publish the updated Platform on the Party website;
- Notify Convention Delegates and Congressional District officers of the update;

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- Retain the updated Platform text in the official Party records.
The SCC may also refer approved planks to the State Convention for ratification or additional deliberation.

Companion Bylaw to Article 6 – State Executive Committee

Bylaw 6.1 – Membership and Authority

The State Executive Committee (SEC) shall consist of those officers and members identified in the Constitution. It shall act on behalf of the State Central Committee between its meetings, subject to all limits imposed by the Constitution or Bylaws.

Bylaw 6.2 – Officers and Reporting

All officers and other reporting party officials must submit written reports in time to be included with the meeting notice and draft agenda, except upon approval of either chief state director. The Secretary shall maintain a digital archive of reports, minutes, and official decisions.

Bylaw 6.3 – Committees and Delegation

The Executive Committee may establish special committees by majority vote. These special committees must operate under a defined scope, report their actions, and remain accountable to the full SEC.

Bylaw 6.4 – Attendance and Participation

Any SEC member who misses two (2) consecutive regular meetings without explanation may be subject to removal by two-thirds (2/3) vote. Participation by video conference or phone shall be considered full attendance.

Bylaw 6.5 – Conflict of Interest and Campaign Involvement

Any member actively involved in a candidate's campaign must disclose that affiliation and abstain from votes on endorsements, resource allocation, or rulings involving that candidate. Members may request a formal ruling on potential conflicts.

Bylaw 6.6 – Leave of Absence

Any member may request a leave of absence of up to 60 days, subject to approval by the State Party Chief Directors. During a leave, the member shall not count toward quorum and may not vote.

Bylaw 6.7 – Virtual and Hybrid Meetings

Meetings may be held in person, by video, or hybrid format. Voting participants must be visible and audible unless excused due to accessibility needs. The Secretary shall verify quorum before any vote is taken.

Bylaw 6.8 – Recordkeeping and Transparency

Draft minutes must be distributed within seven (7) days of each meeting. Approved meeting minutes may be requested via submission form to the State Party Secretary or Deputy Secretary, excluding personnel or legal matters discussed in executive session.

Bylaw 6.9 – Budget Adoption and Financial Oversight

The State Executive Committee shall adopt an annual Party budget by the end of each fiscal year. The Committee must:

- Review, amend if desired, and approve the budget prepared by the Finances & Fundraising Committee; the State Central Committee shall ratify said approved annual budgets after State Executive Committee approval;
- Require bimonthly financial reports comparing actual to budgeted performance;
- Conduct an annual review of insurance coverage and risk controls.

Companion Bylaw to Article 7 – State Core and Special Committees

Bylaw 7.1 – State Core Committees

Bylaw 7.1.01 – Establishment and Standing Nature

State Core Committees shall be standing committees created either by the Constitution or by action of the State Central Committee. Core Committees may not be dissolved except by amendment to the Constitution or by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of the State Central Committee with 30 days' notice.

Bylaw 7.1.02 – Membership

Each Core Committee shall have members appointed to them by the State Executive Committee; a minimum of three (3) and up to ten (10) members and must include:

- At least one (1) At-Large member;
- Members representing at least two (2) different Congressional Districts;
- Both Chief Directors as ex officio members, unless otherwise appointed;
- No limit on the number of Core Committees a member may serve on.

Bylaw 7.1.02.1 – Term of Service

Members shall serve two (2) year terms. No maximum terms. These term years start the first day following the first State Executive Committee Meeting after the regularly scheduled State Convention. Their replacement or reappointment will be decided by the State Executive Committee at its discretion and serve until the next Regular State Convention.

Bylaw 7.1.03 – Chair Selection and Reporting

Each Core Committee shall elect its own Chair from among its members, unless otherwise provided in the Constitution or Bylaws. No member shall be the Chair of more than one core committee. The Chair shall be responsible for:

- Convening meetings (in-person, virtual, or hybrid);
- Setting agendas ahead of meetings;
- Taking minutes where there is not a designated Committee Secretary;
- Preparing quarterly written reports for the State Central Committee;
- Preparing any recommendation for the State Executive Committee in document form;
- Coordinating with the State Director of Party Affairs.

Bylaw 7.1.03.1 – Meetings

Each Core Committee shall meet no fewer than four (4) times per year, of which at least one (1) must occur between each regularly scheduled State Central Committee meeting. All meeting schedules must be submitted and approved by the Director of Party Affairs. Meeting minutes must be recorded and submitted to the State Party Secretary within ten (10) days of each meeting.

Bylaw 7.1.03.2 – Reporting

Each Core Committee shall provide a written report to the State Executive Committee no less than four (4) times per year, each being between regularly scheduled State Central Committee meetings. All reports shall be filed with the State Party Secretary.

Bylaw 7.1.05 – Scope of Work

Each Core Committee shall operate within the general subject matter assigned to it by the Constitution, these Bylaws, or a specific directive from the State Executive or Central Committee. Committees may not speak on behalf of the Party without authorization from the State Executive Committee and informing the State Co-Chairs.

Bylaw 7.1.06 – Creation

Additional Core Committees may be created by the State Executive Committee, State Central Committee, or State Convention by two-thirds (2/3) vote. These may cover new areas of focus or functions separated from other Core Committees to improve efficiency. The scope must be clearly defined in the authorizing resolution.

Bylaw 7.2 – State Special Committees

Bylaw 7.2.01 – Establishment by State Party Officers

No State Special Committee formed by the Forward Independence State Co-Chairs and either Chief State Directors shall become effective until the FI Co-Chairs and Chief State Director(s) have notified the State Executive Committee that such Special Committee has been formed. Such notification shall be distributed to each FI State

Executive Committee member, or by an announcement that is made at an FI State Executive Committee or FI State Central Committee meeting and recorded in that meeting's minutes.

Bylaw 7.3 – Official Core Committees: Structure and Purpose

The following are the Party's founding Core Committees. Each operates under the general oversight of the State Executive Committee and in coordination with the State Director of Party Affairs, who serves as liaison to all Core Committees.

Bylaw 7.3.01 – Public Policy & Legislative Affairs Committee

Purpose:

To develop and review platform planks, resolutions, and policy statements. Assist with language for proposed Party constitutional or bylaw changes.

Primary Duties:

- Draft and recommend new platform planks for State Central Committee consideration, including a full slate presented at the second SCC meeting following the annual State Convention;
- Review public policy developments and draft Party responses;
- Draft responses to lobbying efforts when requested by the SEC;
- Coordinate with Party leadership to ensure platform relevance.

Bylaw 7.3.02 – Candidate Cultivation & Endorsements Committee

Purpose:

To proactively identify and vet candidates, cultivate relationships with potential endorsees, and manage the endorsement process.

Primary Duties:

- Identify priority races at all levels;
- Recruit and vet potential candidates;
- Organize the endorsement process, including screening and application review;
- Coordinate with CD and Constituency Committees to ensure geographic diversity;
- Coordinate with the national Forward Party on endorsements for federal offices.

Bylaw 7.3.03 – Communications & Volunteer Outreach Committee

Purpose:

To manage messaging, grow support, maintain public identity, and organize volunteer efforts.

Primary Duties:

- Create and review Party messaging across media;
- Develop and coordinate email, media, and communications content;
- Build relationships with aligned organizations;
- Expand branding through campaigns and marketing;
- Manage volunteer tools and onboarding;
- Coordinate field activity, tabling, events, phone banking, and parades.

Bylaw 7.3.04 – Finances & Fundraising Committee

Purpose:

To ensure ethical, legal, strategic, and transparent management of the Party's finances and fundraising activities in alignment with nonprofit best practices.

Primary Duties:

1. Support the Treasurer in preparing accurate and timely financial reports, using standardized templates compliant with state and federal law.
2. Monitor ongoing compliance with campaign finance regulations and reporting requirements.
3. Develop, propose, and oversee an operating budget, in collaboration with the Treasurer and State Executive Committee.
4. Assist CD and Constituency Committees in implementing uniform internal financial controls and disbursement practices.
5. Organize fundraising efforts and develop a written, board-approved Annual Fundraising Plan with measurable goals, target audiences, and calendar benchmarks.
6. Establish a donor stewardship protocol to ensure prompt acknowledgment of contributions, transparency about use of funds, and compliance with all donor privacy and intent requirements.
7. Evaluate the cost-effectiveness of fundraising campaigns and report outcomes quarterly to the State Executive Committee.

8. Conduct an annual financial risk assessment and report on reserve levels and sustainability.
9. Prepare and present the Treasurer's report for the State Convention, including:
 - Income and expense summaries
 - Budget vs. actual comparisons
 - PCR and tax checkoff revenue activity
 - Reserve status
10. Recommend policies on gift acceptance, donor recognition, and conditions for declining restricted donations.

Bylaw 7.3.05 – Strategy Committee

Purpose:

To identify strategic growth opportunities for the Party, train leaders, and coordinate high-impact initiatives.

Primary Duties:

- Act quickly in special election opportunities;
- Develop training materials for leadership and candidates;
- Organize the annual State Convention;
- Flag strategic needs for SEC consideration;
- Analyze political trends and coordinate with other state Forward Parties;
- Help apply or update national Forward Party systems.

Bylaw 7.5 – Endorsements

Bylaw 7.5.01 – Eligibility for Endorsement

17.1.01.1 Any member of Forward Independence shall be eligible for endorsement of Forward Independence as a candidate for elected office.

17.1.01.2 Any non-member of Forward Independence may be eligible as outlined in these State Bylaws and Minnesota State Statutes.

Bylaw 7.5.02 – Application for Endorsement

17.1.02.1 Any person seeking endorsement of Forward Independence shall submit an Official Application for Endorsement to the Chair of the Candidate Cultivation &

Endorsements Committee, through the proper online listed application submission form, the Chair of the appropriate Congressional District Committee, or either of the Chief Directors.

17.1.02.2 A “Candidate Pledge(s)” is required as part of the submission.

17.1.02.3 The application may additionally include, but is not limited to, a Background & Compliance Check.

Bylaw 7.5.03 – Committee Composition and Process

17.1.03.1 The members of the Candidate Cultivation & Endorsements Committee shall constitute those involved with the screening process to submit recommendations to the appropriate committees for votes.

17.1.03.2 The Committee shall review the Application for Endorsement and determine whether the candidate is “Qualified.”

17.1.03.3 If found unqualified, the candidate must be informed of the specific basis for that determination.

Bylaw 7.5.04 – Candidate Appeal Rights

Any candidate determined to be unqualified by a Candidate Cultivation & Endorsements Committee may appeal the decision to the Forward Independence committee where the vote would ultimately be taken. The appeal must be considered at the next scheduled meeting where endorsement business is permitted.

Bylaw 7.5.05 – Access to Convention Contact Information

17.1.05.1 A candidate deemed “Qualified” shall be granted access to the relevant contact information of the members and alternates of the committee which will vote on their endorsement.

17.1.05.2 Use of the relevant contact information shall be limited solely to the solicitation of support for candidate endorsements.

17.1.05.3 The relevant contact information shall be deemed copyrighted material, and the property of Forward Independence, and is granted as a license to the candidate.

17.1.05.4 Any unauthorized use, other than for the license granted, may be grounds for revocation of endorsement.

Bylaw 7.5.06 – In-Kind Resources to Non-Endorsed Candidates

17.1.06.1 The FI State Executive Committee may authorize the distribution of in-kind resources for the benefit of any candidate for public office who is not endorsed by Forward Independence, provided that:

- It is beneficial to Forward Independence.

- The candidate has submitted an Official Application for Endorsement.
- The general election for the office being sought by the candidate is being held within 18 months.

17.1.06.2 Such in-kind resources are strictly meant for voter or delegate education purposes and may include but are not limited to candidate listings on web pages or through other means of electronic or paper distribution, party-sponsored forums or debates, or other events or promotions.

17.1.06.3 Such in-kind resources are not direct campaign materials, including but not limited to campaign literature, campaign lawn signs, or bumper stickers.

17.1.06.4 All candidates qualifying under this provision shall be treated as equally as possible until such time as Forward Independence has conferred endorsement to a candidate for that office.

Bylaw 7.5.07 – Coalition Endorsement Criteria

17.1.07.1 Cross endorsements are allowed in instances where Forward Independence has entered into a coalition agreement with one or more other parties.

17.1.07.2 Endorsements for U.S. President shall fall under this provision.

17.1.07.3 A coalition agreement shall:

- Be formed by resolution of the State Executive Committee where the subject is announced as an item of business and following a three-fifths ($\frac{3}{5}$) vote of ballots cast.
- Outline the joint expectations and goals of the coalition, including all anticipated cross endorsements or letters of support to be made, and monetary commitments from the coalition partners.
- Be presented to the relevant approving body for ratification by majority vote.

Bylaw 7.5.08 – Balloting Methods and Ranked Choice Voting

17.1.08.1 All voting shall be by secret ballot and shall include the option of “No Endorsement.”

17.1.08.2 Balloting conducted by virtual vote must use methods that confirm authenticity.

17.1.08.3 Notice of voting and/or voting deadlines shall be provided to the voting delegates with the meeting call.

17.1.08.4 Balloting of three or more candidates shall be by means of ranked choice voting.

17.1.08.5 If only one candidate has been presented to the convention for endorsement for an elected office, a motion of a unanimous ballot (white ballot) shall be in order and

shall require a three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) majority vote of the convention.

17.1.08.6 A blank ballot shall be deemed a ballot not cast.

Bylaw 7.5.09 – Endorsement Threshold

The endorsement of any candidate shall require a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote of the ballots cast for the office being considered.

Bylaw 7.5.10 – Duration of Endorsement

The duration of an endorsement of Forward Independence, unless otherwise provided, shall be effective until:

- The endorsed candidate is no longer a candidate due to the voluntary withdrawal of the candidate.
- The endorsed candidate is no longer a candidate due to failure to win election in a Primary or General Election for the office sought.
- The endorsed candidate is elected and completes the term of elected office.
- The endorsed candidate becomes a candidate for the same office in the next election or a different elected office.

Bylaw 7.5.11 – Definitions

17.1.11.1 “Endorsement”: Shall mean said “Qualified” Candidate will be offered the support of Forward Independence as directed by the State Executive Committee, aided by the Candidate Cultivation & Endorsements Committee. It is to include delegate, data, media, financial aid, and any other resources which the respective governing body can supply to a campaign.

17.1.11.2 “Qualified”: Shall mean such under Bylaw 11.1.04.

Companion Bylaw to Article 8 – Congressional District Conventions

Bylaw 8.1 – Organization of Congressional District Conventions

Bylaw 8.1.01 – Required Annual Convention

8.1.01.01 Each Forward Independence Congressional District Convention shall organize and conduct a Congressional District Convention at least once per calendar year, it must not assemble before the Wednesday following the 1st Tuesday in March, and must assemble forty-five (45) days preceding the regular session of the State Convention.

8.1.01.02 The Convention must be held at least forty-five (45) days before the annual State Convention.

8.1.01.03 The Convention may be conducted in person, virtually, or as a hybrid event..

8.1.01.04 The State Central Committee must select the Regular Session State Convention date for the next calendar year by December 30th..

Bylaw 8.1.02 – Convention Call and Notice

The Congressional District Chair (or Co-Chairs) shall issue a written Call to Convention no fewer than thirty (30) days prior to the opening of the session. The Call must include:

- Date, time, and access details (including virtual access, if applicable);
- Preliminary agenda and list of offices to be elected (if any);
- Credentials procedures and contact for delegate questions.
Notice must be sent to all State Delegates and local delegates residing in the Congressional District.

Bylaw 8.1.03 – Convention Standing Rules

Each District Convention shall adopt a set of Standing Rules at the outset of the session. These must include procedures for:

- Delegate credentialing and challenge resolution;
- Nominations, speaking privileges, and voting methods;
- Endorsement procedures for Congressional and legislative races (if applicable).
Standing Rules may be adapted from a model template provided by the State Executive Committee.

Bylaw 8.1.04 – Delegate and Alternate Procedures

8.1.04.01 Each Congressional District may elect up to ten (10) State Delegates and five (5) alternates in accordance with the Constitution.

8.1.04.02 Delegates to the CD Convention shall be certified and reported to the State Party Secretary.

8.1.04.03 Alternates may be seated in place of absent delegates following credentialing procedures outlined in the Standing Rules.

Bylaw 8.1.05 – Convention Officers

Unless otherwise provided by prior action of the CD Committee:

- The District Chair shall serve as the Temporary Chair of the Convention until a Presiding Officer is confirmed.

- The Convention may elect or confirm a Presiding Officer by majority vote after the adoption of Standing Rules.
- The District Secretary shall serve as Recording Secretary unless another officer is designated.

Bylaw 8.2 – Endorsement and Officer Election Procedures

Bylaw 8.2.01 – Offices Eligible for Endorsement

8.2.01.01 Each Congressional District Convention may endorse candidates for:

- U.S. House of Representatives in that district;
- State legislative offices fully or partially within the district;
- Nonpartisan local offices within the district.

8.2.01.02 Partisan endorsements for state or federal office shall be reported to the State Executive Committee and reviewed or ratified as required by the Constitution (Article 8, Section 1, Subd. 5B).

Bylaw 8.2.02 – Endorsement Process

All candidate endorsements must:

- Use written ballots (secret if contested);
- Include a “No Endorsement” option;
- Require a minimum threshold of three-fifths (3/5) of ballots cast for endorsement. Ranked Choice Voting may be used if three or more candidates are nominated. Endorsement may be withheld even if candidates are qualified.

Bylaw 8.2.03 – Officer Elections

Each CD Convention shall elect the following officers in each odd-numbered year:

- Congressional District Co-Chairs (2);
- Secretary;
- Treasurer.

The Convention may elect additional officers or directors as provided in the CD’s own bylaws.

Bylaw 8.2.04 – Election Method and Threshold

8.2.04.01 Officers shall be elected by majority vote.

8.2.04.02 If more than two candidates are nominated for the same position, Ranked Choice Voting or successive ballots may be used.

8.2.04.03 A white ballot (unanimous vote by acclamation) may be adopted for uncontested offices by two-thirds (2/3) vote.

Bylaw 8.2.05 – Certification and Reporting

8.2.05.01 Election and endorsement results shall be certified by the Convention Secretary and submitted to the State Party Secretary within ten (10) days.

8.2.05.02 Reports must include:

- Full names and contact info of elected officers;
- Date and method of each endorsement vote;
- Any adopted resolutions, if applicable.

Bylaw 8.3 – Convention Quorum and Delegate Rules

Bylaw 8.3.01 – Quorum for Regular Sessions

8.3.01.01 A quorum for a regular Congressional District Convention shall consist of one-third (1/3) of the credentialed delegates for that district, as required by Article 8, Section 2, Subdivision 2(C) of the Constitution.

8.3.01.02 No official business may proceed without quorum.

Bylaw 8.3.02 – Delegate Credentials and Alternates

Each CD Convention shall:

- Receive a Report of the CD Credentialing Committee prior to any voting, confirming the list of credentialed delegates and alternates;
- Allow alternates to be seated in the place of absent delegates as authorized by the Credentials Report and Standing Rules;
- Permit local delegate credentialing procedures if adopted by the Congressional District Committee.

Bylaw 8.3.03 – Filling Vacant Delegate Seats

8.3.03.01 If delegate seats remain vacant at the start of the Convention, the body may vote to fill them in accordance with local rules or by majority vote of the delegates present.

8.3.03.02 Temporary appointments expire at the close of the Convention unless ratified by the CD Committee.

Bylaw 8.3.04 – Voting Rights and Restrictions

8.3.04.01 Only credentialed delegates or properly seated alternates may vote.

8.3.04.02 No delegate may cast more than one vote.

8.3.04.03 Proxy voting is not allowed.

8.3.04.04 Delegates must be present (in person or virtually) to participate.

Bylaw 8.3.05 – Emergency and Special Sessions

For special or emergency CD Convention sessions:

- Quorum and notice rules follow the Constitution (Article 8, Section 2, Subdivisions 2–3);
- Only business explicitly stated in the Call may be considered;
- The CD Committee shall prepare and distribute the agenda and delegate list as early as possible.

Bylaw 8.4 – Convention Agenda and Resolutions

Bylaw 8.4.01 – Agenda Development

8.4.01.01 The preliminary agenda for each Congressional District Convention shall be prepared by the Congressional District Committee and included in the Call to Convention.

8.4.01.02 The Convention may adopt or amend the agenda by majority vote at the beginning of the session.

Recommended standard agenda items include:

1. Adoption of Standing Rules
2. Credentialing Report and Quorum Verification
3. Officer Elections (in odd-numbered years)
4. Candidate Endorsements (if applicable)
5. Resolutions or Platform Submissions
6. Announcements and Adjournment

Bylaw 8.4.02 – Submission of Resolutions

Any delegate may submit resolutions for consideration by the Convention. To be eligible for inclusion:

- Resolutions should be submitted at least seven (7) days prior to the Convention;
- Late submissions may be accepted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the body;
- Each resolution must include a title, brief summary, and resolved clause(s).

Bylaw 8.4.03 – Debate and Adoption of Resolutions

- The Convention may refer multiple resolutions to a temporary committee or consider them individually from the floor.
- Each resolution shall be adopted by a majority vote, unless otherwise specified.
- Resolutions passed at the CD level may be forwarded to the State Platform Committee or State Convention for further consideration, but shall not be binding on the Party unless adopted at the State level.

Bylaw 8.4.04 – Filing of Adopted Items

8.4.04.01 All adopted resolutions, officer elections, and endorsements shall be recorded in the minutes and submitted to the State Party Secretary within ten (10) days of the close of the Convention.

Companion Bylaw to Article 9 – Congressional District Committees

Bylaw 9.1 – Organization and Authority

Bylaw 9.1.01 – Role and Jurisdiction

9.1.01.1 Each Forward Independence Congressional District Committee (CD Committee) shall govern the affairs of the Party within its district between sessions of the Congressional District Convention, as provided in Article 9, Section 1, Subdivision 3 of the Constitution.

9.1.01.2 CD Committees are considered both the Central Committee and Executive Committee of their district.

Bylaw 9.1.02 – Powers of the CD Committee

9.1.02.1 In addition to any powers granted by the Constitution or these Bylaws, each CD Committee may:

- Adopt, amend, or repeal its own District Bylaws, subject to State Constitution compliance;
- Coordinate candidate recruitment, volunteer activity, and district-level events;
- Endorse candidates for legislative and local office (subject to ratification if required);
- Support local Forward Independence units and recommend officers or delegates;
- Raise and spend funds as permitted by State Central Committee certification and finance laws.

Bylaw 9.1.03 – Bylaws and Filing Requirements

9.1.03.1 Each CD Committee shall adopt its own governing bylaws to supplement the State Constitution and Bylaws.

9.1.03.2 A current copy must be filed with:

- The State Party Secretary;
- The CD's own Secretary for recordkeeping.

9.1.03.3 Amendments must be filed within 10 days of adoption.

Bylaw 9.1.04 – Legislative District Committees Within CDs

9.1.04.1 Legislative District (LD) Committees fully within a single CD shall be considered part of that CD Committee's jurisdiction.

9.1.04.2 Where an LD crosses CD boundaries, the LD shall file a resolution designating its parent CD for reporting and affiliation, consistent with Article 9, Section 1, Subd. 2(B)–(C).

Bylaw 9.2 – Meetings and Quorum

Bylaw 9.2.01 – Regular Meeting Requirement

9.2.01.1 Each CD Committee shall hold at least one (1) regular meeting per calendar year, and may meet more frequently as needed.

9.2.01.2 The regular meeting must take place:

- No fewer than 45 days and no more than 270 days after the CD Convention;
- On a date set by the CD Co-Chairs or by majority vote of the Committee.

Bylaw 9.2.02 – Notice of Meetings

9.2.02.1 Written notice of each regular or special meeting shall be distributed at least fifteen (15) days in advance and must include:

- The date, time, and method (in-person, virtual, or hybrid);
- A proposed agenda or list of expected business;
- Contact information for the CD Secretary or presiding officer.

9.2.02.2 Notice shall be sent via email or another reliable method to all committee members.

Bylaw 9.2.03 – Quorum Requirements

9.2.03.1 Quorum for all regular and special CD Committee meetings shall be:

- One-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of the current members of the Committee,
- Without regard to the number physically present, consistent with Article 9, Section 2.

9.2.03.2 If quorum is lost during a meeting, no official action may be taken until quorum is re-established.

Bylaw 9.2.04 – Special Meetings

9.2.04.1 Special meetings may be called by:

- Joint call of both CD Co-Chairs,
- Majority of CD Committee officers, or
- One-third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of all CD Committee members by written petition.

9.2.04.2 Notice must follow the same procedures as regular meetings unless urgent business justifies a shorter time frame approved by a majority of the officers.

Bylaw 9.2.05 – Emergency Meetings

9.2.05.1 Emergency meetings may be held without advance notice under Article 9, Section 2, Subdivision 3 of the Constitution.

9.2.05.2 Quorum for emergency meetings shall be a majority of current members, regardless of attendance.

9.2.05.3 Only urgent business that cannot be postponed to a regular or special meeting may be considered.

Bylaw 9.3 – CD Officer Roles and Elections

Bylaw 9.3.01 – Required Officers

9.3.01.1 Each CD Committee shall have the following officers:

- Two (2) Co-Chairs
- One (1) Secretary
- One (1) Treasurer

9.3.01.2 These officers shall serve as the officers of both the CD Committee and its Convention, as described in Article 9, Section 3, Subdivision 1 of the Constitution.

Bylaw 9.3.02 – Officer Responsibilities

9.3.02.1 Co-Chairs: Lead meetings, coordinate with the State Party, call conventions, and represent the district to the State Executive Committee.

9.3.02.2 Secretary: Record meeting minutes, maintain contact lists, and file required documents.

9.3.02.3 Treasurer: Manage finances in accordance with state campaign finance laws and submit reports to the State Party Treasurer as required.

9.3.02.4 Additional officer roles may be established in the CD Committee's own bylaws.

Bylaw 9.3.03 – Officer Elections

9.3.03.1 CD Officers shall be elected at each odd-numbered-year regular session of the CD Convention by majority vote of credentialed delegates.

9.3.03.2 Elections may use secret ballots or other voting methods as specified in the Convention's Standing Rules.

9.3.03.3 Uncontested races may be decided by white ballot (unanimous consent) with a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

Bylaw 9.3.04 – Terms of Office

9.3.04.1 Terms begin fifteen (15) days after the close of the Convention where elected and end fourteen (14) days after the next such session, in accordance with Article 9, Section 3, Subdivision 4.

Bylaw 9.3.05 – Vacancies

9.3.05.1 If a CD officer resigns, is removed, or becomes ineligible:

- The CD Convention may fill the vacancy at its next session;
- If the vacancy lasts more than sixty (60) days, the State Executive Committee may appoint a temporary officer until the next Convention, as authorized by Article 9, Section 3, Subdivision 5(B).

9.3.05.2 Where the CD Secretary and/or CD Treasurer is absent or vacant, the Forward Independence Congressional District Co-Chairs shall also serve as the CD

Treasurer or Secretary until the CD Treasurer or Secretary position is no longer absent or the office is no longer vacant.

9.3.05.3 The Secretary shall notify the State Party Secretary of all vacancies and appointments.

Bylaw 9.4 – CD Committee Decision Appeals

9.4.1 Motions passed, other than candidate endorsements, by a Congressional District Committee may be appealed to the State Executive Committee.

9.4.2 All candidate endorsement appeals shall be appealed to the State Central Committee.

Companion Bylaw to Article 10 – Constituency Conventions and Committees

Bylaw 10.1 – Constituency Committee Formation

Bylaw 10.1.01 – Definition

A Constituency Committee is a Forward Independence Party unit organized around:

- A specific geographic subdivision (e.g., county, city, ward),
- A community of interest (e.g., youth, veterans, educators), or
- An administrative unit (e.g., school district, municipal district).

Such committees may be established under Article 10 of the Constitution.

Bylaw 10.1.02 – Formation Process and Authorizing Body

A Constituency Committee may be formed by:

- Resolution of a Congressional District Committee or District Convention (if fully contained within that district);
- Joint resolution of the State Executive Committee and relevant CD Committees (if spanning multiple districts).

The resolution must define:

- The name and purpose of the committee,
- The geographic or interest-based boundaries,
- The initial officers or organizing team, and
- Whether the committee is temporary or standing.

Bylaw 10.1.03 – Initial Operating Rules

New Constituency Committees must:

- Adopt a basic set of organizing rules or bylaws within 60 days of formation;
- Hold an organizing meeting open to all Party members within the defined

constituency;

- File their rules and a list of officers with the State Party Secretary and any affected CD Committees.

If these requirements are not met, the State Central Committee may place the committee on probation or revoke its status.

Bylaw 10.1.04 – Constituency Conventions

If a Constituency Committee is authorized to hold a Convention:

- Only members residing within the constituency boundaries may be seated as voting delegates;
- Quorum shall be one-third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of credentialed delegates present, per Article 10, Section 2;
- Voting rights, notice requirements, and standing rules shall follow the same procedures as CD Conventions unless modified in the resolution forming the committee.

Bylaw 10.2 – Constituency Committee Operation and Reporting

Bylaw 10.2.01 – Committee Officers

Each Constituency Committee shall elect, at minimum:

- A Chair (or Co-Chairs);
- A Secretary;
- And, a Treasurer if said committee has been authorized by the State Central Committee to form a Political Committee to raise and disburse money or in-kind resources in the name of Forward Independence.

Additional officers may be included in the committee's organizing rules. Officers shall be elected by majority vote of members eligible to vote within the constituency and shall serve until replaced.

Bylaw 10.2.02 – Meeting Expectations

Each Constituency Committee shall meet at least once per calendar year. Meetings may be in person, virtual, or hybrid.

If a Constituency Committee does not meet at least once per calendar year, it shall be considered inactive and automatically disbanded. It may be reestablished only by adoption of a new formation resolution under Bylaw 10.1.02.

Notice of meetings shall be provided at least seven (7) days in advance to known members and affiliated CD or State Party officers.

Bylaw 10.2.03 – Reporting Requirements

To remain in good standing, each Constituency Committee shall:

Draft as of July 14, 2025

- Submit a brief annual report to the State Party Secretary by February 1;
- Include a list of current officers, meeting activity, and any recommendations;
- Report officer changes or bylaw amendments within ten (10) days.

Bylaw 10.2.04 – Alignment with Higher-Level Rules

All Constituency Committee operations must comply with the Forward Independence Constitution and Bylaws.

If any provision of a Constituency Committee's rules conflicts with higher-level Party rules, the higher rule shall prevail.

Bylaw 10.2.05 – Review and Reauthorization

Each Constituency Committee shall be reviewed by its authorizing body at least once every two years.

A committee may be deactivated or restructured by majority vote of the relevant CD Committee or the State Executive Committee, following written notice and an opportunity for input from committee officers.

Bylaw 10.3 – Nonpartisan Candidate Support

Bylaw 10.3.01 – Declaration of Support

A Constituency Committee may support a nonpartisan candidate only after a vote by at least three (3) credentialed Forward Independence members eligible to vote in the constituency. The candidate may not be one of the voters.

Support requires a simple majority vote.

Bylaw 10.3.02 – Screening Requirement

Before any vote, the Committee Chair must confirm the candidate aligns with the Party platform. If the candidate is found ineligible, no vote may occur.

Bylaw 10.3.03 – Use of Party Resources

If support is declared, the Committee may allocate funds or resources consistent with its rules and available budget. All spending must follow applicable campaign finance law.

Bylaw 10.3.04 – Reporting Requirement

The Chair must notify the State Party Secretary within 7 days of the vote, including:

- The candidate's name and office sought
- The vote outcome and number of participants
- Any planned use of Party resources

Bylaw 10.3.05 – No Support in Partisan Races

This process may not be used in races where a party label appears on the ballot. Such races require a formal Party endorsement under Article 11.

Companion Bylaw to Article 11 – Platform

Bylaw 11.1– Purpose and Scope

11.1.01 The State Party Platform is the official public policy statement issued in the name of Forward Independence.

11.1.02 The Platform shall reflect the defining, bold, and centrist positions most important to Minnesotans, and express the core values and objectives of Forward Independence.

11.1.03 The Platform shall remain concise and limited in scope, emphasizing clarity and principle over comprehensiveness.

Bylaw 11.2 – Format and Plank Style

11.2.01 Each platform plank shall be written as a brief paragraph that clearly communicates a policy position aligned with Forward Independence values.

11.2.02 Planks should be framed in accessible language and may begin with statements such as “Forward Independence supports...” or “Forward Independence believes...”

11.2.03 Planks must be specific enough to express intent, yet broad enough to unite diverse candidates and members.

Bylaw 11.3 – Submission and Drafting Process

11.3.01 Any Party member, committee, or convention may propose new or amended platform planks.

11.3.02 All proposed planks must be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Public Policy and Legislative Affairs Committee or State Party Secretary.

11.3.03 Each submission must include:

- The proposed text of the plank,
- A short values-based justification, and
- The name(s) of submitting member(s) or sponsoring body.

11.3.04 Each proposed plank shall be submitted using the standard Party template at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting at which it is scheduled for review.

Bylaw 11.4 – Adoption and Threshold

11.4.01 Platform planks may be adopted or repealed at any regular or special session of the State Central Committee for which the official call includes platform business.

11.4.02 A plank shall be adopted or reaffirmed only by a three-fifths (3/5) vote of the State Central Committee.

11.4.03 The SCC may amend the wording of a proposed plank while preserving its original intent.

11.4.04 A clear record of all platform votes shall be recorded in the meeting minutes and retained by the State Party Secretary.

Bylaw 11.5 – Sunset and Reaffirmation Procedure

11.5.01 In odd-numbered calendar years, at the second regular session of the State Central Committee, any plank not adopted or reaffirmed since the last general statewide election shall automatically sunset, as required by Article 11, Section 2 of the Constitution.

11.5.02 The Chair of the Public Policy and Legislative Affairs Committee shall compile and circulate a list of sunset-eligible planks at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

11.5.03 The Chair shall also ensure that a reaffirmation docket is created and distributed as part of the agenda for platform review.

11.5.04 Planks may be reaffirmed using the same process and threshold required for new plank adoption.

11.5.05 Sunset planks shall be archived and removed from the published platform within 10 days of the meeting unless reaffirmed.

Bylaw 11.6 – Candidate Independence and Alignment

11.6.01 Endorsed candidates are not required to adopt or campaign on the full State Party Platform.

11.6.02 Candidates may develop their own messaging platforms, provided they are broadly consistent with the core values of Forward Independence.

11.6.03 Candidates and elected officials are encouraged to engage with the Party platform process as a resource and not a mandate.

Bylaw 11.7 – Publication and Promotion

11.7.01 The State Party Secretary shall publish the full, current Platform on the Party website within 10 days of any official changes.

11.7.02 The Platform shall also be:

- Distributed to all State Convention delegates and Congressional District officers;
- Retained as a public document of the Party's official policy positions.

11.7.03 The Platform may be shared publicly via campaign literature, candidate websites, voter guides, and press releases.

11.7.04 The Chair of the Public Policy and Legislative Affairs Committee or a designated committee may prepare optional summaries or highlight materials to aid in public understanding and communication.

Bylaw 11.8 – Provisional Planks

11.8.01 If immediate action is required to address a pressing public issue, the State Central Committee may adopt a provisional platform plank at any regular or special meeting.

11.8.02 A provisional plank may be adopted without prior notice if the committee deems the issue time sensitive.

11.8.03 All provisional planks must be reconsidered for reaffirmation at the next regular SCC meeting at which platform business is included in the call.

11.8.04 If not reaffirmed at that meeting, the provisional plank shall automatically expire.

Companion Bylaw to Article 12 – Bylaw Amendment Process

Bylaw 12.1.01 – Methods of Amendment

These Bylaws may be amended by either:

- A majority vote of the Forward Independence State Central Committee at a regular or special session; or

- A majority vote of the Forward Independence State Party Convention.

In either case, the full text of each proposed amendment must be included in the official meeting notice or convention call. Bylaws may also be amended via a vote-by-mail process, provided all such procedures follow Bylaw 14.3.10–14.3.13.

Bylaw 12.1.02 – Who May Propose Amendments

Any member of Forward Independence, as well as any committee or convention thereof, may propose amendments to the State Party Bylaws.

Bylaw 12.1.03 – Submission, Formatting, and Publication Requirements

Proposed amendments must be submitted in typewritten format with a font size of at least 10 points. They must be submitted to the State Party Secretary, who is responsible for ensuring that they are accurately reproduced and included in the official notice for the relevant meeting or convention.

No person may alter the text of a proposed amendment once submitted, except the individual or entity that proposed it. Minor formatting adjustments for clarity are permitted.

Bylaw 12.1.04 – Deadlines and Filing Procedures

Upon receipt of a proposed amendment, the State Party Secretary shall issue a written receipt to the submitting party. If a deadline for inclusion in a meeting notice has been properly established and announced, no proposed amendment received after that deadline shall be included.

Bylaw 12.1.05 – Cost Responsibility for Lengthy Proposals

- If a member submits an amendment or set of amendments totaling no more than two (2) pages (8½" x 11"), the cost of publication and distribution shall be borne by the Party.
- If the proposal exceeds two pages in length, the proposing member must pay the full cost of publication and distribution—including the first two pages—before it is included in the meeting notice or convention call.
- Proposals submitted by the State Executive Committee, State Central Committee, or a State Party Convention are exempt from these cost provisions.

Bylaw 12.1.06 – Debate and Adoption Procedures

Proposed amendments may be discussed, amended, and voted upon as standard business. However, any motion to amend a proposed amendment must be germane to the original subject matter. Non-germane amendments shall be ruled out of order.

Companion Bylaw to Article 13 – Parliamentary Authority

Bylaw 13.1.01 – Use of Parliamentary Authority

The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the procedures of all Forward Independence conventions, committees, and meetings, unless otherwise provided by the Party Constitution, Bylaws, or adopted Standing Rules.

Bylaw 13.1.02 – Order of Precedence

In the case of conflict, the following documents take precedence in this order:

1. Minnesota Laws & Statutes
2. State Party Constitution
3. State Party Bylaws
4. Standing Rules of the body
5. Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised

Bylaw 13.1.03 – Parliamentarian

Any Party body may appoint a Parliamentarian to advise on meeting procedure. The appointment may be made by the presiding officer or by majority vote of the body.

Companion Bylaw to Article 14 – General Provisions

Bylaw 14.1 – Standing Rules

Each FI Convention or Committee may create and implement any Standing Rules as needed for their own body. Standing Rules continuing beyond a single meeting are subject to filing notice with the State Party Secretary within fourteen (14) days of their adoption.

Bylaw 14.2.01 – Procedures for Voting by Mail

When a vote by mail is authorized under these Bylaws or by Party resolution, the Chair of the convention or committee conducting the vote shall:

- Set a reasonable timeline for ballot return;
- Provide written or electronic notice of the vote;
- Ensure members have time to consider and consult on the issue.

Ballots may be returned via U.S. Mail, electronic mail, or other secure methods approved by the Party.

Bylaw 14.2.02 – Authentication of Mail Ballots

The Chair conducting the vote must exercise due diligence in authenticating all

returned ballots. Methods may include verification codes, secure electronic platforms, or signature matching, as defined in Standing Rules or by resolution.

Bylaw 14.2.03– Public Inspection and Retention of Ballots

Voting results and individual vote-by-mail records shall be made available to the public by request and reported in the minutes of the next regular meeting of the committee or convention. All ballots—electronic or physical—must be retained until after that next regular meeting for potential review.

Bylaw 14.2.04 – Challenging the Vote

Any voting member may challenge the authenticity of votes cast by mail. A majority vote of the convention or committee may uphold a challenge and rescind the motion passed via mail ballot.

Bylaw 14.3.01 – Use of State Tax Checkoff Proceeds

Proceeds received by Forward Independence through the Minnesota Department of Revenue’s income tax checkoff may be disbursed at the discretion of the State Executive Committee, in accordance with applicable State and Federal laws.

Bylaw 14.3.02 – Use of PCR Contributions

Each Party unit (e.g., Congressional District or State Party) that accepts contributions through Minnesota’s Political Contribution Refund (PCR) program:

- Must be registered with the Campaign Finance & Public Disclosure Board;
- Shall be responsible for full compliance with all reporting rules;
- Shall issue timely receipts to contributors as required by law;
- May disburse PCR funds at the discretion of the Party unit, provided a duly elected Chair, Treasurer, and bank account are in place.

The State Executive Committee may establish revenue-sharing arrangements that:

- Require each receiving Party unit to retain at least 75% of funds received;
- Maintain equal and reciprocal percentages across units.

Bylaw 14.3.03 – Use of Other Contributions

Cash contributions not associated with the tax checkoff or PCR program are subject to the same provisions as PCR funds and must follow the same legal and internal financial requirements.

Bylaw 14.4.01 – Redistricting of Party Units

Forward Independence unit boundaries shall be redrawn as necessary to conform to:

- National or state census results;
- Minnesota statutes;

- Any final court order.

Redistricting shall commence immediately after such legal triggers.

Bylaw 14.5 - Definitions

Nonfeasance and nonfeasant shall mean the willful or negligent failure to perform the responsibilities of one's role, especially when the duty is clear and essential. It is a serious charge that implies neglect, abandonment, or disregard of an assigned obligation. The determination of nonfeasance of State Party Officers shall be determined by resolution of the State Executive Committee.

Companion Bylaw to Article 15 – Amendments

Bylaw 15.1 – Constitutional Amendment Procedures

Bylaw 15.1.01 – Submission Format

All proposed amendments to the Constitution must be:

- Submitted in writing to the State Party Secretary,
- Include both the existing text (if any) and the proposed change,
- Clearly labeled as a proposed constitutional amendment.

Submissions may be made by any Forward Independence convention or committee.

Bylaw 15.1.02 – Distribution and Notice

The full text of any proposed amendment must be posted on the Party website and distributed to all State Central Committee members at least thirty (30) days prior to the scheduled vote, in accordance with Article 15, Section 2 of the Constitution.

Bylaw 15.1.03 – Ratification Recording

Any amendment approved by the State Central Committee and ratified by the State Convention (or passed by 3/5 vote of the State Convention alone) shall:

- Be recorded in the official Party Constitution;
- Include the date of passage and method of adoption in a footnote or header;
- Be certified by the State Party Secretary within seven (7) days.

Bylaw 15.1.04 – Effective Date and Enforcement

Unless otherwise stated in the amendment itself, all constitutional amendments shall take effect immediately upon final adoption and ratification as required by Article 15, Section 3 or 4 of the Constitution.

Bylaw 15.1.05 – Restrictions During Merger Transition Period

Pursuant to Article 16, Section 6 of the Constitution:

- No amendment to the Constitution or to any section of the Party Bylaws may alter, suspend, or repeal the rights or protections granted in Article 16, Section 4 or Section 6 during the Merger Transition Period.
 - The Merger Transition Bylaws adopted under Article 16, Section 6 may only be amended, suspended, or repealed during the Transition Period by a three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) vote of either the State Executive Committee or the State Convention, as allowed by Article 16.
- This restriction shall remain in effect until the Merger Transition Period ends or Article 16 is revoked under Section 7 of that Article.

Companion Bylaw to Article 16 – Merger Transition Bylaws

Adopted pursuant to Article 16, Section 6 of the Forward Independence Constitution

These Bylaws govern the implementation of the Merger Transition Period and provide mechanisms for compliance, affiliation clarity, and risk mitigation to the national Forward Party brand.

Bylaw 16.1 – Forward Affiliation

16.1.1 Forward Independence is, during the Merger Transition Period, a state affiliate of the national Forward Party, subject to an executed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

16.1.2 Forward Independence also has a secondary and limited affiliation with the Alliance Party because of the historical relationship of the Independence-Alliance Party.

Bylaw 16.2 – Candidate Endorsement Authority

16.2.1 Forward Independence has the only authority to endorse candidates for public office in Minnesota during the Merger Transition Period.

16.2.2 The Alliance Party may, with notice to FI, identify Forward Independence-endorsed candidates as “Alliance Party Endorsed,” but may not make its own endorsements in Minnesota unless first authorized by Forward Independence.

16.2.3 No other organization may represent itself as having endorsement authority for Forward Independence or any candidate standing for its support.

16.2.4 Forward Independence may voluntarily allow co-branding of endorsed candidates during the transition but retains exclusive and final authority on endorsement decisions.

Bylaw 16.3 – Restriction on Alliance Party Roles

16.3.1 Officers of Forward Independence may continue in roles or titles held with the national Alliance Party prior to the adoption of this Constitution, provided those roles do not conflict with Forward Independence duties.

16.3.2 No officer may accept or be appointed to any new position, leadership role, or committee assignment in the national Alliance Party during the Transition Period.

16.3.3 Any actual or potential conflict must be disclosed in writing to the State Executive Committee, which shall have authority to determine appropriate remediation consistent with Article 16, Section 4 of the Constitution.

Bylaw 16.4 – Transition Compliance Oversight

16.4.1 The State Executive Committee shall appoint a Transition Compliance Officer for the duration of the Transition Period.

16.4.2 The Compliance Officer shall:

16.4.2.1 Monitor adherence to Article 16 and these Bylaws.

16.4.2.2 Maintain a confidential registry of officer disclosures.

16.4.2.3 Coordinate with national Forward Headquarters on MOU compliance.

16.4.2.4 Issue internal advisories on potential violations or reputational risk.

16.4.2.5 Recommend corrective actions to the Executive Committee.

16.4.3 All officers and committee chairs shall cooperate fully with the Transition Compliance Officer.

Bylaw 16.5 – Forward Branding

16.5.1 During the Merger Transition Period, national Forward Party Headquarters is the sole authority on all branding, design standards, and public-facing visual identity applicable to Forward Independence.

16.5.2 Forward Independence must strictly follow all branding guidelines issued by national Forward, including but not limited to usage of logos, fonts, color palettes, slogans, and official names.

16.5.3 No public materials, digital content, press releases, campaign messaging, social media posts, or promotional assets may include the logo, name, or branding elements of the national Alliance Party.

16.5.4 Any violation of this policy will be referred to the Transition Compliance Officer and may result in disciplinary action or revocation of public communication privileges.

Bylaw 16.6 – Amendment of These Bylaws

16.6.1 These Merger Transition Bylaws may only be amended, suspended, or repealed during the Merger Transition Period by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the State Executive Committee or the State Convention.

16.6.2 No amendment may conflict with or diminish any right, protection, or obligation established in Article 16 of the Constitution, particularly Sections 2, 4, and 6.

16.6.3 Any ambiguity in interpretation shall be resolved in favor of full compliance with the Constitution.

Bylaw 16.7 – Revocation of Article 16

16.7.1 The Companion Bylaws to Article 16 shall automatically become null and void at the end of the Merger Transition Period or upon revocation of Article 16 of the FI State Constitution.