

Forward Independence

State Party Constitution

Preamble – Forward Independence Core Values

The Independence-Alliance Party of Minnesota and the Forward Party of Minnesota, now unified as the party, Forward Independence, have fused to establish the forward-thinking, solutions-oriented political alternative. As a grassroots organization, we are committed to transcending partisan gridlock and advancing a collaborative vision for meaningful, lasting progress. Our united party seeks to restore trust in government by prioritizing the quality of life for all Minnesotans. We stand firmly against political rivalry, unchecked corporate influence, and the excessive power of the ultra-wealthy; forces that have contributed to the distortion of facts in partisan media and public policy. Our mission is to rebuild trust in the government and its institutions, strengthen the voting power of every Minnesotan, and promote equality across the state.

Core Values

1. **Foundation of Truth and Integrity**
 - We pledge to be transparent and honest in all our dealings, building trust rooted in integrity, and accountable to the facts in our actions and communications.
2. **Fundamental Freedoms and Human Rights**
 - We believe it is our shared responsibility to uphold each person's autonomy and work together for a more inclusive society. One where everyone's basic human rights, needs and dignity are protected. A society where we strive to break down barriers of discrimination and build a foundation of respect.
3. **A Ground-Up Governance Philosophy**
 - We emphasize solutions that originate within local communities, as this empowers grassroots leaders to craft policies that address specific needs without top-down overreach. Our goal is to foster collective responsibility and civic engagement.
4. **Authentic and Innovative Leadership**
 - We commit to leadership that is evidence-based, forward-thinking and solutions-oriented. The ethical utilization of technology shall help us move beyond our biases, but it is also our duty to protect the communities from its misuse, ensuring the benefit to all.

5. Collaboration with Diverse Thinking

- We strive to create a culture that encourages diverse viewpoints and constructive dialogue, in an environment where new ideas take root and guide us towards a collective good. Differences are not divisions but invitations to understand, connect, and grow.

6. Listening. Inclusivity. Tolerance.

- We are building a home for all, not just for Independents or Alternative Parties, but all those who believe in the promise of a better tomorrow. Every voice looking to engage with honest intent is to be heard and valued, leading with empathy to bring compassion to leadership and purpose to action.

7. Service & Stewardship

- We hold it a sacred duty to serve Minnesota with conviction and vigor, in pursuit of the well-being of current and future generations. To be stewards of our lands, communities, and institutions, not for fleeting gains, but for the lasting welfare of our great state.

Article One – Name

Section 1. Name:

The official name in its totality of this organization shall be **Forward Independence**.

Section 2. Abbreviations:

Forward Independence shall be limited to the use of the abbreviations **FI**, **FI-MN**, **FWD**, and **FWD IND** in official communications.

Article Two – Objective

Section 1. State Objective:

The objective of Forward Independence shall be to:

- Function as a Minnesota state major political party,
- Endorse candidates for partisan and nonpartisan public office,

- Assist Forward Independence-endorsed candidates in their campaigns for public office,
- Assist Forward Independence-endorsed elected public officials in their service in public office,
- Advocate the enactment of public policy and laws that are consistent with the Forward Independence values, platform, and public policy positions,
- Support Forward Independence members for appointed public office,
- Encourage and support citizen participation in the public political process, and

Section 2: National Objective:

The objective of Forward Independence shall also be to support and participate in comparable activities listed in Article 2 - Section 1 with the Forward Independence national affiliate.

Article Three – Membership

Section 1. Membership:

Any person may be a member of Forward Independence who is:

- In agreement with the Forward Independence Values and Objectives,
- In compliance with the political party membership provisions of the Minnesota Statutes and Minnesota Rules and;
- Currently eligible to vote, or will be eligible to vote at the next State General Election.

Article Four – State Convention

Section 1. State Convention Organization:

Subdivision 1. Existence: There shall be a Forward Independence State Convention. It shall be the primary authority of Forward Independence.

Subdivision 2. Members and Officers: The voting members of the Forward Independence State Convention shall be the State Delegates. When the Forward Independence State Convention is in session, the officers of said Convention shall be such as may be provided this Constitution, FI Bylaws, and the Parliamentary Authority. When the Forward Independence State Convention is not in session, the Forward Independence State Party Officers shall be the officers of the Forward Independence State Convention.

Subdivision 3. Responsibilities: The Forward Independence State Convention shall serve as the highest governing authority of Forward Independence.

Subdivision 4. Powers:

- I. The Forward Independence State Convention shall be the governing body of Forward Independence, serving as its overarching authority and shall hold ultimate power within Forward Independence, subject to the provisions of this Constitution, FI Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority.
- II. The Forward Independence State Convention may exercise any power and take any action that any subordinate Party Convention, Party Committee, or other Forward Independence entity is authorized to exercise or take under this Constitution, FI Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority.

Subdivision 5. Duties: The Forward Independence State Convention shall:

- I. Elect Forward Independence State Party Officers,
- II. Endorse candidates for statewide public office, or return votes of No Endorsement,
- III. Deliver a report on the financial status of Forward Independence to its members,
- IV. Call the 1st regular meeting of the Forward Independence State Central Committee meeting following the regular session of the State Convention, as provided by this Constitution, FI Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority,
- V. May assume any other such duties, as it deems appropriate and necessary to carry on the affairs of Forward Independence, subject to the provisions of this Constitution, FI Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority.

Section 2. State Convention Sessions:

Subdivision 1. Regular Sessions: The Forward Independence State Convention shall assemble in regular session once in each calendar year. The day(s), time, method, and location of each such session shall be set by the Forward Independence State Central Committee. A

written notice to each such session shall be distributed to each State Delegate at least thirty (30) days before the opening of the regular session. A quorum for each regular session of the State Convention shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members in total, including at least one (1) State Party Officer, and must represent at least one-half (50%) of the state delegation present at the session.

Subdivision 2. Special Sessions:

- I. Forward Independence Special State Conventions may be called as a special session by the Forward Independence State Central Committee or authority designated by the Forward Independence State Central Committee to assemble. The day(s), time, method, and location of each such session shall be set by said committee or designated authority calling the special session. A written notice to each such special session shall be distributed to each State Delegate at least twenty-two (22) days before the opening of the special session. A quorum for each special session of the State Convention shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members in total, including at least one (1) State Party Officer, and must represent at least one-half (50%) of the state delegation present at the session.
- II. Only items of business specifically stated in the written notice to a special session shall be in order during the session. Items of business shall be determined by the Forward Independence State Central Committee or authority designated by the Forward Independence State Central Committee.

Subdivision 3. Emergency Sessions:

- I. Forward Independence Emergency State Conventions may be called as an emergency session, without previous notice, by the Forward Independence State Central Committee or authority designated by the Forward Independence State Central Committee to assemble. The day(s), time, method, and location of each such session shall be set by said committee or designated authority calling the emergency session. A written notice to each such emergency session shall be distributed to each State Delegate before the opening of the emergency session. A quorum for each emergency session of the State Convention shall consist of at least one-half (50%) of all State Delegates, regardless of attendance at the emergency session, and must be maintained at or above that threshold for the duration of the session.
- II. Only items of business specifically stated in the written notice to an emergency session shall be in order during the session. Items of business may only be added or altered when postponement of such items until a special session or regular session are deemed unadvisable by a joint determination of the Forward Independence State Co-Chairs or their chair designee.

Section 3. Members / State Delegates:

Subdivision 1. State Central Committee Delegates:

- I. The members of the State Central Committee shall serve as State Delegates to the Forward Independence State Convention.
- II. The elections, appointments, and terms of which, as provided by the Forward Independence State Constitution and FI Bylaws.

Subdivision 2. Congressional District Delegates and Office Terms:

- I. Each Congressional District shall allocate Congressional District Delegates to serve as State Delegates at the Forward Independence State Convention, per the rules and procedures of the Congressional District, but no more than ten (10) Delegates and five (5) Alternates per Congressional District shall be allowed.
- II. Congressional District Delegates from each of the Forward Independence Congressional Districts shall be elected by majority vote of Forward Independence members at the regular session of each Forward Independence Congressional District Convention. Congressional Delegates shall be reported to the State Party Secretary no more than fourteen (14) days following the election of any Congressional District Delegates.
- III. Vacancies for Congressional District Delegates acting as State Delegates may be fill through elections at regular or special sessions of the Forward Independence State Convention by majority vote of the delegation, as provided for in the FI Bylaws, up to the limits set in: Article 4 - Section 3 - Subdivision 2 - II.
- IV. The term of office for each Congressional District Delegate, shall begin on the fifteenth (15th) day after the close of the regular session of the State Delegate's Congressional District Convention during even-numbered years, and terminates on the 14th day after the close of the next regular session of the State Delegate's Congressional District Convention during even-numbered years. If the State Delegate was elected at the State Convention, the term of office shall begin once duly elected and the State Party Secretary updates the State Delegation Rolls, and ends on the 14th day after the close of the next regular session of the State Delegate's Congressional District Convention during even-numbered years.

Subdivision 3. Vacancies:

- I. Any delegate that fails to attend any combination of two (2) consecutive Congressional District Convention or State Conventions, to which the delegate was properly notified, or where delegate status verification procedures exist the same for all delegates, and a delegate fails to comply with such procedures, that delegate shall be declared

nonfeasant by action of the State Party Secretary or Congressional District Secretary of their respective Convention. For which the delegate's seat shall immediately become vacant, and may be filled as provided in Article 4 - Section 3 - Subdivision 2 - III, or as otherwise provided by this Constitution, FI Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority.

- II. Vacancies for Congressional District Delegates by abdication, shall be filled in the respective Congressional District, and per the Congressional District Constitution, Congressional District Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority.

Article Five – State Central Committee

Section 1. State Central Committee Organization:

Subdivision 1. Existence: There shall be a Forward Independence State Central Committee. It shall be secondary authority of Forward Independence, and shall act as the oversight for the State Executive Committee.

Subdivision 2. Members and Officers:

- I. The members of the Forward Independence State Central Committee shall consist of:
 - Forward Independence State Executive Committee members,
 - State Party Officers and State Party Deputy Officers,
 - Chief State Directors or other State Directors,
 - Congressional District Committee Officers and Congressional District Committee Deputy Officers from each Congressional District, and
 - Constituency Committee Officers and Constituency Committee Deputy Officers.
- II. Additional ex-officio members of the Forward Independence State Central Committee, with full voting rights shall exist, and consist of Forward Independence-endorsed elected public officials.
- III. The Forward Independence State Party Officers shall be the Forward Independence State Central Committee Officers.

Subdivision 2.5. Chairpersons: The Forward Independence State Co-Chairs, shall be the Chairpersons of the Forward Independence State Central Committee.

Subdivision 3. Responsibilities: The Forward Independence State Central Committee shall serve as the 2nd highest governing body of Forward Independence.

Subdivision 4. Powers: The Forward Independence State Central Committee shall be the governance of Forward Independence between sessions of the Forward Independence State Convention, and shall have the power to adopt, amend, ratify, and rescind provisions of the Forward Independence State Party Bylaws, as subject to the provisions of this Constitution, FI Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority.

Subdivision 5. Duties: The Forward Independence State Central Committee shall:

- I. Set the date for the annual State Convention,
- II. Oversee and Supervise the Forward Independence State Executive Committee,
- III. Have the power to oversee budget and fiscal matter guidelines for State Party, including the ratification of all annual budgets;
- IV. Hear Appeals as outlined in this Constitution and FI Bylaws, including appeals of motions passed by the State Executive Committee,
- V. Receive report of and vote to reaffirm any member removal measures taken by the State Executive Committee,
- VI. May appoint Chairs of Special Committees it has formed, as defined in this Constitution and FI Bylaws,
- VII. Elect the State Executive Director and the State Director of Party Affairs, and any additional Directors as provided in this Constitution and FI Bylaws,
- VIII. By resolution, form any and all Constituency Committees, including committees that fall under a Congressional District Committee, if not otherwise formed,
- IX. Appoint At-Large members of the Forward Independence State Executive Committee, as defined in this Constitution and FI Bylaws,
- X. Review and Approve the authorized publishing of a State Platform, voted on by individual planks, with a recommendation slate presented from the State Core Committee - Public Policy & Legislative Affairs,
- XI. Exercise any power and fulfill all additional duties, as is necessary and appropriate to carry on the responsibilities and affairs of Forward Independence, subject to the provisions of this Constitution, FI Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority, subordinate to the Forward Independence State Convention.

Section 2. State Central Committee Meetings:

Subdivision 1. Regular Meetings:

- I. There shall be four (4) regular meetings of the Forward Independence State Central Committee during a twelve-month-period running from May 1st to April 30th. The 1st meeting is to be held between 14 days and 31 days after that year's State Convention and called by the State Convention. The 2nd meeting is to be held within 90 days of the 1st meeting. The 3rd meeting is to be held between the 1st Tuesday in November and Thanksgiving Day, excluding the November 11th holiday. The 4th meeting is to be held anytime after January 1st, but no later than 45 days prior to May 1st.
- II. The meeting day(s), time, method, and location shall be set by the Forward Independence State Central Committee, except a notice by the Forward Independence State Convention where it shall set said notice requirements. A written notice of each such meeting shall be distributed to each Forward Independence State Central Committee member at least thirty (30) days before the opening of the regular meeting.
- III. A quorum for each regular meeting of the Forward Independence State Central Committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members in total, including at least one (1) State Party Officer, and must represent at least one-half (50%) of the State Central Committee members present at the session.

Subdivision 2. Special Meetings:

- I. Forward Independence Special State Central Committee meetings may be called as a special meeting by the Forward Independence State Executive Committee or an authority designated by the Forward Independence State Executive Committee, a joint call by the State Co-Chairs, or by a petition of one-third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the Forward Independence State Central Committee members to assemble. Said petition shall be filed with the State Party Secretary and notice sent out by the State Party Officers. The day(s), time, method, and location of each such meeting shall be set by the body who issued it or as stated in the petition for the special meeting. A written notice to each such special meeting shall be distributed to the members of the Forward Independence State Central Committee at least twenty-two (22) days before the opening of the special meeting. A quorum for each special meeting of the Special State Central Committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members in total, including at least one (1) State Party Officer, and must represent at least one-half (50%) of the State Central Committee members present at the special session.
- II. Only items of business specifically stated in the written notice to a special meeting shall be in order during the session. Items of business shall be determined and set by the body who issued it or as stated in the petition for the special meeting.

Subdivision 3. Emergency Meetings:

- I. Forward Independence Emergency State Central Committee meetings may be called as an emergency meeting, without previous notice by, a majority of State Central Committee Officers, or a majority of all the members of the Forward Independence State Executive Committee or authority designated by the Forward Independence State Executive Committee to assemble. The day(s), time, method, and location of each such meeting shall be set by the body who issued it. A written notice to each such emergency meeting shall be distributed to the members of the Forward Independence State Central Committee before the opening of the emergency meeting. A quorum for each emergency meeting of the State Central Committee shall consist of at least one-half (50%) of all members of the State Central Committee, regardless of attendance at the emergency meeting, and must be maintained at or above that threshold for the duration of the session.
- II. Only items of business specifically stated in the written notice to an emergency meeting shall be in order during the session. Items of business may only be added or altered when postponement of such items until a special session or regular session are deemed unadvisable by a joint determination of the Forward Independence State Co-Chairs or their chair designee.

Article Six – State Executive Committee

Section 1. State Executive Committee Organization:

Subdivision 1. Existence: There shall be a Forward Independence State Executive Committee. It shall act be the nexus for all State Core Committees, and shall act as the chief managing body there of.

Subdivision 2. Members and Officers:

- I. The members of the Forward Independence State Executive Committee shall consist of:
 - Forward Independence State Party Officers,
 - Forward Independence Congressional District Committee Chairpersons,
 - Forward Independence Directors, and
 - Forward Independence State At-Large Chairs.
- II. Forward Independence State Party Deputy Officers, shall be non-voting members of the State Executive Committee, except in cases of absent superior officers, then said State Party Deputy Officers, shall be granted voting privileges for that meeting.

- III. Forward Independence State Party Officers, shall be the officers of the Forward Independence State Executive Committee.

Subdivision 2.5. Chairpersons: The Forward Independence State Executive Director, shall be the Chairperson of the Forward Independence State Executive Committee. In the absence of the State Executive Director, the State Director of Party Affairs, shall be the Chairperson of the State Executive Committee.

Subdivision 3. Responsibilities: The Forward Independence State Executive Committee shall be the 3rd highest governing body of Forward Independence.

Subdivision 4. Powers: The Forward Independence State Executive Committee shall provide the governance of the Forward Independence between meetings of the Forward Independence State Central Committee and when the Forward Independence State Convention is not in session, and shall have such powers as may be appropriate and necessary to carry on the affairs of Forward Independence, as provided by this Constitution, FI Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority, and subordinate to the Forward Independence State Convention and the Forward Independence State Central Committee.

Subdivision 5. Duties: The Forward Independence State Executive Committee shall conduct the day-to-day business of Forward Independence, and shall have other such duties as may be appropriate and necessary to carry on the affairs of Forward Independence, as provided by this Constitution, FI Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority, and subordinate to the Forward Independence State Convention and the Forward Independence State Central Committee.

Section 2. State Executive Committee Meetings:

Subdivision 1. Regular Meetings: The Forward Independence State Executive Committee shall assemble regular meetings no less than once in every calendar month. The day(s), time, method, and location of each such meetings shall be set by the State Executive Director and State Director of Party Affairs, or in the event of a lack of consensus or nonfeasance of both Chief State Directors, a majority of the State Executive Committee Officers. A written notice to each such meeting shall be distributed to each Forward Independence State Executive Committee member at least fourteen (14) days before the opening of the meeting. A quorum for each regular meeting of the State Executive Committee shall include no fewer than three (3) members in total, including at least one (1) State Party Officer, and must represent at least one-half (50%) of the State Executive Committee members present at the regular meeting

Subdivision 2. Special Meetings:

- I. Forward Independence State Executive Committee meetings may be called as a special meeting by the Forward Independence State Executive Committee or authority designated by the Forward Independence State Executive Committee, joint call of both Forward Independence Chief State Directors, a majority (50%+1) of State Party Officers, or petition of one-third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the Forward Independence State Executive Committee

members to assemble. Said petition shall be filed with the State Party Secretary and notice sent out by the State Party Officers. The day(s), time, method, and location of each such meeting shall be set by the body that issued it or as stated in the petition for the special meeting. A written notice to each such special meeting shall be distributed to the members of the Forward Independence State Executive Committee at least seven (7) days before the opening of the special meeting. A quorum for each special meeting of the Special State Executive Committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members in total, including at least one (1) State Party Officer, and must represent at least one-half (50%) of the State Executive Committee members without regard to the number of members present at the special meeting.

- II. Only items of business specifically stated in the written notice to a special meeting shall be in order during the session. Items of business shall be determined and set by the body that issued it or as stated in the petition for the special meeting.

Subdivision 3. Emergency Meetings:

- I. Forward Independence Emergency State Executive Committee meetings may be called as an emergency meeting, without previous notice by, a majority (50%+1) of State Executive Committee Officers, a unanimous agreement of all Forward Independence State Co-Chairs and Chief State Directors, or (50%) of the Forward Independence State Executive Committee members to assemble. The day(s), time, method, and location of each such meeting shall be set by the body who issued it. A written notice to each such emergency meeting shall be distributed to the members of the Forward Independence State Executive Committee before the opening of the emergency meeting. A quorum for each emergency meeting of the State Executive Committee shall consist of at least one-half (50%) of all members of the State Executive Committee, regardless of attendance at the emergency meeting, and must be maintained at or above that threshold for the duration of the session.
- II. Only items of business specifically stated in the written notice to an emergency meeting shall be in order during the session. Items of business may only be added or altered when postponement of such items until a special session or regular session are deemed unadvisable by a joint determination of the Forward Independence Chief State Director or their chair designee.

Section 3. State Party Officers:

Subdivision 1. Existence and Designation: There shall be Forward Independence State Party Officers. Forward Independence State Party Officer shall have such parliamentary and administrative responsibilities, powers, and duties, as appropriate to one's office, to carry on the parliamentary and administrative affairs of Forward Independence. The Forward Independence State Party Officers shall be:

- Two (2) Forward Independence State Party Co-Chairs,
- The Forward Independence State Treasurer,
- The Forward Independence State Secretary,
- The State Party Executive Director, and
- The State Director of Party Affairs.

Subdivision 1.5. Ex-Officio Designations: The Forward Independence State Party Co-Chairs and the Chief State Directors, shall be ex-officio members of all Forward Independence State Core Committees and Special Committees.

Subdivision 2. State Party Deputy Officers: The Forward Independence State Party Secretary and Forward Independence State Party Treasurer, shall have a Deputy, known as the Forward Independence Deputy State Secretary and Forward Independence Deputy State Treasurer respectively. Forward Independence State Party Deputy Officers, shall assist their superior Forward Independence State Party Officers in the performance and execution of their responsibilities, powers and duties, as directed by their superior State Party Officers. The Forward Independence State Party Deputy Officers, shall be voting members of the Forward Independence State Executive Committee, but shall not serve as Forward Independence State Party Officers, except where a Deputy's respective Forward Independence State Party Officer is absent unavailable or found to be nonfeasant, as provided by this Constitution, FI Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority.

Subdivision 3. Chief State Directors:

- I. Forward Independence shall have two (2) Chief State Directors; State Executive Director and State Director of Party Affairs, to act as the 2nd highest executives within the state party Forward Independence.
- II. The Forward Independence State Executive Director shall be the Chairperson of the State Executive Committee, manage the day-to-day operations of Forward Independence between meetings of the State Executive Committee in tandem with the the Director of Party Affairs, may serve as a designated party Spokesperson as provided by FI Bylaws, and facilitate the strategic direction of Forward Independence leading from the State Executive Committee chair.
- III. The State Director of Party Affairs shall serve as the designated substitute to the State Executive Director, coordinate collaborations and communications between the State Core Committees themselves and the State Executive Committee, assist or collaboration with Congressional District Committees with their development, may serve as a designated party Spokesperson as provided by FI Bylaws, act as chief liaison between

the state and national parties, and, in agreement with the State Executive Director, assume tasks necessary to grow and strengthen Forward Independence.

Subdivision 4. State Party Co-Chairs (Spokesperson):

- I. Forward Independence shall have two (2) State Party Co-Chairs, to act as the highest executives within the state party Forward Independence.
- II. The Forward Independence State Co-Chairs shall be the Chairpersons of the State Central Committee, serve as the primary liaisons between Forward Independence and the media outlets, state government, national government, and other State Parties in Minnesota, as well as act as liaisons to our national affiliate the Forward Party, determine who will serve as Chair of the Forward Independence State Convention, unless otherwise provided in FI Bylaws.
- III. The State Co-Chairs shall by a joint agreement, appoint a State Party Spokespersons for Forward Independence, and shall be their Point Person. A State Party Spokespersons shall hold no offices within Forward Independence, or other positions that would constitute a conflict of interest to Forward Independence.

Subdivision 5. Elections: Forward Independence State Party Officers shall be elected by Ranked Choice Voting of members in attendance of their respective bodies, as follows:

- I. The State Co-Chairs, State Treasurer, and State Secretary, nominated and elected by the Forward Independence State Convention, during each regular session in the odd-numbered calendar year.
- II. The State Deputy Treasurer and State Deputy Secretary, nominated by their respective State Party Officers and elected by the Forward Independence State Central Committee, during each 1st regular session in the odd-numbered calendar year, as provided for in Article 5 - Section 2 - Subdivision 1 - I.
- III. The State Executive Director, nominated and elected by the Forward Independence State Central Committee, during each 1st regular session in the odd-numbered calendar year, as provided for in Article 5 - Section 2 - Subdivision 1 - I.
- IV. The State Director of Party Affairs, nominated and elected by the Forward Independence State Central Committee, during each 1st regular session in the even-numbered calendar year, as provided for in Article 5 - Section 2 - Subdivision 1 - I.

Subdivision 6. Terms: The term of office for each Forward Independence State Party Officer shall begin on the fifteenth (15th) day after the close of the regular session of their respective Forward Independence State Convention or Forward Independence State Central Committee,

and terminates on the fourteenth (14th) day after the close of the such regular session, in respect to said offices.

Subdivision 7. Vacancy:

- I. Forward Independence State Party Officer vacancies may be filled by vote of the Forward Independence State Convention.
- II. Forward Independence State Party Officer vacancy may be temporarily filled by resolution of the Forward Independence State Central Committee. Each such appointed State Officer, shall be known as Officer Pro Tem of the office named in the resolution, and shall automatically and instantly yield the office upon the next regular election of that office.
- III. Where both Forward Independence State Treasurer and State Deputy Treasurer are absent or vacant, the Forward Independence State Director of Party Affairs shall serve as the Forward Independence State Treasurer, until the Forward Independence State Treasurer or State Deputy Treasurer is no longer absent, or until the office is no longer vacant.
- IV. Where both the Forward Independence State Secretary and State Deputy Secretary is absent or vacant, the Forward Independence State Executive Director shall serve as the Forward Independence State Party Secretary, until the Forward Independence State Secretary or State Deputy Secretary is no longer absent, or until the office is no longer vacant.

Article Seven – State Core Committees & Special Committees

Section 1. State Core Committees: There shall be Forward Independence State Core Committees. The existence and properties of each State Core Committee shall be as such, provided for in this Constitution and FI Bylaws.

Section 2. State Special Committees: There shall be Forward Independence State Special Committees. The State Special Committees are to carry out specific, time-limited, or focused tasks not assigned to or reassigned from a Core Committee. Their responsibilities, powers, and duties are to be clearly defined in their organizing, along with their directive, scope and time-period.

- I. State Special Committees may be formed by resolution of the Forward Independence State Executive Committee, resolution of the Forward Independence State Central Committee, formal written request of a State Core Committee, or action of both State Co-Chairs and either one (1) of the State Chief Directors.

- II. All State Special Committees may be dissolved by their organizing body.
- III. No State Special Committee shall exist beyond the adjournment of the next regular session of the Forward Independence State Convention, without being again formed by the State Central Committee, State Executive Committee, or State Co-Chairs and either Chief State Directors.

Article Eight – Congressional District Conventions

Section 1. Congressional District Convention Organization:

Subdivision 1. Existence and Number: There shall be one (1) Forward Independence Congressional District Convention for each Congressional District in the State of Minnesota.

Subdivision 2. Members and Officers: The members of each Forward Independence Congressional District Convention shall be the Forward Independence Congressional District Convention Officers and the delegates who are eligible to vote in the Congressional District Convention. This group shall also be known as the Congressional District Convention Delegation. In each Congressional District Convention that is in session, the officers of the Convention shall be such as provided in the Congressional District Constitution, Congressional District Bylaws, Parliamentary Authority, or Standing Rules. Each Forward Independence Congressional District Convention when not in session, the Congressional District Party Officers shall be the officers of their Congressional District Convention.

Subdivision 3. Responsibilities: The Forward Independence Congressional District Conventions shall provide the governance of Forward Independence in its Congressional District.

Subdivision 4. Powers:

- I. The Forward Independence Congressional District Conventions shall be the highest governing body of Forward Independence in its Congressional District, subordinate to the Forward Independence State Convention, Forward Independence State Central Committee, and Forward Independence State Executive Committee.
- II. The Forward Independence Congressional District Conventions may exercise power and take any action as Forward Independence in its Congressional District, authorized by the provisions of this Constitution and FI Bylaws.

Subdivision 5. Duties: The Forward Independence Congressional District Conventions shall:

- I. Elect its Forward Independence Congressional District Party Officers,
- II. Endorse candidates for the offices in the territorial limits of which are wholly within the territorial limits of its Congressional District for the United States House of Representatives and Minnesota State Legislature, and non-partisan offices within said same territorial limits, or return votes of no endorsement. All congressional partisan-office endorsements shall be reviewed and ratified by the State Central Committee or the State Convention,
- III. Deliver a report on the financial status of the Forward Independence Congressional District to its members,
- IV. Call the 1st regular meeting of its Forward Independence Congressional District Committee meeting following the regular session of its Congressional District Convention, as provided by this Constitution, FI Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority,
- V. May assume other such duties, as it deems appropriate and necessary to carry on the affairs of Forward Independence in its Congressional District, subject to the provisions of this Constitution, FI Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority.

Section 2. Congressional District Convention Sessions:

Subdivision 1. Regular Sessions:

- I. The Forward Independence Congressional District Conventions shall assemble in regular session once in each calendar year. The day(s), time, method, and location of each such session shall be set by the Forward Independence State Central Committee. A written notice to each such session shall be distributed to every Local Constituency Delegate in the Convention's Congressional District at least thirty (30) days before the opening of the regular session. A quorum for each regular session of the Congressional District Conventions shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members in total, and must represent at least one-half (50%) of the Congressional District Convention Delegation present at the session.
- II. The Forward Independence Congressional District Conventions 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 Forward Independence State Convention.

Subdivision 2. Special Sessions:

- I. The Forward Independence Special Congressional District Conventions may be called as a special session by the same Forward Independence Congressional District Committee of which the Congressional District Convention is being called or an authority thereof designated by said Forward Independence Congressional District Committee,

the Forward Independence State Executive Committee, or by a petition of one-third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the Congressional District Convention Delegates to assemble. Said petition shall be filed with the Congressional District Secretary and State Party Secretary. The day(s), time, method, and location of each such special session shall be set by the body who issued it or as stated in the petition for the special session. A written notice to each such special session shall be distributed to every Local Constituency Delegate in the Special Convention's Congressional District at least twenty-two (22) days before the opening of the special session. A quorum for each special session of the Congressional District Conventions shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members in total, and must represent at least one-half (50%) of the Congressional District Convention Delegation present at the session.

- II. Only items of business specifically stated in the written notice to a special session shall be in order during the session. Items of business shall be determined and set by the body who issued it or as stated in the petition for the special session.

Subdivision 3. Emergency Sessions:

- I. The Forward Independence Emergency Congressional District Conventions may be called as an emergency session, without previous notice by, by majority (50%+1) of the same Congressional District Officers of which the Congressional District Convention is being called, or the Forward Independence State Executive Committee. The day(s), time, method, and location of each such emergency session shall be set by the body who issued it. A written notice to each such emergency session shall be distributed to every Local Constituency Delegate in the Emergency Convention's Congressional District before the opening of the special session. A quorum for each emergency session of the Congressional District Conventions shall consist of a majority of the Congressional District Convention Delegates, without regard to the number of delegates present at the emergency session, and must be maintained at or above that threshold for the duration of the session.
- II. Only items of business specifically stated in the written notice to an emergency session shall be in order during the session. Items of business may only be added or altered when postponement of such items until a special session or regular session are deemed unadvisable by a joint determination of the Forward Independence Congressional District Co-Chairs or their chair designee.

Article Nine – Congressional District Committees

Section 1. Congressional District Committee Organization:

Subdivision 1. Existence and Function: There shall be one (1) Forward Independence Congressional District Committee for each Congressional District in the State of Minnesota.

Every Congressional District Committee shall be, one in the same, Central Committee and Executive Committee of its Congressional District.

Subdivision 2. Members and Officers: The members of each the Forward Independence Congressional District Committees shall be the Congressional District Party Officers and the members who are eligible to vote in the Congressional District Committee, as provided for by this Constitution, FI Bylaws, or any by its Congressional District Consitution and Bylaws.

Subdivision 3. Legislative District Committees:

- I. The Forward Independence Legislative District Committees, the territorial limits of which are wholly within the territorial limits of one (1) Congressional District, shall be a resident Legislative District Committee of that Forward Independence Congressional District.
- II. The Forward Independence Legislative District Committees, the territorial limits of which extend into the territorial limits of more than one (1+) Congressional District, shall be a resident Legislative District Committee of only one of those Congressional Districts; that one shall be designated by resolution to the Forward Independence State Core Committee that such actions are its purview, as provided by this Consitution and FI Bylaws.Said resolutions shall be filed with the Forward Independence State Secretary and the Forward Independence Congressional District Secretary.
- III. The Forward Independence Legislative District Committees shall be within the jurisdiction of the Forward Independence Congressional District Convention and Congressional District Committee of which it is a resident Legislative District Committee.
- IV. Purpose of delegate registration and seating at the Forward Independence Congressional District Conventions and Forward Independence State Conventions; each delegate shall be registered and seated according to the Congressional District in which the delegate is eligible to vote.

Subdivision 3. Responsibilities: The Forward Independence Congressional District Committees shall be the next-highest governing body of Forward Independence in its Congressional District, to its Forward Independence Congressional District Convention.

Subdivision 4. Powers: The Forward Independence Congressional District Committees shall provide the governance of Forward Independence in its Congressional District between sessions of its Congressional District Convention and when its Forward Independence Congressional District Conventions is not in session, and shall have the power to adopt, amend, ratify, and rescind provisions of its Forward Independence Congressional District Bylaws, as subject to the provisions of this Constitution, FI Bylaws, or any Congressional District Consitution and Bylaws, and subordinate to its Forward Independence Congression District Convention, State Executive Committee, State Central Committee, State Convention.

Subdivision 5. Duties: The Forward Independence Congressional District Committees shall conduct the day-to-day business in its Forward Independence Congressional District, and shall have other such duties as may be appropriate and necessary to carry on the affairs of Forward Independence in its Congressional District, as provided by this Constitution, FI Bylaws, or any Congressional District Constitution and Bylaws, and subordinate its Forward Independence Congressional District Convention, State Executive Committee, State Central Committee, State Convention.

Section 2. Congressional District Committee Meetings:

Subdivision 1. Regular Meetings: The Forward Independence Congressional District Committees shall assemble regular meetings no less than once in each calendar year. The day(s), time, method, and location of each such session shall be set by its Congressional District Co-Chairs, or in the event of a lack of consensus or nonfeasance of both Co-Chairs, a majority of its Congressional District Committee Officers. A written notice to each such meeting shall be distributed to each Forward Independence Congressional District Committee member at least fourteen (22) days before the opening of the meeting. The quorum for each regular meeting of each Forward Independence Congressional District committee shall be one-half of the committee members in attendance.

A quorum for each regular meeting of its Congressional District Committees shall include no fewer than three (3) members in total, and must represent at least one-half (50%) of the Congressional District Committee members present at the regular meeting.

Subdivision 2. Special Meetings:

- I. The Forward Independence Special Congressional District Committee meetings may be called as a special meeting by the Congressional District Committee or an authority thereof designated by said Forward Independence Congressional District Committee, State Executive Committee, a majority (50%+1) of its Congressional District Committee Officers, joint call of both its Congressional District Co-Chairs, or petition of one-third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of its Forward Independence Congressional District Committee members to assemble. The day(s), time, method, and location of each such meeting shall be set by the body that issued it or as stated in the petition for the special meeting. A written notice to each such special meeting shall be distributed to the members of the Forward Independence State Executive Committee at least seven (15) days before the opening of the special meeting. A quorum for each special meeting of the Special Congressional District Committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members in total, including at least one (1) State Party Officer, and must represent at least one-half (50%) of the State Executive Committee members without regard to the number of members present at the special meeting.
- II. Only items of business specifically stated in the written notice to a special meeting shall be in order during the session. Items of business shall be determined and set by the body that issued it or as stated in the petition for the special meeting.

Subdivision 3. Emergency Meetings:

- I. Forward Independence Emergency Congressional District Committee meetings may be called as an emergency, without previous notice by, a majority (50%+1) of its Congressional District Committee Officers, by joint agreement of the Congressional District Co-Chairs, or at least one-half (50%) of its Forward Independence Congressional District Committee members to assemble. The day(s), time, method, and location of each such meeting shall be set by the body that issued it. A written notice to each such emergency meeting shall be distributed to the members of the Forward Independence Congressional District Committee before the opening of the emergency meeting. A quorum for each emergency meeting of its Congressional District Committee shall consist of at least one-half (50%) of all members of the Congressional District Committee, regardless of attendance at the emergency meeting, and must be maintained at or above that threshold for the duration of the session.
- II. Only items of business specifically stated in the written notice to an emergency meeting shall be in order during the session. Items of business may only be added or altered when postponement of such items until a special session or regular session are deemed unadvisable by a joint determination of the Forward Independence Chief State Director or their chair designee.

Section 3. Congressional District Party Officers:

Subdivision 1. Existence and Designation: There shall be Forward Independence Congressional District Party Officers for its Congressional District. The Congressional District Party Officers shall be; the Congressional District Party Co-Chairpersons, the Congressional District Treasurer, and the Congressional District Secretary.

Subdivision 2. Duties, Responsibilities, and Powers: Each Forward Independence Congressional District Party Officer shall have, as appropriate to one's office, such responsibilities, powers, and duties as are appropriate and necessary to carry on the parliamentary and administrative affairs of its Forward Independence Congressional District, subject to this Constitution and FI Bylaws.

Subdivision 3. Election: The Forward Independence Congressional District Party Officers of each Congressional District shall be elected by majority vote of the Congressional District Convention Delegates at each regular session of its Forward Independence Congressional District Convention in the odd-numbered calendar year, subject to this Constitution and FI Bylaws.

Subdivision 4. Term: The term of office for each Forward Independence Congressional District Party Officer shall begin the fifteenth (15th) day after the close of the regular session of the officer's Congressional District Convention in the odd-numbered calendar year and terminates fourteen (14) days after the close of the next such session.

Subdivision 5. Vacancy: The Forward Independence Congressional District Party Officer vacancies shall be filled by majority (50%+1) vote of a Forward Independence Congressional District Convention that has the same territorial limits as the vacant office. The Congressional District Officer vacancies that continue for more than sixty (60) days may be filled by resolution of the Forward Independence State Executive Committee.

Article Ten – Constituency Conventions and Committees

Section 1. Existence:

There shall be Constituency Conventions and Constituency Committees. Where constituencies cross Congressional District borders, the designation and territorial limits of the Minnesota territorial division, political subdivision, or administrative unit for which such Convention assembles or such committee is formed. Where constituencies are wholly within Congressional District borders, such Constituency Conventions and Constituency Committees shall be governed per the Congressional District Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules.

Section 2. Constituency Conventions: The members of each Forward Independence Constituency Convention shall be the Congressional District Delegates who are eligible to vote within the territorial limits of its Congressional District Convention.

Section 3. Constituency Committees: Forward Independence Constituency Committees may be formed by resolution of the Congressional District Convention or Congressional District Committee, the territorial limits of which wholly contain the territorial limits of the committee so formed, or by joint resolution of the State Executive Committee and Congressional District Conventions or Congressional District Committees; for the combined territorial limits of which wholly contain the territorial limits of the Committee so formed. The properties of either Committee so formed shall be such as are stated in the resolution to form the Committee.

Article Eleven – State Party Platform

Section 1. Existence and Definition:

Subdivision 1. Formation: There may be a State Party Platform, that shall consist of Platform Planks. The State Party Platform shall be:

- I. An official statement of publicly announced Political Platform stances made and issued in the name of Forward Independence,
- II. In keeping with the Core Values and Objective of Forward Independence, and
- III. Wholly sunsetted at the call to order at the regular session of the State Convention.

Section 2. Platform Formulation and “Sunset” for Planks: Individual Platform Planks shall require three-fifths ($\frac{3}{5}$) vote of the State Central Committee. Every 2nd regular meeting of the State Central Committee, a State Party Platform slate for release shall be an item of business:

- I. The current Platform Planks shall all be noted for the full slate of the full State Party Platform for release. These are any adopted or reaffirmed Platform Planks since the sunsetted State Party Platform as provided in Article 11 - Section 1 - Subdivision 1 - III, approved by a State Central Committee or State Convention, to prepopulate the new State Party Platform at the 2nd regular meeting of the State Central Committee, as provided in Article 5 - Section 2 - Subdivision 1 - I, in the odd-numbered calendar year, or as provided for in FI Bylaws.
- II. Platform Planks may be affirmed, amended, or rescinded during any regular or special meeting by the State Central Committee or State Convention, provided that proper notice is given per FI Bylaws.

Article Twelve – State Party Bylaws

Section 1. Forward Independence Bylaws: There shall be State Party Bylaws and Congressional District Bylaws. State Party Bylaws shall be subject to the provisions of this Constitution, whereas Congressional District Bylaws shall be subject to the corresponding Congressional District Constitution, and this Constitution, keeping with the Core Values and Objective of Forward Independence.

- I. Where any provision of any Bylaws or Standing Rules conflicts with the provisions of any higher level Bylaws and/or Constitutions, the provisions of the higher level Bylaws and/or Constitutions shall prevail, and the provision of the conflicting language shall be null and void.
- II. Current copies of all Bylaws or Standing Rules at any level shall be filed with and available from the State Party Secretary and, where applicable, the Congressional or Constituency District Secretary.

Article Thirteen – Parliamentary Authority

Section 1. Parliamentary Authority: The parliamentary authority of Forward Independence shall be the current edition of, hereupon the reading of his, The Scott Foresman Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised. The provisions of the parliamentary authority shall prevail in all cases to which they apply, and in which they are not inconsistent with this

Constitution, the Bylaws, and any Standing Rules, that organized entities of Forward Independence may adopt.

Article Fourteen – General Provisions

Section 1. Definitions:

Subdivision 1. “Congressional District” / “Legislative District”: Shall mean a Minnesota territorial division of that name as defined in the Minnesota Statutes and Minnesota Rules.

Subdivision 2. “Congressional District Committee” / “Congressional District Convention”: Shall mean the Forward Independence unit of that name, having the same territorial limits and titular number as the same named and numbered Minnesota territorial division, and having jurisdiction in those territorial limits, subject to the provisions of this Constitution and FI Bylaws.

Subdivision 3. “State Executive Committee” / “State Central Committee” / “State Convention”: Shall mean the Forward Independence unit of that name having the same territorial limits as the territorial limits of the state of Minnesota, and having jurisdiction in those limits, subject to the provisions of this Constitution and FI Bylaws.

Subdivision 4. “Territorial Limits”: Shall mean the geographical boundaries of the state of Minnesota, territorial divisions, political subdivisions, or administrative units, as defined in the Minnesota Statutes and Minnesota Rules.

Subdivision 5. “File” / “Filing” / “Filed”: Shall mean distributed in a timely manner to the appropriate authority and kept in the official books or records of Forward Independence.

Subdivision 6. “Distribute” / “Distributed” / “Distribution”: Shall mean sending or receiving documents via the first-class mail service of the United States Postal Service, or by a method that is equally reliable and timely, or more reliable and timelier. The Forward Independence email database and emails from shall be accepted as equally reliable and timely.

Subdivision 7. “Eligible To Vote”: Shall mean eligible to vote in a State of Minnesota general election as provided in the Minnesota Statutes and Minnesota Rules.

Subdivision 8. “Forward Independence Party Official”: Shall mean any person who is a Forward Independence Officer, Committee member, or Delegate at any level.

Subdivision 9. “Properties”: Of a Convention or Committee, shall mean the existence, definition, designation, responsibilities, powers, duties, voting rights, sessions or meetings,

quorum, members, officers, terms, and other such characteristics of the Convention or Committee.

Subdivision 10. "Party": Shall mean, Forward Independence, the registered party within the State of Minnesota.

Subdivision 11. "Endorsement": Shall mean said, "Qualified" Candidate, will be offered the support of Forward Independence and its respective governing bodies. It is to include Delegate, Data, Media, Financial Aid, and any other resources that the respective governing body agrees to supply to a political campaign.

Subdivision 12. "Person": Shall mean only natural persons (human beings).

Subdivision 13. "Superior": Shall mean the next highest body or individual with formal authority, oversight, or decision-making power over a given position, entity, organization, committee, or convention.

Section 2. General Provisions For Members and Officials:

Subdivision 1. Accreditation: Each Forward Independence member or official shall be accredited by virtue of one's standing as a member or official, and compliance with such registration requirements as may be provided in Forward Independence Bylaws, Parliamentary Authority, or Standing Rules.

Subdivision 2. Fees: Forward Independence entities may charge admission fees to Forward Independence members, Party Officials, and/or members of the general public for certain events; no such fees or assessments shall be charged to any individual as a condition of eligibility for Party Office, continuing service in Party Office, or participation in any Forward Independence Convention or Committee.

Subdivision 3. Voting and Participation Rights: No person shall be required to cast a vote contrary to one's expressed preference. No person shall be granted Forward Independence voting rights who is not a Forward Independence member in good standing. No person shall have more than one vote. No Forward Independence member or official shall be granted Party voting rights who is not accredited. No person shall be denied voting or participation rights, except by due process as is provided in this Constitution, FI Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority.

- I. No person shall have Committee voting rights who is not a member of the Committee conducting a vote.
- II. No person shall have Convention voting rights who is not a member of the Convention conducting a vote.

Subdivision 4. Proxy Voting Prohibited: Except as expressly provided for in the Forward Independence State Constitution and FI Bylaws, there shall be no proxy votes or voting by proxy.

Subdivision 5. Duties of Forward Independence Party Officials: Each Forward Independence Party Official shall, as appropriate to one's office:

- I. Read the Forward Independence State Constitution and FI Bylaws,
- II. Be present at sessions and meetings,
- III. Notify officials of one's anticipated absence from upcoming sessions or meetings,
- IV. Vote or register abstention from voting on questions that properly come before the official,
- V. Maintain proper registration,
- VI. Cast any vote-by-mail ballots in the time and manner provided for doing so,
- VII. Respond to Official Forward Independence Surveys, and
- VIII. Present such reports as may be officially requested.

Subdivision 6. Limits of Responsibility, Power, and Duty: Each Party Official of Forward Independence shall have only those responsibilities, powers, and duties that are provided in this Constitution, FI Bylaws, Standing Rules of a Convention, Standing Rules of a Committee, or Parliamentary Authority.

Subdivision 7. Removal of Forward Independence Party Officials:

- I. Each Forward Independence Party Official that is elected by a Convention may be removed from office for cause by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of a Convention that has the same territorial limits and jurisdiction as the Convention that elected the official. Each Forward Independence Party Official that is elected by a Committee may be removed from office for cause by two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of a Committee that has the same territorial limits and jurisdiction as the Committee that elected the official.
- II. Each Forward Independence Party Official that is appointed may be removed from office, for any reason by action of the authority that appointed the official.

Subdivision 8. Appeals: Excluding actions that are considered breaches of order, any session or meeting, where corrective or disciplinary action that is imposed upon any Forward Independence member, official, committee, or convention may be appealed within fifteen (15) days of notification of such action, to the committee that is superior to the committee or convention that imposed such action.

- I. After receipt of such an appeal, the superior committee may affirm, amend, or rescind the action imposed, or refer the appeal to the State Central Committee.

- II. No appeal so referred shall again be referred. Appeals shall have precedence over all other committee or convention business.
- III. Notwithstanding Article 14 - Section 2 - Subdivision 7 of this Constitution, the voting and participatory rights of any member, official, committee, or convention that has made such an appeal shall remain in full force and effect while one's appeal is pending; except that the authority that imposes corrective or disciplinary action upon a Party Officer may direct that the officer shall be suspended from certain parliamentary and administrative responsibilities, powers, or duties while any appeal the Party Officer may make is pending.

Subdivision 9. Honors: Honorary titles or positions may be conferred upon individuals by resolution of a Convention, as is appropriate to the Convention's territorial limits and jurisdiction, or resolution of a State Central Committee meeting, for Statewide or Partywide recognition.

Section 3. General Provisions for Conventions and Committees:

Subdivision 1. Congressional District Rules and Procedures: Forward Independence Congressional District Conventions/Committees shall have Bylaws and Standing Rules. In the absence of said Bylaws or Standing Rules that apply to stated provisions with this Constitution or FI Bylaws, the State Executive Committee may implement temporary Congressional District Convention/Committee Bylaws and/or Standing Rules, until such time as the Congressional District Conventions/Committees adopt their own Bylaws and/or Standing Rules.

Subdivision 2. Rules: Each Forward Independence State Convention may adopt rules for its Congressional District Convention Delegates, Congressional District Convention Officers, and the conduct of the business and affairs of the Convention. Such rules shall be known as the Standing Rules of the Convention. These rules shall be subject to the provisions of this Constitution, FI Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority. The effect of such rules shall expire at the close of the session in which the rules were adopted.

Subdivision 3. Minutes: Each Forward Independence Convention and Committee shall provide for the keeping and approval of minutes of its session's proceedings, and for the filing of such minutes with the Forward Independence State Secretary.

Subdivision 4. Alternative-Voting Methods:

- I. The officers of each Forward Independence Convention/Committee may conduct votes using hybrid and/or alternative methods, including but not limited to: vote-by-mail and secure electronic-voting systems. Each such vote shall not be conducted by secret ballot, except in cases where user verification is authenticated to the sufficiency of the Convention or Committee and the ability provided to hide the vote's user identity. The percentage of votes tallied in any alternative-voting method shall be calculated as a percentage of all eligible votes, without regard to the number of ballots cast, except in cases where there is hybrid-attendance and hybrid-voting methods, and votes are cast in

multiple methods, and quorum of votes is being monitored, then it is based on number of ballots cast. Hybrid or Alternative-voting methods shall not be decided by less than a majority vote.

- II. Procedures for conducting vote-by-mail, electronic, or other approved hybrid and/or alternative-voting methods; including authentication, public inspection, filing, retention of ballots, and mechanisms for challenging the accuracy of the vote, shall be established in the FI Bylaws. No such vote shall be conducted in the absence of relevant FI Bylaws. Notably, hybrid and/or alternative-voting methods shall not be used in lieu of any session, meeting, business, or action explicitly required by the provisions of this Constitution and FI Bylaws.

Subdivision 5. District Fundraising:

- I. Each Forward Independence Congressional District Committee may raise and disburse money in the name of Forward Independence, provided they have been certified by the State Central Committee and registered with the State of Minnesota.
- II. Each committee that does so shall:
 - Be fully responsible for its own compliance with the applicable statutes, rules, codes, and regulations of the State of Minnesota,
 - File copies of all government-required reports with the Forward Independence State Treasurer, no later than the same day such reports are filed with the government agencies.
 - Maintain the proper banking account for such funds, and
 - Provide copies of account statements for said account to the Forward Independence State Treasurer.

Subdivision 6. Spending Restrictions: Monetary disbursed shall not be made by any Forward Independence Convention, Committee, or Treasurer, in support of any public policy initiative that is not in keeping with; Forward Independence Core Values, Objective, or any State Party Platform Planks, to the benefit of any candidate for public office who is not endorsed by Forward Independence, except as may be provided in Forward Independence State Bylaws.

Section 4. General Administrative Provisions:

Subdivision 1. Accounting Standards: Each financial report given or approved by any Forward Independence Party Official, Committee, or Convention shall be in keeping with generally accepted accounting principles.

Subdivision 2. Open Meetings and Books:

- I. Certain Forward Independence meetings, sessions, books, records, and lists/databases shall be open or available by request, to the public; the minutes of State Executive Committee meetings, membership lists, and contributor lists; works-in-progress that are not ready for public distribution and certain lists/databases designated as confidential in FI Bylaws, or by action of the State Executive Committee or State Central Committee. The Forward Independence State Executive Committee shall have the authority to establish a Confidentiality Agreement to control the distribution of delegate, membership, and Forward Independence State Central Committee lists/databases to any person or entity.
- II. Forward Independence State Executive Committee shall, at all times, maintain current and accurate lists of all Forward Independence Party Officials, including the official's names, mailing and addresses, and telephone number(s). Lists of Forward Independence Party Officials shall at all times be fully available to any Forward Independence Party Official who requests a Party Official Contact List. Such lists will be distributed electronically, except where disabilities must be accommodated.

Subdivision 3. Electronic voice or data meetings: Any regular, special or emergency meeting that is properly called, may be held virtually by electronic data which includes live visual capabilities, or a hybrid of virtual and in-person.

Section 5. Officer Eligibility: A State Party or Congressional District Party Officer shall be required to meet the following eligibility requirements for election to office:

- Comply with membership requirements for Forward Independence, as provided in Article 3 of this Constitution.
- Reside within the respective Forward Independence State or Congressional District organizational territorial boundaries for the position elected.

Article Fifteen – Constitutional Amendment

Section 1. Constitution Amendment Review: The Forward Independence State Executive Committee may assign duties to review and draft resolutions to amend the Forward Independence State Party Constitution in the respective State Core Committee, as provided in FI Bylaws.

All amendments to the Forward Independence State Party Constitution shall be submitted to the Forward Independence State Executive Committee for review and recommendation to be included in the agenda for the following session of the State Convention. These amendments may come from any Forward Independence Convention or Committee. All amendments outside the State Convention shall be distributed to the Forward Independence State Executive Committee for a recommendation vote, for further consideration by the Forward Independence State Central Committee.

Section 2. Notice of Amendment: The specific language of any amendment to be considered shall be made available on the Forward Independence website, no later than thirty (30) days prior to any formal vote by the State Central Committee or State Convention.

Section 3. Amendment Adoption: All amendments to the Forward Independence State Party Constitution shall require the approval of the Forward Independence State Central Committee by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote. Upon passage, the amendment shall have immediate effect, subject to ratification of the Forward Independence State Party Convention.

A Forward Independence State Convention, using the same notice of amendment requirements listed in Article 15 - Section 2, may approve an amendment without a State Central Committee vote by a three-fifths ($\frac{3}{5}$) vote.

Section 4. Ratification:

Amendments to the Forward Independence State Party Constitution approved by the Forward Independence State Central Committee shall require ratification, without further amendment, by the Forward Independence State Convention by a simple majority (50%+1) vote. Failure to ratify the amendment shall render the amendment null and void.

Section 5. Composition:

Page identification, format, and any attached cover pages or reference aids, such as a table of contents or index, shall not be deemed part of this Constitution. No text or illustrations other than the text of this Constitution, page identification, and cross references shall be placed between the first word and last word or in the margins of this Constitution. This Constitution is composed of the Preamble and Articles, and there of titles and numbering.

Section 6. Enforcement:

Each provision of this Constitution and FI Bylaws shall be separately enforceable. Where any item or portion of this Constitution and FI Bylaws becomes invalidated or declared void by proper authority, all other provisions of this Constitution and FI Bylaws shall remain in full force and effect.

Article Sixteen – Merger Transition Period

Section 1. Definition of Transition Period: The “Merger Transition Period” shall begin on the date this Constitution is adopted and shall continue through December 31, 2026.

Section 2. Durable Name: During the “Merger Transition Period,” the legal name of this organization shall remain Forward Independence. Any motion to alter, revise, amend, qualify, or condition this name including altering or removing this Article 16—whether by addition of words such as “Party” or “Minnesota” or otherwise—shall be ruled out of order and shall not be entertained in any committee, convention, or meeting of Forward Independence.

Section 3. Relationship with the National Forward Party: Forward Independence shall operate during the “Merger Transition Period” in a manner consistent with other state parties, including the adoption of the standard national Forward Party Affiliation Agreement, adapted to relevant Minnesota state laws, that have formal memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with the national Forward Party. The merger between the Independence-Alliance Party of Minnesota and the Forward Party of Minnesota shall be contingent upon the execution of such an MOU, which shall govern matters including but not limited to data management and branding, in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws.

Section 4. Ongoing Involvement with the national Forward Party and Alliance Party: Any individual, including officers of Forward Independence, may continue to serve in positions or roles with either the national Forward Party or the national Alliance Party during the “Merger Transition Period” to the extent that such service existed prior to the adoption of this Constitution. Officers of Forward Independence shall have a duty to identify, disclose, and resolve any apparent conflict between such service and their obligations to Forward Independence. In cases where a clear and unresolvable conflict arises, the Forward Independence State Executive Committee shall provide enforceable direction as to the remediation of said conflict.

Section 5. Alliance Party Relationship During Transition: In pursuit of bringing together the best of both the Forward Party and the Alliance Party in order to strengthen and grow Forward Independence, Forward Independence shall serve as a public and organizational ally to the Alliance Party. Forward Independence-endorsed candidates during the “Merger Transition Period” may also be counted as Alliance Party candidates.

Section 6. Transition Bylaw Protections: A separate Bylaw, titled “Merger Transition Bylaw,” shall be adopted subject to national Forward Party approval, to define, clarify, and limit matters related to this Article 16. That Bylaw and Section 4 above shall not be amended, repealed, or suspended in whole or in part to diminish the right to continue activity under Article 16 - Section 4, by any body of Forward Independence until the conclusion of the “Merger Transition Period” as defined in Article 16 - Section 1.

Section 7. Revocation of Article 16: Forward Independence will endeavor to encourage the merger of the national Forward and Alliance Parties. Should the national Forward and Alliance Parties agree to and approve a formal merger; this Article 16 shall automatically become null and void. Should no such merger be agreed to or if the national Forward Party rescinds and disaffiliates, dissolving its’ Affiliation Agreement with Forward Independence; the entirety of Article 16 shall become null and void at the end of the transition period listed in Article 16 - Section 1; This Article 16 will be removed from the Constitution upon all such revocations or dissolution.