

WSPHA Policy and Procedure Legislative and Policy Committee

The WSPHA Board has two opportunities to consider endorsements for resolutions, programs, and initiatives annually. Resolutions are presented for endorsement prior to the Annual Business Meeting in October. Other requests may come to Board members at any time during the year. The purpose of this policy is to establish protocols and procedures for seeking WSPHA support on these opportunities.

The Legislative and Policy committee is the appropriate conduit for individuals and organizations seeking WSPHA endorsement or support for proposed resolutions, programs, and initiatives.

Procedure for Proposing and Adopting Policy Resolutions

A policy resolution is a concise statement of the Association's stance on a particular issue affecting the health of the public. They have a specific focus and contain a call for defined action.

Policy resolutions serve as the basis for establishing the Association's advocacy positions, priorities, and actions. All policy resolutions are considered and approved by a vote of the membership.

1. The Legislative and Policy Committee shall manage the procedure.
2. **Announcement:** A specific call to the membership for submission of proposed resolutions will be issued annually in April/May in the Association newsletter and on the website.
3. **Origination:** Any WSPHA member is eligible to submit a proposed resolution for consideration. Drafts of proposed resolutions may be submitted to the Legislative and Policy Committee from the end of the Annual Business Meeting until July 31st of the following year.
4. **Late-breakers:** Provision is made for the consideration of "late-breaking" resolutions that are directly related to important, emergent events occurring after the proposal submission deadline. The submitting author of a proposed "late breaking" resolution should submit it as soon as possible. The Legislative and Policy Committee chair or co-chairs will judge the eligibility of "late-breaking" proposals.
5. **Resolution Format:** The requirements and procedure for submitting resolutions shall be printed annually in the Association newsletter and on the website. Draft resolutions must:
 - a. Be consistent with the mission, vision and the strategic plan of the Association;
 - b. Fill gaps in the Association's existing policy resolutions;

- c. Be drafted as concisely as possible and facilitate clear and succinct expression;
- d. Incorporate the best possible data-supported evidence; and
- e. Call for a series of actions to address the specific public health policy issue.
- f. Use the approved format (e.g., with "whereas" and "resolved" clauses). See *Resolution Formatting Guidelines for additional information*.

6. Resolution Submission: Drafts of proposed public policy statements should be submitted electronically and addressed to the Legislative and Policy Committee to Jennifer Muhm jmuhm@wspha.org. Receipt of each proposed public policy statement will be acknowledged to the person identified as the submitting author.

7. Initial Assessment Report: After its first review, the Legislative and Policy Committee will inform the submitting author/contact of each resolution that the proposal has been given an initial assessment as follows:

- a. A **positive assessment**, i.e., the Legislative and Policy Committee is favorably inclined to approve the proposal essentially as submitted, and expects to recommend it to the Board for inclusion on the Annual Business Meeting agenda.
- b. A **conditional assessment**, i.e., the Legislative and Policy Committee suggests revision of the proposal, and may reconsider the proposal later, when it is revised as suggested, expecting eventually to refer it to the Board for consideration.

Resolutions that are not in the approved format will receive a conditional assessment and will be returned to the submitting author for correction. Further, the Legislative and Policy Committee may request authors of separate (but related) proposals, and others to work cooperatively together in the development of a single, succinct, jointly developed proposal. A conditional assessment report is accompanied by specific Legislative and Policy Committee suggestions for revision. OR,

- c. A **negative assessment**, i.e., the Legislative and Policy Committee suggests withdrawal of the proposal, being inclined to disapprove the proposal, calling for its rejection if considered by the Board. A negative assessment report is accompanied by specific reasons for Legislative and Policy Committee disapproval. Proposals voluntarily withdrawn by sponsors proceed no further in the process.

8. Board Consideration: After review by the Legislative and Policy Committee, all resolutions will be forwarded to the Board for consideration of inclusion on the Annual Business Meeting agenda.

For each resolution, the Board can vote to “**endorse**”, “**not endorse**” or “**take no action**”. All resolutions will be forwarded to the membership for consideration of adoption at the Annual Business Meeting with an explanation of the Board’s decision.

9. Consent agenda: At the meeting during which the resolutions are discussed, the Legislative and Policy Committee may suggest a proposed "consent agenda" which lists, by title, those proposed resolutions it recommends to the Board for endorsement. The consent agenda will include resolutions that the Legislative and Policy Committee believes are not controversial.

At the request of any Board member, a resolution can be removed from the proposed consent agenda. After discussion, the WSPHA President will call for the adoption of all proposed resolutions remaining on the consent agenda, by unanimous consent of the Board.

10. Membership Notice: Proposed resolutions on the Annual Business Meeting agenda will be made available to the membership on the WSPHA website prior to the Joint Conference on Health.

11. Resolution Discussion Session: A special session to discuss each resolution will be held during the Joint Conference on Health prior to the Annual Business Meeting.

The resolution discussion session is intended to be a forum provided for exploration, discussion, and debate of the proposed resolutions on the Annual Business Meeting agenda. Submitting authors must attend both the special session and the Annual Business Meeting to present their resolution(s) to the membership and respond to questions. Failure of a submitting author to participate in both special session and the Annual Business Meeting will result in removal of the proposed resolution from the Annual Business Meeting agenda.

12. Resolution Adoption: Voting by the membership will occur at the Annual Business Meeting at the Joint Conference on Health.

13. Publication: Resolutions adopted by the Board will be published annually on the WSPHA Web site. Staff will maintain a compendium of WSPHA resolutions as determined by the Board.

Procedure for Responding to Requests for WSPHA Endorsement

WSPHA may have the opportunity to or be requested to send letters to policy makers advocating for or against specific legislation and regulations that have public health implications. By sustaining a noticeable presence throughout the policy-making process, WSPHA can help to ensure that vital public health programs and services are protected and supported, both fiscally and politically.

1. Assumptions:

- a. WSPHA should only take an official stand on those policy issues that are central to mission, vision and strategic plan of the organization.
- b. WSPHA should authorize the Executive Director to publicly support or not support proposed legislation that is central to mission and vision of the organization.
- c. Endorsement shall mean an arrangement in which WSPHA's name and/or logo are attached to a policy, document, or event, and refers to an act of support only, that does not incur any financial obligations by WSPHA.

2. Procedure:

- a. The requestor shall submit an endorsement request by email to Jennifer Muhm, jmuhm@wspha.org.
- b. The Legislative and Policy Committee shall manage the procedure. WSPHA will not support or discuss new initiatives that have not come to them through this committee.
- c. The endorsement request will be forwarded to the WSPHA Legislative and Policy Committee. The Legislative and Policy Committee shall review the endorsement request and apply the following criteria in making its determination:
 - i. Public health has a legitimate, defensible interest in the issue;
 - ii. The endorsement request is consistent with WSPHA's mission, goals and strategic plan;
 - iii. WSPHA has established policy (e.g., a resolution) related to the issue outlined in the endorsement request;
 - iv. The issue outlined in the endorsement request is endorsed by APHA or another credible public health-related organizations;
- d. To be considered, the endorsement request must meet criteria (i) and (ii).

Endorsement requests that meet criteria (i), (ii), and (iii) will be processed directly by the Legislative and Policy Committee without further consideration by the Board. All other endorsement request must be considered by the Board in order to be approved.

e. If the Legislative and Policy Committee agrees to recommend the request for endorsement by the WSPHA Board, the chairperson of the committee will contact the WSPHA President, inform him/her of the request and the decision of the committee.

f. The President will either schedule the vote request on a regularly scheduled meeting agenda or conduct an email vote of the Board, depending on the expediency needed with the request.

The endorsement request must receive a two-thirds vote by a quorum in order to be approved.

g. The President will document the Board vote and forward that documentation to the Legislative and Policy Committee chairperson and will inform the Board of its decision.

h. The Chair or co-chair of the Legislation and Policy Committee will communicate the decision of the WSPHA Board to the requestor.

i. If any significant doubt exists as to whether the approval of the endorsement request will contribute to the best interests of WSPHA, permission shall be withheld.