



Idaho Medical Association

Reference Committee Chair and Member Duties

General overview: The purpose of this document is to give you an overview of the operational structure of the House of Delegates and the presentation of reports and resolutions through the Reference Committee process.

Parliamentary procedure: The IMA bylaws adopt Rules of Order, by James Davis, MD, as the final authority for the order of procedure of the House, the Board, and all other bodies to which the members have delegated governing authority.

Reference Committee: Each Reference Committee is comprised of a Chair and delegates who are assigned to the Reference Committee to establish diversity and balance. The committee duties are:

The Chair. The Reference Committee Chair is seated at the center of the table, on a raised dais at the head of the room, facing the assembled delegates. It is his/her duty to:

- Preside over the hearing.
- Maintain order.
- Facilitate the discussion by recognizing Committee members and delegates who wish to speak in such a manner as to elicit as much information as possible to aid the Committee in its deliberations.
- Remind Committee members to provide any testimony from the floor.
- Require that all amendments must be submitted in writing using the Resolution Amendment Form available in a variety of formats.
- Approve the final written Reference Committee report.

The Committee. Members of the Reference Committee are seated to the right and left of the Chair. Members must evaluate all opinions presented so that they may responsibly provide the voting body with a carefully considered recommendation. While Committee members may not argue, or present personal opinions from the dais during the hearing, they may:

- Call for order if they cannot hear.
- Ask questions. It is the duty of the committee members to understand the nature of the testimony presented.
- Answer questions if a delegate seeks clarification. Any individual present at the hearing, e.g. delegate, IMA staff, insurer medical directors, may be called upon to provide clarification.
- Provide testimony on a report or resolution. Committee members must leave the dais and provide any testimony from the floor.

Reference Committee process: Prior to the House of Delegates, resolutions are assigned to either Reference Committee A or B. Resolutions are assigned based on similar subject matter and to balance the volume of work assigned to each Reference Committee.

The Reference Committee process is comprised of three distinct sections. The following describes each section and outlines specific roles for the Reference Committee members and the Chair.

1. The Hearing (Open Session in the House of Delegates) – Friday Morning

The main purposes of the hearing are to express views on relevant matters by as many delegates as wish to speak, and to assist the Committee in evaluating the matters referred to it.

Hearing Process

The Chair will introduce self and then pass the microphone so that each member may state his/her name, specialty, and practice location.

The Chair will open the hearing with a statement of which Reference Committee is being convened, the referred business before the Committee and the House (as posted and presented prior to the hearing, in accordance with IMA Bylaws), and the rules to be followed, as set forth below:

Rules

Length of debate: The Chair may limit the length of time a delegate may speak. Such limitations may be announced prior to the hearing or may be ordered, without objection, if it appears to the Chair that time is becoming limited in relation to the number of delegates seeking recognition.

Testimony recognition: For recognition: first in time, first in right. An exception would be when a delegate has already spoken on the same issue, and others seek recognition. If a delegate has special expertise on an issue, this exception may be waived—but remember to accommodate all. Time should be allotted or alternated between proponents and opponents. Please see the *IMA House of Delegates Guidelines for Testimony* for further clarification on who is allowed to participate in the open Reference Committee hearings.

During the Reference Committee hearing, each resolution is presented. A specified delegate attending the House of Delegates has been identified to present the resolution. If the presenter is not present, inquire if anyone else wishes to present the resolution. The presenter is to summarize the WHEREAS sections and read the RESOLVED(s). After presentation of each resolution, the Reference Committee Chair will ask for comments. Any member may provide comment on a resolution so that the RESOLVED of each resolution is thoroughly understood by the voting delegates. Members are encouraged, when speaking to a resolution, to recommend to the voting body what action should be taken.

If a member of the Committee wishes to speak to a resolution, the member must leave the dais and go to the floor to present testimony.

Adjournment of the hearing by the Chair is after all items have been addressed, or the allotted time has expired – whichever occurs first.

2. Post-Hearing Deliberation (Closed Session) – Friday Afternoon

The primary purpose of this meeting is for the Chair and Committee members to discuss matters referred to them and the information garnered in the hearing before making recommendations to the House. This is the Committee’s time to make the decision as to what recommendation to make to the House of Delegates related to adoption, not adoption, referral, or amendments. Only information submitted during the open Reference Committee hearings may be considered and no new information may be introduced. The Chair may request clarification from appropriate sources, e.g. IMA staff or legal counsel, to clarify any concerns raised during testimony and not clarified at that time by an appropriate source.

Deliberation Meeting Process

The Committee must make recommendations on all matters referred to it; it may not postpone or defer any business. In the case where multiple resolutions address a similar issue and where there seems to be no significant controversy, resolutions can be combined. Recommendations must be appropriate and consistent with the Committee’s assessment, and should not be influenced by the number who spoke on one side or the other but should truly limit any conclusions to the substance of the issue.

It is the Chair’s responsibility to ensure that Committee business is conducted efficiently and fairly, to conclude the agenda assuring that every Committee member has the chance to participate. While informality is allowed, each member should respect the Chair’s right to resort to formal parliamentary procedure, including limiting discussion, in order to complete the Committee’s primary duty.

Staff will record the Committee’s proceedings and prepare a draft report to the House for the Committee’s consideration. Because of time constraints, Committees must reach decisions in a plain, deliberate, and straightforward fashion. Staff can provide additional details, but have no authority to decide any aspect of any issue under the Committee’s jurisdiction.

This chart provides the options available to the Committee for dispensing with each agenda item:

Hearing Documents	Committee Actions on RESOLVED					Consent Calendar
	File	Refer	Adopt	Not Adopt	Amend and Adopt as Amended	
Resolution (RES)		X	X	X	X	Yes, if no testimony, or all testimony in favor
Committee Report (CR)		X	X	X	X	Yes, if no amendment.
Special Report (SR)	X					

Administrative Report (ADM)			X		X	X*
File: Used for reports that are informational only and do not create IMA policy.						
Refer: Indicate to whom referred; referral can contain specific instructions for dispensation, but it is not required. All referred items will be reported back to the HOD.						
Adopt: Commits House to all findings and opinions contained therein and will result in establishment of IMA policy.						
Amend & Adopt: There is always a motion to adopt the amendment, and another motion to adopt the amended resolution.						
*ADM IV - Report of the Treasurer and Membership: Cannot be on the consent calendar as the HOD must vote on the report.						

Committee deliberations will be expedited if all members review the report requirements (which follow) prior to the Committee's meeting. The Committee's report guides the House in its consideration of the Committee's findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The report will also become a part of the permanent record of that session. IMA staff will prepare the report based on direction from the Committee and Chair. The Chair will review the final report prior to its presentation to the House of Delegates. The Chairs' responsibility for presentation to the House of Delegates is covered individually with each Chair.

Closely related items (i.e., a report and resolution dealing with the same subject) or non-controversial items are amendable to combine into a single recommendation (as part of the consent calendar), if that is the Committee's wish.

Report Requirements

These requirements apply to each item of business considered by the Committee. At a minimum, the Committee's report should contain the following:

- Identification of the resolution or report by number and title.
- Summary and comment on the testimony presented in the hearing.
- Findings and conclusions of the Committee, with supporting evidence as may be required.
- The Committee's recommendation, stated separately.
- Recommendations must be stated apart from the body of the Committee's report.

3. The Report (General Open Session in House of Delegates) – Sunday Morning

The Chair will be seated at the front dais and will work in coordination with the Speaker or Vice Speaker to present the Reference Committee's report. Committee members may sit in the audience with their delegations and participate in debate and voting.

The House will consider the Reference Committee's report and its recommendations separately; that is, the House will consider each recommendation on its own merits. The House may not alter, reject, or change the Committee's report in any aspect, without the consent of all Committee members. The House may, on the other hand, dispose of the Committee's recommendations for action, e.g. adopt, not adopt, etc., in any way it chooses.

Meeting registration is required for anyone who wishes to testify during the general session of the House of Delegates, and the Speaker will only recognize those with nametag credentials. Only registered delegates with blue nametag credentials are allowed to vote.