

Report No. 19

Petition Number:

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE INTERAGENCY LEGISLATIVE GATHERING

The *Book of Discipline 2000* provides for the General Council on Ministries (GCOM) to “establish the processes and relationships pertaining to the coordination and funding of the ministries and program emphases of the denomination through its general agencies and to minimize unnecessary overlapping or conflicting approaches to the local church and the annual conference (§ 905.2).”

In fulfilling this coordinating function related to the legislative proposals being submitted to General Conference, in previous quadrennia the General Council on Ministries Committee on Legislation convened the Interagency Task Force on Legislation the year prior to the General Conference. This Task Force was composed of representatives from the general agencies of The United Methodist Church, the Council of Bishops and the Committee on Central Conference Affairs to work on matters of legislation for the General Conference along with the Secretary of the General Conference and the editor of the *Daily Christian Advocate*.

For the 2001-2004 quadrennium, the GCOM Legislation Committee decided to expand the invitation to a variety of groups to participate in a Legislative Gathering on September 12-14, 2002, in Portland, Oregon. To encourage cooperation and networking, representatives from the general agencies, ethnic initiatives approved by 2000 General Conference, and independent caucuses of The United Methodist Church were invited to attend. Individuals shared their group’s plan for legislation, received feedback and input from other participants, and were encouraged to network with others developing similar legislation. Several resource persons were included in the Legislative Gathering who assisted in giving valued and respected feedback to the groups as they presented their legislative proposals.

The following recommendations were made:

1. GCOM was asked to establish a list-serve and communicate information related to the legislative gatherings as well as to other legislative matters.
2. GCOM would work with United Methodist Communications to develop a web site and to set up web links with agencies and other groups to post their legislation when final legislation was approved.
3. GCOM was also asked to determine the best means to accomplish uniformity in formatting information in the agency paragraphs and submit enabling legislation as appropriate to achieve some standardization in organizing the agency paragraphs. Afterward, GCOM was asked to share with the general secretaries a proposed format for organizing the agency paragraphs in the *Book of Discipline* in a similar style to facilitate access to information related to the general agencies.
4. Agencies with expired (time-dated) resolutions in the *Book of Resolutions* will write legislation to renew those resolutions that are scheduled to expire.

Because the response of the participants was very enthusiastic about the format and approach to the 2002 Legislative Gathering, the General Council on Ministries Legislation Committee

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Agency: General Council on Ministries

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Financial Implications: None

recommended the General Council on Ministries (or equivalent structure) continue this format next quadrennium with the following guidelines:

1. Central conferences will be represented in an intentional manner to give broader perspectives and insights as the legislative proposals are shared.
2. Selection of the dates for the event be made in a timely manner to give the respective groups an opportunity to budget for their attendance.
3. Participants should include two representatives from each general agency, general church initiatives, ethnic caucus or special interest caucus.
4. Resource persons should be used, if possible, to bring their wealth of experience and their less biased perspectives to the setting.
5. Location should be chosen to allow for group meals and informal gathering times.

Signed: _____
Bishop Edward W. Paup, President

Signed: _____
Daniel K. Church, General Secretary