

Writing Resolutions that Work

 www.nationalgrange.org/writing-resolutions-that-work/

The Grange has a long history rooted in member participation in our policy development through our resolution process. Each Granger is tasked with addressing voids and surpluses in our policy and can propose to implement these changes by offering amendments to your local and State Granges. Drafting resolutions may seem like a daunting task at first, but if you follow the simple format listed below, you will soon be on your way to writing a clear and effective resolution.

First, it is important to know the anatomy of a resolution. There are three main parts: the Title, the body or Whereas section, and the conclusion or Resolved section.

1. The Title should clearly state the issue to be addressed. Be clear about the topic, the more specific you are the easier it is to differentiate between resolutions on similar topics.
2. The Whereas section is where you get to make your argument for why this resolution is necessary. This section does not become policy but explains to other Grangers why the issue is important and provides details, data, and other reference material so they can be better educated on voting for the issue. It is important to note that these should be rooted in facts and not based on the opinions of the writer.
3. The Resolved section must be a complete sentence which sums up what your resolution is trying to achieve and can stand alone without any of the supporting information.

Example:

Deregulation of the Postal Service

WHEREAS the federal government imposes unreasonable regulations and mandates on the U.S. Postal Service but no longer funds any of the organization's operating costs; and WHEREAS the U.S. Postal Service will continue to be forced to close local post offices and reduce services under such a business model; and WHEREAS the U.S. Postal Service could survive and compete if allowed to create its own business model free of Congressional oversight; and WHEREAS the National Grange has a rich tradition in helping to ensure the rural free delivery of mail; therefore be it RESOLVED that the National Grange support legislation that creates an autonomous U.S. Postal Service, which can set its own operating procedures and business model without the undue regulation of the federal government.

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Once the resolution is written, it must be approved by a Subordinate or Pomona Grange before it moves on to State or National Session. It is helpful for the writer of the resolution to keep track of all the resources used to assemble the resolution. Then when the resolution is being debated, members can be referred to these resources for more information before

making an informed decision. It is important to present both sides of the argument. Though you may not agree with the opposing viewpoint, it is still valid and needs to be part of our your information.

Note to State Masters/Secretaries: After a resolution has passed that will be sent to National Grange, it is helpful to the committees that will be taking a look at the resolutions if you include background information about the topics. Again, the more information you provide the more informed the committee will be and this greatly enhances the deliberative process. As stated above, please try to submit opposing viewpoints on the topic.

Samples of Useful Supplementary Information:

- Government statistics or academic articles with documented sources
- Fact sheets from groups who lobby for or against the subject matter
- Newspaper articles
- Books or magazine articles

In closing, make sure your resolution can stand the test of time. A good deal of Grange policy dates back 75 years or more and continues to be relevant because the ideals and concepts hold true today. However, we also have policy that is out-of-date and relates to issues that have been dealt with on the local and congressional levels. If you have a resolution that deals with an issue that is connected to a current event or particular bill, your resolution may be included in the committee of jurisdiction's policy statement for that year, rather than passed as a resolution. Rest assured that this is still very important and is actually a better home for your resolution. Every resolution that is sent to National Grange is taken seriously by the committee that it was assigned to and is given consideration. For information about resolution writing contact your State Legislative Director or State Master. Good luck and happy policymaking!