

# COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL STUDENT SENATE

## Resolution Urging Committee Review for All Substantive Measures Considered by the Senate

PROPOSED  
April 6, 2010

PROPOSERS  
By-Laws Revision Committee

ADOPTED  
April 6, 2010

5 WHEREAS the Senate currently has an underutilized committee structure, whereby most substantive business reaches the Senate floor in rough draft form, without first having been revised or widely considered; and

The efficiency of Senators' time and the quality of the Senate's deliberation would be increased if committees regularly considered substantive business before it reaches the Senate floor.

RESOLVED BY THE COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL STUDENT SENATE,

10 That the 2010–11 Executive Board be urged to amend its [Rules of Procedure](#) to implement the following:

- The notice requirement for submitting substantive business for the Senates' consideration at regular or special meetings should be increased to seven days;
- Upon submission of any substantive business, the Executive Board should swiftly refer the matter to the appropriate Senate Committee for its consideration;
- 15 • Upon referral, the Committee of Reference should consult with the proponent(s) of a referred measure and any other resources necessary to produce an agenda item appropriate for Senate consideration. Thereafter, the Committee of Reference should report the referred measure to the Senate with its recommendation and/or revisions;
- A Senator should be permitted to discharge a substantive business item to the Senate floor, by majority vote, if the Executive Board and/or Committee of Reference fails to act, and
- 20 • Consideration of substantive business at an emergency meeting should be similarly guided and enhanced, but with added flexibility to allow the Executive Board and Senate to act as circumstances require.

25 That draft language incorporating the points above, styled as By-Laws, are attached to this resolution as an illustration.

That the Student Senate Parliamentarian transmit these suggestions, with the 2009–10 Senate's endorsement, to the 2010–11 Executive Board.

This resolution expires upon its execution.

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## Draft By-Laws Establishing Committee Review of Substantive Measures

### [NEW] Section Two — Senate Consideration of Substantive Measures

- 5           A. General Rule. The Senate shall not consider any substantive measure (excluding officer reports, committee reports, and announcements) that does not meet the requirements of this Section.
- B. Consideration at a Regular or Special Meeting
- 10           1. No substantive measure shall be considered at a Regular or Special Meeting of the Senate unless submitted to the Executive Board at least 7 days in advance.
2. Within 24 hours of submission, excluding weekends, University holidays and vacation periods, the Executive Board shall refer measures to the appropriate Senate Committee for its consideration.
- 15           a. The Executive Board may defer to the Parliamentarian on referral decisions, which may be modified by a majority of the Executive Board.
- b. For the purpose of this subsection B, the Executive Board may function as a Committee of reference.
3. Within 96 hours of referral, excluding weekends, University holidays and vacation periods, a Committee of reference shall report to the Senate any measure referred to it.
- 20           a. Committees of reference should consult with the proponent(s) of a referred measure and any other resources necessary to produce an agenda item appropriate for Senate consideration.
- b. Measures may be reported with a favorable, unfavorable or neutral recommendation on its merits and the Committee of reference may provide reasons therefor.
- 25           c. Measures may be reported, with or without changes, by a majority of Committee members voting, provided that a majority of incumbent Committee members participate in consideration of the measure.
- i. If a measure is reported without changes, it shall be introduced to the Senate in its original form.
- 30           ii. If a measure is reported with all changes considered friendly by a majority of the measure's proponent(s), it shall be introduced to the Senate as amended.

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iii. If a measure is reported with any changes considered unfriendly by a majority of the measure's proponent(s), it shall be introduced to the Senate including only those changes agreed to by a majority of the measure's proponent(s). The Senate shall consider all other Committee changes during debate on the measure.

5 4. If the Executive Board fails to refer a measure within 24 hours after submission, or if a Committee fails to report a measure to the Senate within 96 hours after referral, in both cases excluding weekends, University holidays and vacation periods, any Senator may move to discharge the measure at the next Regular or Special Meeting.

10 5. The Senate shall immediately consider any measure discharged by a majority of members present.

## C. Consideration at an Emergency Meeting

1. No substantive measure shall be considered at an Emergency Meeting of the Senate unless submitted to the Executive Board as early as circumstances allow.

15 2. The Executive Board, at its discretion, should consult with the proponent(s) of an emergency measure and any other resources necessary to produce an agenda item appropriate for Senate consideration.

3. If the Executive Board fails to act on an emergency measure within a reasonable time, any Senator may move to discharge the measure at an Emergency Meeting called pursuant to Section 3 of Article VI of the Constitution.

20 4. The Senate shall immediately consider any emergency measure discharged by a majority of members present.