

# 2024 Call to Convention Memo

**TO:** Board of Directors, Management Team, and Delegates to the Chapter Congress

**FR:** C. Steven Hartman, CAE, *Miami '16-Honorary*  
Chief Executive Officer

**DT:** May 16, 2024

**RE:** Chapter Congress Meeting

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**Notice is hereby given that the Sixty Second (62nd) Meeting of the Chapter Congress of Alpha Kappa Psi Fraternity will reconvene on Thursday, July 25, 2024.** The Chapter Congress Meeting will reconvene at The Westin Indianapolis in Indianapolis, Indiana.

At this meeting of the Chapter Congress, amendments to the *Constitution* and *Statutory Code* will be considered and voted upon by the delegates present. For an amendment to be considered, it must have been submitted to a standing or appointed committee by March 1, 2024. The committees will deliberate on all items submitted and make a report to the Chapter Congress on Thursday, July 25.

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## PROPOSED LEGISLATION

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## NEW CONSTITUTION

<b>Committee hearing legislation:</b>	Constitution
<b>Sponsored by:</b>	Board of Directors
<b>Board Recommendation:</b>	Pass

### Proposed Legislation:

The Alpha Kappa Psi Chapter Congress hereby approves and enacts a new Constitution, organized as follows:

[Constitution \(Proposed\) – Clean](#)

[Constitution \(Proposed\) – Tracked Changes](#)

[Bylaws \(Proposed\)](#)

### Intent of Legislation:

The Chapter Congress is requested to adopt a new Constitution to be more in-line with generally accepted non-profit governance models and become compliant with Indiana non-profit law. This will bring the Fraternity in-line with its Greek and non-profit peer organizations and enable necessary updates to governance to be more flexible and responsive to rapidly changing dynamics where necessary. Final specific verbiage will be approved by the Fraternity's legal counsel to ensure alignment with Indiana and United States laws.

### Background:

At present, the Fraternity is governed by a series of nesting documents: the *Constitution*, the *Statutory Code*, the Board's Corporate and Operational Guidance, and student/alumni chapter bylaws. The *Constitution* and *Statutory Code* (C/SC) was wholesale revised in the 1990s, with updates occurring every 2-4 years. The C/SC can only be changed by the Chapter Congress (75% for Constitution, 50%+1 for Statutory Code), and all Board policies and lower-level documents must abide by the C/SC.

The C/SC is a 25+ year old document, updated in relevant sections as circumstances require, each time losing cohesion and integrated language. Since the early 1990s, the Fraternity has expanded its membership base, its geographic footprint, its place in the larger AKPsi Enterprise, and now sits alongside the Foundation and Commonwealth Leadership® Alliance (CLA). Our membership base is more progressive and the environment where we operate is becoming more risk-adverse and has changing priorities, requiring a more dynamic and less prescriptive set of governing documents.

Unlike traditional high-level governing documents, the C/SC is prescriptive and any updates,

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regardless of whether it's one word or an entire Article, requires the same lengthy process which can only be addressed every two years at the Chapter Congress meeting. Items which are no longer feasible or desirable from a business or strategic standpoint are enshrined in governance as required to occur/exist, hampering the Fraternity's ability to adjust when needed and creating a financial and logistical strain on the organization.

Approximately three years ago, the Board charged a task force to propose a 'wholesale' rewrite of the C/SC, with the catalyst being the Fraternity's diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) efforts but to limit their efforts to DEIA issues. Due to various circumstances, the only proposals given to, and approved by the 2022 Chapter Congress, were mostly focused on DEIA items, including removing religious, gendered, and historically harmful terminology, but it did not address any systematic or structural issues hindering the governance of the Fraternity. As such, the C/SC remains overly prescriptive and is not adaptable to local, national, and international changes.

Most large organizations, including our peer non-profit membership organizations (Greek and non-Greek), do not have two levels of general membership-approved governing documents. Constitutions, where they still exist, focus on the purpose, general structure, rights of membership, and other universal issues like symbols. On average, non-profit organizations have a single Constitution, organization bylaws set by their Board as the operational implementation of the Constitution, and local group bylaws. In corporate organizations, the overall strategy and guardrails are set by the Board and details are implemented by the Chief Executive Officer.

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## CONVENTION TIMING

**Committee hearing legislation:** Constitution  
**Sponsored by:** Northern Rio Grande Region  
**Board Recommendation:** Do Not Pass

### Proposed Legislation:

Amend *Constitution* Article III, Section 4 to add the line:

*Convention shall be within the first 10 days of January in odd numbered years beginning in 2027.*

### Board Comment:

The proposal is too prescriptive for the *Constitution*, locking the Fraternity into a very short/specific date range in January, not allowing for issues with location, travel in the winter, and the beginning of classes at most semester-based universities. In 2022, the Chapter Congress removed the specificity that Convention had to be held in "odd numbered years", which in the Covid Pandemic caused a myriad of problems to solve.

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## DUES ADJUSTMENT

<b>Committee hearing legislation:</b>	Finance
<b>Sponsored by:</b>	Board of Directors
<b>Board Recommendation:</b>	Pass

### **Proposed Legislation:**

In accordance with the *Statutory Code*, Caput VI, Section 3(A), the Chapter Congress sets student membership semi-annual dues at US\$80, due twice annually, sets pledge dues at US\$65 per pledge, and initiation dues at US\$110. The Chapter Congress further sets all future annual adjustments of no more than 5%, to be determined by the Board of Directors.

### **Intent of Legislation:**

The Board recommends raising the semi-annual student member dues (SMD) to account for inflation, the cost of events and professional services, and fund educational and programmatic offerings to our members, including Pathways, Elevate, and Convention. AKPsi hasn't raised dues since 2015; due to inflation, the buying power of the US dollar (US\$) has decreased by nearly 31% (for example, \$50 in 2015 is \$65.89 as of early 2024). Inflation, compounded with the exponential increase in costs to host events, hire and retain professional staff, and provide our signature programming has increased.

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## PUBLICIZING INTERNAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Committee hearing legislation:** Finance

**Sponsored by:** Pacific Northwest Region

**Board Recommendation:** Do Not Pass

### **Proposed Legislation:**

The Chapter Congress directs that all financial information of the Fraternity, including the individual salaries of employees, shall be published annually.

### **Board Comment:**

The Fraternity currently publishes financial information via IRS tax forms, as well as through audited financial statements. Privacy laws could restrict the publishing of individual salaries. Additionally, publication of individual salaries of each staff member may cause HR and morale issues, and do not serve a purpose for the advancement of AKPsi's mission and vision. IRS regulation requires salaries of individuals in excess of a certain threshold to be reported.

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## FINANCIAL SUSPENSION CHANGES

**Committee hearing legislation:** Membership

**Sponsored by:** Board of Directors

**Board Recommendation:** Pass

### **Proposed Legislation:**

The Chapter Congress hereby replaces *Constitution* Article II, Section 6(A)(2) with the following:

*Automatic Suspension of Membership: Finances. Members who are thirty (30) days in arrears for dues payments will be automatically suspended pending full payment or establishment of a payment plan approved by the Chapter's Executive Committee.*

### **Intent of Legislation:**

Amend Constitution Article II, Section 6, to shorten the process for financial suspension of student members and update the billing timeline.



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## PLEDGING AGE REQUIREMENT

**Committee hearing legislation:** Membership  
**Sponsored by:** Northern Rio Grande Region  
**Board Recommendation:** Do Not Pass

### **Proposed Legislation:**

Amend Statutory Code, Caput II, Section 6, Subsection A(3) to add:

*f) all members of the chapter and Potential New Members must be over the legal age of the country at the time of the first day of classes at the respective university.*

### **Board Comment:**

The proposal is overly broad and vague, as there are different definitions of legal age (military, voting, alcohol consumption), there is no standard definition. Additionally, this could violate discrimination clauses, not be allowed to be enforced on different university campuses, and there is no reasoning as to the answer of "what problem are we trying to solve."

## DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

**Committee hearing legislation:** Membership  
**Sponsored by:** Northern Rio Grande Region  
**Board Recommendation:** Do Not Pass

### Proposed Legislation:

Amend *Constitution* Article II, Section 2 as follows:

Current: A Student Member is an individual who is properly registered and actively pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree from a college or university that promotes a course of study not fewer than two (2) academic years in length for any such degree ("Qualified Institution") and who has been duly initiated into a College Chapter (as defined in Article VIII, Section 1, Paragraph A hereof).

Proposed: A Student Member is an individual who is properly registered and actively pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree from a college or university that promotes a course of study not fewer than ~~two (2)~~ one (1) academic years in length for any such degree ("Qualified Institution") and who has been duly initiated into a College Chapter (as defined in Article VIII, Section 1, Paragraph A hereof).

### Board Comment:

Upon review, the Board believes the proposal is a result of a misinterpretation of the Article and is unclear.

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## REMOVING APPOINTED STUDENT CHAPTER OFFICERS

**Committee hearing legislation:** Membership

**Sponsored by:** Northern Rio Grande Region

**Board Recommendation:** No Recommendation

**Proposed Legislation:**

- 1) Amend *Statutory Code* Caput II, Section 3(A) by removing the line "*The Chapter President shall appoint the Chaplain, the Warden, and the Chapter Historian.*"
- 2) Amend *Statutory Code* Caput II, Section 3(C) by removing paragraphs 7 (*Chaplain and Warden*) and 8 (*Historian*) from list of appointed chapter officer positions.