

Speakers' Letter



Physicians Caring for Texans



Arlo F. Weltge, MD
Speaker



Bradford W. Holland, MD
Vice Speaker

Jan. 7, 2021

Fellow TMA Delegates and Alternate Delegates:

We look forward to your participation at the 2021 Annual Session of the Texas Medical Association House of Delegates, April 29 and May 14-15. The health and safety of our members and staff remain paramount, and throughout the pandemic we strongly encouraged Texans to follow proven guidelines for slowing the spread of COVID-19. With that in mind, your speakers and the TMA Board of Trustees are researching options for a healthy and safe [TexMed 2021](#). A virtual meeting is tentatively planned, though TMA is considering allowing a limited number of delegates to join us in person at the JW Marriott Austin. Due to current social distancing requirements, seating at the in-person house would be fairly limited. More information on this option will be made available after the 2021 Winter Conference.

Check the [House of Delegates webpage](#) for ongoing updates to this Speakers' Letter. The Speakers' Letter will be updated with additional election information on Feb. 19. Following that date, the letter will be updated as information is received; check the website frequently. If you have questions about any of the following items, email [Marti Francisco](#) or [Brad Burnett](#), House of Delegates staff.

HOUSE OF DELEGATES SCHEDULE

Key Dates:

Feb. 18	Resolution Deadline/Candidate Filing Deadline
March 25	Handbook Posted/Online Testimony Opens
March 30	Supplement Deadline for Resolutions
April 8	Supplement Posted
April 22	Online Testimony Closes
April 29	House of Delegates Opening Session (Prerecorded)
April 29-May 3	Elections
May 6-9	Runoff Elections (If Necessary)
May 8	Virtual Reference Committee Hearings
May 10	Final Reference Committee Reports Published Online
May 14	House of Delegates Business Session Day 1 (Live)
May 15	House of Delegates Business Session Day 2 (Live)

The House of Delegates officially will open with a prerecorded video session **Thursday, April 29**, two weeks in advance of the May business sessions. The house will convene promptly at 9 am on Friday, May 14, to act on reference committee reports. The house will reconvene promptly at 9 am on Saturday, May 15, to complete action on reference committee reports and to install the 2021-22 TMA and TMA Alliance presidents. Our goal is to finish business no later than noon on Saturday.

House Standing Rules for Special Circumstances

Your speakers are drafting House Standing Rules for Special Circumstances to serve as an operational guide and description for how the house will conduct its elections and business at a hybrid meeting. The house will vote on adoption of these rules when delegates cast their ballot for TMA candidates.

HANDBOOK

The *Handbook for Delegates* will be posted on the website by March 25. The *Supplement to the Handbook* will be posted April 8.

Resolution Deadline

Resolutions are due **Thursday, Feb. 18**, for posting on the TMA website and publication in the *Handbook for Delegates*. Resolutions submitted past the deadline but received by March 30 will be included within the *Supplement to the Handbook*.

NEW Resolution Builder

The TMA website now includes a [resolution builder](#) for members to format and draft resolutions and search through relevant TMA and American Medical Association policy. Follow [these guidelines](#) for writing and submitting resolutions. TMA staff are available to help; please email HOD@texmed.org.

TMA Policy Page

The [TMA Policy](#) page offers a searchable compendium of policies adopted by the house. Also included is a complete index of current and past TMA policy, as well as links to the [TMA Audit Trail Library](#) and current ethics opinions of the TMA Board of Councilors. The compendium is updated after each House of Delegates meeting; thus the current version includes all adopted policy through the 2020 Special Session.

Online Testimony

After the *Handbook* is posted March 25, online testimony on reports and resolutions will be accepted for consideration by reference committees prior to TexMed. This testimony may be in lieu of in-person testimony at a reference committee hearing. Any member of TMA may submit testimony by logging into his or her [texmed.org account](#) and filling out the **online testimony form**. This form will be made available closer to March 25 – watch this space for updates in a future Speakers' Letter. Supportive information or testimony in the form of PDFs and Word, Excel, and PowerPoint documents will be accepted as attachments. Online testimony will be accepted until **April 22**. Reference committee members will then meet in executive session to review submitted testimony and create draft reports. Members should review these draft reports before the May 8 reference committee hearings. **PLEASE MAKE AN EFFORT TO PROVIDE FORMAL AND SUBSTANTIVE COMMENTS ONLINE PRIOR TO THE LIVE REFERENCE COMMITTEE HEARINGS.** This will help streamline the live reference committee hearings.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS TO SERVE ON REFERENCE COMMITTEES

If you are interested in serving on a reference committee, please complete the online [Reference Committee Interest Form](#) by **Friday, Feb. 12**. We will send invitation letters to those selected to serve. Please note this year volunteers will need to meet *twice* in executive session before the May business sessions: once after online testimony closes to create a draft reference committee report, and again after the virtual hearings to finalize their report. These meetings will take place through Zoom. Particular committee preferences will be taken into consideration when making appointments. The following committees will be appointed for the 2021 Annual Session:

- Reference Committee on Financial and Organizational Affairs,
- Reference Committee on Science and Public Health,
- Reference Committee on Medical Education and Quality, and
- Reference Committee on Socioeconomics

Virtual Reference Committee Hearings

Reference committee hearings will occur virtually through the Zoom conferencing platform on **Saturday, May 8**, and final reference committee reports will be published by the end of day Monday, May 10. Stay tuned for more information on these interactive meetings.

Conflict of Interest Policy

We remind you to disclose any financial relationship with any enterprises and organizations being debated if the relationship might influence your testimony.

TMA's Conflicts of Interest Policy is as follows: *295.011. Potential Conflicts of Interest, Disclosure of Affiliations, and Relationships with Business Entities*: The Texas Medical Association will foster exemplary relationships with all business entities in order to expedite better communications regarding quality, operations, global payment processes, transparency, and other issues unrelated to fees.

The TMA Board of Trustees and members of TMA standing councils will restate the policy of full disclosure of all financial remuneration from any business entity as that relationship could be considered a conflict of interest when these members represent the membership of the Texas Medical Association (Amended Res. 106-A-06; reaffirmed BOT Rep. 7-A-16).

Elections

Elections will take place virtually from April 29-May 3, and potential runoff elections will take place from May 6-9. Delegates can find a link to their ballot on the [TMA House of Delegates website](#) starting April 29. Delegates also will receive an email with this link.

Candidate Forum

The annual Candidate Forum provides an opportunity for House of Delegates members to meet the candidates who are running for election. Candidates introduce themselves and field questions from members on a wide range of issues. Planning is underway for a virtual Candidate Forum for contested races. This interactive forum will be recorded and posted on the TMA website for delegates who are unable to tune in live.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Candidates and those who will nominate candidates should notify [House of Delegates staff](#) at TMA headquarters as soon as possible so that the names of candidates seeking election or reelection can be distributed to members of the house and county medical societies. It is house protocol to distribute the names of candidates seeking election or reelection to members of the house in advance of the meeting.

The candidate filing deadline is **Feb. 18**. Candidate materials received after this date, but before close of business on March 30, will be posted online and provided to the members of the house in advance of the meeting by publication in the *Handbook for Delegates* or *Supplement to the Handbook*.

ELECTIONS

Office	Incumbent	Eligible for Election	Term of Position	Candidates Announced as of Jan. 7
OFFICERS				
President-Elect	E. Linda Villarreal	No	2021-22	Gary W. Floyd Tarrant
Speaker, House of Delegates	Arlo F. Weltge	Yes	2021-22	Bradford W. Holland McLennan
Vice Speaker, House of Delegates	Bradford W. Holland	Yes	2021-22	

Four Trustees*	Keith A. Bourgeois Jayesh B. Shah Richard W. Snyder II Joseph S. Valenti	Yes Yes Yes Yes	2021-24	Keith A. Bourgeois Harris Jayesh B. Shah Bexar Richard W. Snyder II Dallas Joseph S. Valenti Denton
COUNCILORS				
District 1	Gilbert A. Handal	Yes	2021-24	Gilbert A. Handal
District 2	Vivek U. Rao	Yes	2021-24	Vivek U. Rao
District 4	Stuart L. Abramson	Yes	2021-24	Stuart L. Abramson
District 11	Sheldon Y. Freeberg	Yes	2021-24	Brenda M. Vozza
District 14	Edward W. Tuthill	Yes	2021-24	Edward W. Tuthill
VICE COUNCILORS**				
District 1	Angel M. Rios	Yes	2021-24	Angel M. Rios
District 2	James W. Huston	Yes	2021-24	James W. Huston
District 4	Vacant	Yes	2021-24	
District 11	Brenda M. Vozza	Yes	2021-24	
District 14	Steven R. Hays	Yes	2021-24	Steven R. Hays
District 8	Vacant	Yes	2021-23	Steven E. Wolf
TEXAS DELEGATION TO THE AMA				
Delegate	Brad. G. Butler	No	2022-23	Roxanne M. Tyroch
Delegate	Diana L. Fite	Yes	2022-23	Diana L. Fite
Delegate	Gary W. Floyd	Yes	2022-23	Gary W. Floyd
Delegate	John T. Gill	Yes	2022-23	John T. Gill
Delegate	Robert T. Gunby Jr.	No	2022-23	John T. Carlo
Delegate	David N. Henkes	Yes	2022-23	David N. Henkes
Delegate	Jayesh Shah	Yes	2022-23	Jayesh Shah
Delegate	Lyle S. Thorstenson	No	2022-23	Elizabeth Torres
Alternate Delegate	Robert H. Emmick Jr.	Yes	2022-23	Robert H. Emmick Jr.
Alternate Delegate	Steven R. Hays	Yes	2022-23	Steven R. Hays
Alternate Delegate	Jennifer R. Rushton	Yes	2022-23	Jennifer R. Rushton
Alternate Delegate	Sherif Z. Zaafran	Yes	2022-23	Sherif Z. Zaafran
Alternate Delegate	Zeke Silva III	Yes	2022-23	Zeke Silva III
Alternate Delegate	Bryan G. Johnson	Yes	2022-23	Bryan G. Johnson
Alternate Delegate	Three Vacancies	—	2022-23	
Alternate Delegate	Matthew McGlennon***	—	2021-22	
Alternate Delegate	Patrick Bettiol***	—	2021-22	

*Trustee positions are “at large,” not slotted. TMA Bylaws provide that all nominees for trustee will be listed on a single ballot. If Dr. Floyd is elected president-elect there will be a vacancy for an at-large trustee.

**As provided in TMA Bylaws, nominations for vice councilor positions are determined by district elections and confirmed by the House of Delegates. Should you have a nomination for vice councilor, please notify Laura Thetford, associate general counsel and staff for the Board of Councilors, at laura.thetford@texmed.org.

***Nominations are made by the Resident and Fellow Section and Medical Student Section.