



# Use of Language in Association Policies, Positions, and House of Delegates Recommendations

## BOD Y11-25-04-01 [Policy]

### I. Purpose

This policy establishes standardized language usage in the development of Association policies, positions, and recommendations to the Board of Directors. It ensures clarity, consistency, and appropriate interpretation of intent and resource implications.

### II. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals and groups involved in drafting, reviewing, or approving Association policies, positions, and recommendations to the Board of Directors, including the House of Delegates, Board committees, Board-appointed groups, the Board of Directors, and staff. The House of Delegates and the Board of Directors are the only groups that adopt Association policy.

### III. Policy Statement

Language used in Association documents shall reflect the intended level of commitment, action, and resource allocation. The following guidance outlines approved terminology and its interpretation for two categories:

#### A. Language in Association Policies and Positions

These terms are used to express values, expectations, and obligations. They do not carry direct or immediate fiscal implications.

Word	Definition	Interpretation
Be/Is/Are	Describes qualities or conditions	Expected behavior
Believe	Statement of opinion	Affirmative statement of values
Support	To agree with	Affirmative statement of agreement

Oppose	To disagree with	Affirmative statement of disagreement
Shall	Expresses duty or obligation	Obligates action; preferred over “should”
Will	Decree or resolve with intent	Implies expectation, not action
Other verbs may be used as appropriate to describe an expected behavior.		

#### B. Language in Recommendations to the Board of Directors

These terms indicate varying levels of action and resource commitment. Fiscal implications (monetary and human resources) shall be considered when using these terms.

Word	Definition	Interpretation	Fiscal Implication
Advocate	To speak in favor of; recommend	Raise awareness; less strong than promote	Minimal to moderate
Develop	To bring into being	Requires end-product	Usually significant
Encourage	To foster or stimulate	Nonfinancial; fosters member action	None
Endorse	To give approval	General approval; minimal financial impact	Minimal
Explore	To research or investigate	Produces information, not recommendations	Minimal to significant
Evaluate	To appraise or assess	Requires end-product	Minimal to significant
Identify	To determine nature or obligation	Requires end-product	Moderate to significant
Implement	To put into effect	Action-oriented	Usually significant
Promote	To emphasize or raise awareness	Stronger than advocate; less than pursue or	Minimal to moderate

Word	Definition	Interpretation	Fiscal Implication
Provide	To furnish or supply	Requires end-product	Minimal to significant
Pursue	To strive to accomplish	Goal-directed with end-product	Moderate to significant

### Explanation of Reference Numbers:

BOD P00-00-00-00 stands for Board of Directors/month/year/page/vote in the Board of Directors minutes; the "P" indicates that it is a position (see below). For example, BOD P06-22-05-04 means that this position can be found in the June 2022 Board of Directors meeting minutes on Page 5 and that it was Vote 4.

E: Binding Ethical Document | P: Position | Y: Policy

**Last Updated:** 12/11/2025

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