

Report of the DPCA Resolutions Committee: May 2021

Committee Members: Susan Vaillant, Chair; Rick Wicks, Carol Adamson, Katie Solon

Members of Democrats Abroad were invited to submit resolutions on March 30, 2021 in the 45 Day Notice of the Global Meeting, and again on April 14 in the 30 Day Notice of the Global Meeting (GM).

The deadline for submission was April 15 (per the Charter, 30 days out from the GM).

Drafts of the 2021 resolutions were first posted in the DA wiki on April 29 here:

<https://democratsabroad.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/Resolv/pages/6785860366/2021+DPCA+Resolutions>

Updated versions have since been posted.

Twenty-six resolutions were submitted by the deadline. One came in after the deadline and – realizing that we likely won't be able to address all at the GM anyway – that one has been held for consideration at a later (follow-up online) meeting. The texts of twenty-six resolutions were circulated to the committee for editing and responding to the authors. All except one were updated by the authors/sponsors; that one was dropped (considered withdrawn).

Because there were so many resolutions this year, the committee scheduled two online Resolutions Pre-Meetings so that DPCA voting members could discuss and respond to the resolutions. The first pre-meeting took place May 6, and the second May 10. In addition, a straw poll (Google form) was sent to DPCA voting members (via the chatbox at the May 10 pre-meeting and subsequently via the Leadership listserv) to measure which resolutions should have priority at the Global Meeting. The poll was opened May 10 and closed May 12. (Results below.)

Link to the recording of the May 6 Resolutions Pre-Meeting:

<https://democratsabroad.webex.com/recording-service/sites/democratsabroad/recording/ba4f081490901039bf770050568c7f8b/playback>

Link to the recording of the May 10 Resolutions Pre-Meeting:

<https://democratsabroad.webex.com/democratsabroad/ldr.php?RCID=f02c1ffb4e3a4f28ab7c9c1c095c3b86>

Link to the straw poll (now closed):

<https://forms.gle/NWiu186wbUiWnHbG7>

The committee met online periodically for discussions during this process to review responses to the resolutions and to comment on the rules and procedures now in place and note possible clarifications and updates on documentation and process. This review of the process and our recommendations will be submitted after the GM.

After the final pre-meeting, the committee worked on this report ahead of the Global Meeting itself. This report will be posted in the 2021 Resolutions section of the DA wiki by May 13, and a link to it posted in the Leadership listserv.

As a first recommendation, the Resolutions Committee would urge the DPCA voting body – at the Global Meeting – to entertain a motion to hold a follow-on DPCA online meeting within 90 days to consider any of the 26 resolutions not discussed at the Global Meeting.

Recommendations of the Resolutions Committee

The committee appreciates the work and thought put into the resolutions submitted by each of the authors/sponsors! We regret that time likely will not allow all 25 to be considered during the Global Meeting, and are determined to help make sure each resolution is given due consideration, if not at the Global Meeting then at follow-on meetings soon thereafter.

These are our thoughts regarding the resolutions that should be addressed during the limited time allocated during the Global Meeting, and our reasoning.

1st set: We recommend that the 3 resolutions honoring individuals be considered first and expect they will pass without objection:

- #1 To Rename the Historic Edmund Pettus Bridge for Congressman John R. Lewis
 - #2 Applauding Congressman Jamie Raskin and House Impeachment Managers
 - #6 Honoring Patrick Werner, founder of Democrats Abroad Nicaragua
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2nd set: Based on feedback from the Resolutions Pre-Meetings and the straw poll, support for the following 7 resolutions seems very strong and therefore we suggest that they be bundled, considered as a group, with a motion to pass them without objection encouraged:

- #16 In Support of Medicare Portability
- #24 Supporting the Military Justice Improvement Act to Protect Military Women & Men from Sexual Harassment & Assault
- #11 In Support of H.R. 40 and the Commission to Study U.S. Reparations
- #10 In Support of the PRO Act
- #23 In Support of Non-Citizen Service Members, their Families, Deported Veterans and H.R. 1182: the Veterans Deportation Prevention and Reform Act
- #12 In Support of Statehood for Puerto Rico
- #26 Advocating Against Prison Gerrymandering

We recommend that the sponsors/authors of the above 10 (=3+7) resolutions be allotted sufficient time (perhaps 2 minutes each) to introduce their resolution. If there are objections to any of these resolutions, they could be pulled out of the group and given perhaps 5 or 10 minutes for individual consideration after the rest of the group.

3rd set:

If time allows, we suggest that the 3 resolutions below having to do with tax policy or strategy be taken up together. (If time is short, we recommend considering all tax related resolutions at a follow-on meeting):

- #5 In Support of Urgent Federal Tax Filing Relief for Americans Abroad in the American Jobs Plan (infrastructure legislation) and American Families Plan
- #18 To Relieve the Financial and Administrative Burdens of the Present U.S. Tax and Financial Reporting Systems for Americans Outside the U.S., While Ensuring the Ultra-Rich Pay Their Fair Share of Taxes No Matter Where They Reside
- #4 In Support of Democrats Abroad Joining the RBT (residence-based tax) Coalition

We anticipate debate on some or all of these resolutions, but suggest they be initially considered together as the issues overlap. Then they may need to be split for individual action (amendment, passage, whatever).

4th set:

Time permitting, we recommend that the next 4 resolutions be considered for debate:

- #21 To Condemn Recent Anti-Transgender Legislation and Support Passage of the Equality Act
 - #22 To Regulate Social Media and Limit Negative and Divisive Effects on Society Around the World
 - #17 In Support of Reactivation of the Atrocities Prevention Board
 - #14 To Keep the Pershing Hall Collections and the Time Capsule in France
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5th set

Assuming that time will have expired, we recommend that the remaining resolutions be considered in follow-on meetings, soon after the Global Meeting. In some cases further research and/or content editing would be helpful. In order of submission to the committee:

- #3 In Support of Development of a DA messaging platform for engaging members in Congressional outreach in support of DA issues-advocacy initiatives
 - *This may be a decision for the ExCom, based on more research, pricing, and considering competing priorities and DA budget.*
- #7 On Strengthening Democratic Institutions in the U.S.
 - *While the topic is critical, we believe the resolved clause(s) need revising to be more clear and achievable.*
- #8 On Polarization of the Electorate
 - *Again, while the topic is critical, we believe the resolved clause needs revising to be more clear and achievable.*

- #9 On Central American Immigration in 2021
 - *While the topic is critical and timely, we suggest that this resolution be rewritten to address immigration problems more broadly and take account of actions already underway.*
- #13 To Expand the Travel Fund to Include Stipends for Members Interested in Attending DNC, ASDC, and DA Regional Meetings
 - *Feedback on this resolution suggested revising it so that recipients would be DA members elected to represent DA at these U.S. meetings and/or that funds would go to members traveling to DA regional meetings.*
- #15 Covid-19 Vaccinations for U.S. Veterans, Caregivers and their Families Abroad
 - *Concerns were expressed about sensitivity to the feelings of host country nationals without similar access.*
- #19 Supporting H.R. 2590: Prohibiting Use of U.S. Military Foreign Aid for Detention of Children
 - *We recommend postponing until DA policy is debated and more clearly established and communicated; this resolution could also be rewritten without reference to any foreign country but more clearly focused on U.S. policy.*
- #20 To Condition Military Aid to Israel
 - *We recommend postponing until DA policy is more clearly established and communicated; this resolution could also be rewritten without reference to any foreign country but more clearly focused on U.S. policy.*

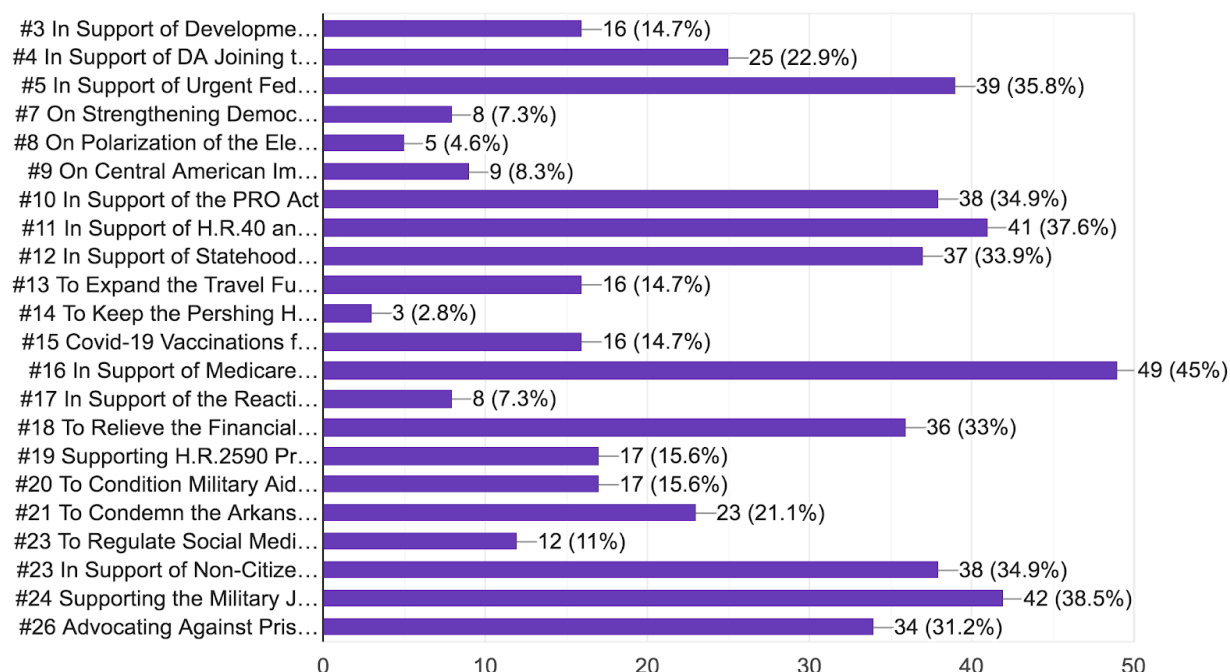
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- #25 To Endorse Anti-War Policies
 - *We considered this withdrawn as authors didn't translate the 2020 Platform plank into resolution format and didn't respond. Authors are encouraged to update, rewrite, and resubmit.*
 - #27 Justice in Law Enforcement
 - *This resolution arrived after the April 15 deadline; we recommend consideration at a follow-on meeting.*
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Feedback from DPCA Voting Members via the “Straw Poll”

Below is the data collected from the poll asking voting members to select the five resolutions they would like to see considered at the Global Meeting. (Please note that first #23 refers to resolution #22.)

Please indicate which FIVE of the following 22 resolutions you would most like to see considered at the Global Meeting. Please select no more than 5. [...on resolutions will happen at the Global Meeting.]

109 responses



Twaking the Resolutions Process

After the high number of resolutions submitted this year – and hoping that the level of engagement will continue in the future – we plan to propose improved submission procedures and committee processes.

As part of our review, after the Global Meeting, we will collect feedback from resolution authors/sponsors and from DPCA voting members and make suggestions for improvement, which may include:

- The realization of a year-round resolutions process;
- An earlier submission deadline for resolutions to be considered at Global Meetings, allowing time for more substantive (as opposed to merely textual) review;
- A standard format for resolutions;
- An online submission form (similar to that used for Charter amendments);
- Clearer guidance on who can submit: In several cases, sponsorship of a resolution has come into question because of country committee elections in the middle of the submission process. We temporarily resolved this by allowing the initial DPCA voting-member sponsor who is familiar with the content of the resolution to remain responsible for presenting it. But, perhaps a current DPCA voter may be required as sponsor at the time a resolution is voted upon;
- Suggestions of current issues that could be addressed in a resolution;
- Organize training sessions for DA members on how to write a resolution;

- Recruit more help for the committee, especially in tech and or project management;
- Expand the diversity of the committee;
- Encourage engagement of country committees and chapters in the submission of resolutions as well as interest in resolutions already adopted;
- Encourage follow-up reports (feedback) on the progress of issues that were the subject of adopted DA resolutions so members remain informed (for example, if a critical issue that DA had addressed becomes law or has had some impact on U.D. government domestic and/or foreign policy). This might encourage membership engagement and pride in DA.