DIOCESE of CHRIST our HOPE

2026.2 Floor Nominations to Provincial Council and Assembly
RE: Title I. Canon 2. Section 10
Proposed by Bp. Alan Hawkins

INITIALLY PROPOSED LANGUAGE

Section 10. Diocesan Delegates to the Provincial Assembly and Provincial Council
The Synod of the Diocese shall elect the delegates and alternates to the Provincial Council and the Assembly from a list of nominees provided by the Diocesan Council and the Bishop. ~~Nominations from the floor shall be allowed.~~ The number of alternates shall be decided by the Diocesan Council and the Bishop. Vacancies shall be filled by elected alternates in descending order, according to number of votes received. The Diocesan Council may fill any remaining vacancies in the event that an insufficient number of elected alternates are able to serve.

Rationale:
Removing this requirement simplifies our Synod meeting by eliminating a simple procedural matter from the Synod agenda, which matter can and should rightly be administered effectively by the Diocesan Council before arriving at Synod.

Anticipated Potential Objection:
This amendment restrains the vote and authority of the Synod.

Response:
The desire is actually to strengthen the vetting process of nominees to Provincial Council and Assembly. By removing nominations from the floor of Synod, the onus is placed on the Diocesan Council to do the work of receiving nominations and vetting nominees significantly ahead of our Synod. The Synod still retains the final vote to elect these delegates.

Constitution and Canons Committee Initial Comments (March 27, 2026 – 221 days before Synod)
Committee members expressed concerns that the Synod could perceive this as an encroachment upon its discretion and may reject it.

Reviewed by Diocesan Council (April 23, 2026 – 198 days before Synod)
The Diocesan Council had no comments or proposed revisions to this amendment.

Revisions from Submitter
The submitter had no revisions to this amendment.

Submitted for review to the Colleges (May 1, 2026 – 190 days before Synod)

Feedback from Colleges (June 15, 2026 – 145 days before Synod)

Comments from the College of Bishops
The College of Bishops is grateful that the existing Title I, Canon 2, Section 10 reflects a healthy and balanced framework of shared decision-making. The Synod of the Diocese, the Diocesan Council, and the Bishop Ordinary are all actively involved in selecting delegates and alternates to the Provincial Council and Assembly, and that collaborative structure is worth preserving and strengthening.

We recognize that removing the ability to nominate a delegate or alternate from the floor of Synod may appear heavy-handed or restrictive at first glance. We want to address that concern directly, because we understand firsthand what the current practice produces in practice — and it is not what any of us intend.

These are consequential selections. They deserve care, prayerful discernment, adequate time, and genuine vetting. Floor nominations, however well-intentioned, work against all of those things. They give Synod delegates less information, less time for prayer, and less opportunity to ask meaningful questions of the candidates. Both lay and clergy delegates have shared with us that when nominations come from the floor, they often end up voting for the person they already know — not because that person is the best candidate, but because they have no basis for comparison. That is not discernment – it is familiarity.

Our experience confirms this concern on multiple fronts. At the parish level, allowing vestry nominations from the floor has consistently proven unwise. Similarly, one of our bishops observed in his previous service in TEC that floor nominations for Provincial Council delegates produced the same problem at a larger scale — a process that felt inclusively democratic but actually diminished the quality of the decision.

Beyond the quality of the selection itself, floor nominations have a secondary cost: they unnecessarily lengthen our Synod, which is already a full and demanding gathering. Time consumed by last-minute nominations is time taken away from the substantive work delegates came to do.

Scripture is clear that rushed decisions — and especially hasty selections of leaders in the church —

carry real risk (cf. 1 Timothy 5:22). This amendment is not a restriction of Synod's authority. It is an investment in Synod's ability to exercise that authority well. By shifting nominations to the Diocesan Council process well in advance of Synod, we give every delegate the time, information, and prayerful space to make a genuinely informed choice.

Critically, Synod retains the final vote. Nothing in this amendment removes that. What it removes is the pressure to evaluate candidates on the spot, without preparation, at the end of an already full agenda.

We commend this amendment to the Synod.

Comments from the College of Presbyters
Responses to this proposal were generally limited but cautiously positive. One respondent described the change as wise, while another expressed support provided there is a clear and well-publicized pre-Synod nomination process that allows clergy and laity meaningful opportunities to recommend candidates. Improved vetting of nominees was also cited as a reason to support the amendment. Another respondent expressed ambivalence, raising concerns about potential encroachment on Synod's role and noting the lack of an apparent process should Synod decline to ratify the slate presented by the Diocesan Council and Bishop. One respondent offered no opinion.

Another respondent offered the following comments.

<u>A Comparative Analysis of ACNA Diocesan Constitutions & Canons</u>
Analysis: The Diocese of Christ Our Hope is in good company by allowing Provincial Council nominations from the floor and should vote “NO” to amending our canons for the following reasons: Three other sister ACNA Diocese (highlighted in yellow below and including two of our historic sister PEAR Diocese) allow the Diocesan Council and the Bishop to put forward a vetted list of Provincial Council and Assembly delegate candidates. And they further state, “Nominations from the floor shall be allowed.” In other words, these two options are not mutually exclusive. BOTH the DC / Bishop AND the Diocesan Synod should retain their current respective rights.

Multiple other dioceses, whose relevant canons are also listed below, elect their Provincial Council and Assembly delegates for five-year terms. DCOH only elects delegates for a one-year term, which limits the continuity and knowledge a delegate can have from one Provincial Council to the next. At the same time if the DC and Bishop are concerned an unvetted and suboptimal candidate could be nominated from the floor and elected, our current canons limit this person’s term to one year.

The Bishops’ rationale for supporting this change states in part, “At the parish level, allowing vestry nominations from the floor has consistently proven unwise.” However, the analogy between vestry

nominations from the floor of a congregational meeting and Provincial Council nominations from the floor of Synod breaks down upon closer examination. Delegates to Synod include all clergy, and laity, who are often vestry members themselves. In other words, these are many of the most knowledgeable and committed lay and clergy leaders in our diocese. In contrast a congregational annual meeting includes anyone on the membership rolls who chooses to attend. The bar for participation in Synod is far higher than the bar for participation in a congregational meeting. Therefore, our Synod delegates should retain commensurate decision-making authority and trust in their ability to discern.

Notably, we have a recent case study of nominations from the floor of Synod to Provincial Council. Last year, the Diocesan Council and the Bishop put forward their recommended slate of delegates to Provincial Council. Nominations from the floor were opened. Several candidates were nominated or self-nominated. Rev. Matthew Wilcoxen, a floor nominee not on the Diocesan Council list, was elected as our Provincial Council clergy delegate. By all accounts Rev. Wilcoxen did a phenomenal job representing the DCOH at Provincial Council. If this amendment passes, the Synod will lose the freedom to BOTH listen to the Diocesan Council and Bishop's recommendation AND nominate and select its own candidate, if desired.

Finally, Synod only gathers once a year. Much of the work of Synod happens over meals, in breakout workshops, in between meetings and during face-to-face fellowship and discussion, before Synod is ever called to order. As such nominations from the floor are often the fruit of listening, observation and discussion prior to Synod. This fruit will only grow as our College of Presbyters, Deacons and Laity mature. Eliminating nominations from the floor disempowers our Colleges at the precise time they are beginning to grow in ownership and discernment.

<u>Eight-Dioceses Comparison of Provincial Council Nomination Canons</u>

1. Diocese of Christ Our Hope (current canon): Canon 2, Section 10

Section 10. Diocesan Delegates to the Provincial Assembly and Provincial Council
The Synod of the Diocese shall elect the delegates and alternates to the Provincial Council and the Assembly from a list of nominees provided by the Diocesan Council and the Bishop. Nominations from the floor shall be allowed. The number of alternates shall be decided by the Diocesan Council and the Bishop. Vacancies shall be filled by elected alternates in descending order, according to number of votes received. The Diocesan Council may fill any remaining vacancies in the event that an insufficient number of elected alternates are able to serve.

2. Diocese of the Rocky Mountains: Canon 2, Section 11

Section 11. Diocesan Delegates to the Provincial Assembly and Provincial Council
The Synod of the Diocese shall elect the delegates to the Provincial Council and the Assembly from a list of nominees provided by the Council and the Bishop. Nominations from the floor shall be allowed. In the case of elected delegates unable to attend the Provincial Council or Assembly, the Diocesan Council may appoint alternates to fill the vacancies.

3. ADOC: Canon 2, Section 9

Section 9. Diocesan Delegates to the Provincial Assembly and Provincial Council
The Synod of the Diocese shall elect the delegates to the Provincial Council and the Assembly from a list of nominees provided by the Bishop with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee. Nominations from the floor shall be allowed.

4. Anglican Diocese of the South: Canon 6

Delegates of the Diocese to the Provincial Council and Assembly of the Anglican Church in North America The Synod of the Diocese shall elect the delegates to the Provincial Council and the Assembly of the Church from a list of nominees provided by the Standing Committee and the Bishop. Nominations from the floor shall be allowed. Provincial Council delegates shall hold office for five years. A Provincial Council delegate may serve a second consecutive term, but not a third consecutive term. The Standing Committee may provide that the Provincial delegates shall serve staggered terms, and may divide the Provincial Council delegates into appropriate groups of different terms to give effect to this provision. Each Provincial Council delegate shall be and remain while serving a communicant in good standing and a clergy or lay member of a Congregation or Mission of this Diocese. The Diocese shall make application to the Executive Committee of the Council of the Church for certification of the allowable number of its delegates to the Assembly. The Diocese shall report the names and contact information of its delegates, and such alternates as it deems prudent to name, not less than sixty (60) days prior to a meeting at the Assembly.

5. Diocese of the Mid Atlantic: Canon 2, Section 10

Section 10. Diocesan Delegates to the Provincial Assembly and Provincial Council
The Synod of the Diocese shall elect the delegates and alternates to the Provincial Assembly and Provincial Council from a list of nominees provided by the Clergy and Vestries of the Congregations and Missions and endorsed by the Standing Committee and the Bishop. Delegates elected for the Provincial Council shall be automatically included among the Provincial Assembly delegates. The number of alternates shall be decided by the Standing Committee and the Bishop. Vacancies shall be filled by elected alternates in descending order, according to number of votes received. The Standing Committee may fill any remaining vacancies in the event that an insufficient number of elected alternates are able to serve.

6. Anglican Diocese of South Carolina: Canon 25

Of Representatives to Provincial Council and Assembly
The Anglican Diocese of South Carolina, as a member of the Province of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), has the right to the election of members to represent it in the Provincial Council and Provincial Assembly of that body.

Section 1. At an Annual Convention of the Diocese, there shall be elected one member of the clergy and two members of the laity to serve as members of the Provincial Council of the ACNA. They shall

possess the same qualifications as members elected to the Standing Committee of the Diocese and shall be elected by a concurrent majority of both orders. The term of office shall be five years.

7. Churches for the Sake of Others: Canons 3, Section 7

Section 7. ACNA Annual Provincial Assembly Representatives to the ACNA Annual Provincial Assembly shall be selected by the Executive Leadership Team in accordance with Title I, Canon 2 of the ACNA Canons.

8. Gulf Atlantic Diocese: Canon 25

Provincial Council

The Synod shall elect one (1) clergy and two (2) lay persons to serve 5-year terms as members of the Provincial Council. Those nominated to serve in this role must be deeply knowledgeable of and active within the diocese and, as such, must be at the time of nomination an elected member of the Standing Committee or the Diocesan Council, or else have their nomination confirmed by majority vote of the Standing Committee.

Comments from the College of Deacons

No comments offered.

Comments from the College of Laity

The Constitution and Canons Committee offered: "Committee members expressed concerns that the Synod could perceive this as an encroachment upon its discretion and may reject it."
In response to this, we ask how the diocese can have more input on the selection, either through the colleges or other means?

Revisions from Submitter to Constitution and Canons Committee, Diocesan Council, and the Bishop (August 1, 2026 – 98 days before Synod)

One college member noted the lack of an apparent process should Synod decline to ratify the slate presented by the Diocesan Council and Bishop.

Response

Our Canons address this. First, delegates to Provincial Council and Assembly are not Provincial requirements, but a right afforded to our diocese. In the unlikely event that we did not have a slate of delegates attend these meetings, we would not be in breach of Provincial Canons. Second, should there be vacancies in these offices, this same Canon stipulates that "the Diocesan Council may fill any remaining vacancies in the event that an insufficient number of elected alternates are able to serve."

One college member argued for retaining nominations from the floor of the Synod on the basis that

eight different dioceses in the ACNA also do so.

Response
There are thirty dioceses in the ACNA. If it could be determined that a majority of ACNA dioceses include nominations from the floor of the Synod, that would be a more compelling argument.

Additional Response and Rationale from submitter
The amendment remains as originally proposed, with the addition of a clause regarding terms for delegates to Provincial Council and Assembly. These five-year terms are required by Provincial Canons and were also encouraged by one college member.

We intend to address the concerns raised. However, the overarching rationale for the amendment remains unchanged: removing this requirement simplifies our Synod meeting by eliminating a simple procedural matter from the Synod agenda, which matter can and should rightly be administered effectively by the Diocesan Council before arriving at Synod. The Synod still retains the final vote to elect these delegates.

It is also worth considering that most of us do not know each other well enough to determine fitness for membership in the Provincial Council and Assembly without any previous information. Thus, when voting on nominations from the floor we inevitably resort to simple factors like familiarity with the candidate, or simply assuming the best and voting "blindly."

That said, these are legitimate concerns and questions, which we propose to address as follows.

We are committed to creating a more robust and thorough nomination and vetting process for delegates to Provincial Council and Assembly, including standards for preferred candidates and previous service in local church and diocesan governance.

In addition, at our 2027 Synod it is our intent to propose an amendment to this Canon establishing what will essentially be a standing delegation to Provincial Council and Assembly, with staggered terms.

Based on Provincial Canons stipulations, our delegation would consist of:

- Our four bishops
- Eight clergy delegates: two primaries, and six alternates
- Eight lay delegates: two primaries, and six alternates

Attendance at each Provincial Council and Assembly would be determined by the staggering of the terms and seniority as well as availability.

Our desire is that these changes will actually strengthen our Provincial Council and Assembly delegations, providing a consistent and well-prepared body that represents our diocese well at Provincial governance meetings.

UPDATED PROPOSED LANGUAGEE

Section 10. Diocesan Delegates to the Provincial Assembly and Provincial Council
The Synod of the Diocese shall elect the delegates and alternates to the Provincial Council and the Assembly from a list of nominees provided by the Diocesan Council and the Bishop. ~~Nominations from the floor shall be allowed.~~ Provincial Council and Assembly delegates shall have a term of five years. The number of alternates shall be decided by the Diocesan Council and the Bishop. Vacancies shall be filled by elected alternates in descending order, according to number of votes received. The Diocesan Council may fill any remaining vacancies in the event that an insufficient number of elected alternates are able to serve.

Diocesan Council Governance Working Group Feedback to Submitter (September 1, 2026 – 67 days before Synod)
The Diocesan Council Governance Working Group had no comments or proposed revisions on this amendment.

***Further feedback from the Constitution and Canons Committee (October 5, 2026)**
Striking "floor nominations shall be allowed" leaves it unclear whether floor nominations are allowed. If the intent of the submitter is to not allow nominations from the floor, an improved wording would be "floor nominations shall not be allowed."

Final draft provided by Submitter to Constitution and Canons Committee, Diocesan Council, and Bishop (October 1, 2026 – 37 days before Synod)

FINAL PROPOSED LANGUAGE

Section 10. Diocesan Delegates to the Provincial Assembly and Provincial Council
The Synod of the Diocese shall elect the delegates and alternates to the Provincial Council and the Assembly from a list of nominees provided by the Diocesan Council and the Bishop. Nominations from the floor shall not be allowed. Provincial Council and Assembly delegates shall have a term of five years. The number of alternates shall be decided by the Diocesan Council and the Bishop. Vacancies shall be filled by elected alternates in descending order, according to number of votes received. The Diocesan Council may fill any remaining vacancies in the event that an insufficient

number of elected alternates are able to serve.