

## A BILL FOR A RULE TO AMEND RULE I – STANDING ORDERS (SPEAKING TO MOTIONS) 2022

### EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

#### Background

1. Standing Order 34(d) at present provides:
  - (d) Except in Committee of the whole Synod, no member shall be allowed to speak more than once on the same question, except in explanation.
2. The proper interpretation of this provision has been the subject of careful investigation and consideration. It has been accepted by the Standing Committee of General Synod that, where the question before the meeting is that a motion be agreed to, a member who speaks for the purposes of moving or seconding an amendment to that motion is speaking to the question that the motion be agreed to; in other words, a member who has already spoken cannot then move or second an amendment, and a member who has moved or seconded one amendment cannot move or second another, or speak later in the debate on the original motion.
3. Conversely, once an amendment has become the question before the meeting, any member is entitled to speak in the debate on *that* question, even if they have already spoken relation to the original motion (or some other amendment).
4. The proposed amendment has only two purposes:
  - (1) to put the interpretation set out above into plain text in the standing orders; and
  - (2) to impose shorter time limits on the those moving, seconding and debating amendments.
5. Clarity is much more readily achieved by rewriting and reordering Standing Order 34 as a whole than by trying to interpolate even more words into an already dated and complex provision.

#### Note on proposed text

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| Heading       | The current heading is "Length of speeches", but the standing order covers not only the length of speeches but who has the right to speak at all. The heading "Speaking to motions" is therefore proposed.                  |
| Paragraph (a) | corresponds to the current paragraph (a), except that it uses the word "may" rather than "shall", since the purpose is simply to state what time is permitted. In particular, the seconder is not required to speak at all. |
| Paragraph (b) | uses the text of the current paragraph (b), but adds (in (ii), the right of reply currently in paragraph (d).   |

- Paragraph (c) uses the first sentence of the current paragraph (d), but then adds a clear statement regarding how that is to be interpreted in the case of amendments, namely, that moving or seconding an amendment is to be taken to constitute speaking on the original motion.
- Paragraph (d) sets out the time limits for those speaking regarding an amendment (5 minutes for the mover, 4 minutes for everyone else), and also states in sub-paragraph (ii) that participating in the debate on an amendment does not constitute speaking on the original motion. Strictly speaking sub-paragraph (ii) is probably unnecessary, but including it may avoid future uncertainty.
- Paragraph (e) is the current paragraph (c), with minor editorial improvements.
- Paragraph (f) contains what is left of the current paragraph (d) that is not now included in the other paragraphs (namely, that there is no right of reply except in relation to the motions covered by paragraphs (a) and (b) of this Standing Order).