

# Overtures

## Guidelines

(from *Rules of Assembly Operations [RAO]*, Article XI)

### **An overture ordinarily is the request of a presbytery for action by the General Assembly upon a specific matter (11-4).**

- No overture will be considered by the General Assembly until it first has been presented to a presbytery. If approved by the presbytery, it will come before the Assembly as the overture of that court. An overture requested by an individual communicant, a teaching elder, or a session, but rejected by the presbytery, may be presented to the Assembly, provided the fact that it was rejected by the presbytery is clearly stated with the overture (11-10).
- Upon receipt the Stated Clerk shall refer all overtures requesting amendment of the *Book of Church Order* or the *Rules of Assembly Operations* to the Committee on Constitutional Business for its advice to the Overtures Committee (11-5).
- Upon receipt, the Stated Clerk shall forward all overtures concerning presbytery boundaries or a new presbytery to the permanent Committee on Mission to North America (11-5).
- Any overture, other than an overture proposing amendment to the Constitution (which shall be referred to the Committee on Constitutional Business for its advice to the Overtures Committee), having to do with the nature or responsibilities of a permanent Committee or Agency shall be referred by the Clerk to the appropriate permanent Committee or Agency or ad interim committee (11-5).
- All other overtures shall be referred to the Overtures Committee (11-5).
- An overture proposing amendment to the Constitution shall be referred only to the Overtures Committee for consideration and recommendation; such an overture, however, may be referred to other Committees of Commissioners, other permanent Committees or Agencies, or other ad interim committees for advice only, to the Overtures Committee (11-5).
- All communications or overtures which propose or request that General Assembly appoint a study committee for any purpose shall contain as a part of the request or proposal a statement of the maximum amount to be budgeted for the study committee (see 9-2) (11-11).
- No communication or overture shall be received that seeks to memorialize someone (11-12).
- All overtures shall be published in the *Commissioner Handbook* with reference for consideration indicated (11-5).

## Deadlines

- All overtures requiring references to the Committee on Constitutional Business shall be delivered by at least sixty (60) days prior to the opening of the General Assembly to the Stated Clerk in order to be referred to the committee. No overture requiring reference to the permanent Committee on Constitutional Business received later than sixty (60) days prior to the opening of the General Assembly by the Stated Clerk shall be referred or considered by the General Assembly convening in that year (11-6).
- All other overtures shall be delivered to the Stated Clerk at least ninety (90) days prior to the opening of the General Assembly in order to be included in the *Commissioner Handbook* for the next meeting of the General Assembly (11-7).
- Overtures received after the *Commissioner Handbook* is published, and at least one (1) month (31 days) prior to the opening of the General Assembly shall be reported to the Assembly by the Stated Clerk, together with reference (11-8).
- No overtures received by the Stated Clerk less than one month prior to the opening of the meeting of the General Assembly shall be referred to or considered by the General Assembly convening in that year. An overture proposed by a commissioner to the General Assembly during its proceedings shall be treated as new business (11-9; cf. 13-1, 13-2).