

1 **OVERTURE 22** from the Session of First Presbyterian Church (CCB, OC, SJC)  
2 Montgomery, Alabama  
3 “Amend *RAO* 8-4.h; 17-1; and 19-2 to Specify When Minority Reports Are  
4 Permitted”  
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6 [Note: This overture was submitted to Southeast Alabama Presbytery at its called meeting,  
7 March 7, 2023, by TE Reed DePace, commissioner to the Presbytery, on behalf of the Session  
8 of First Presbyterian Church, Montgomery, Alabama. It was rejected by the Presbytery at that  
9 same called meeting, March 7, 2023 (*RAO* 11-10).]  
10

11 **Whereas**, the 49th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) decided  
12 against allowing a minority report to be presented from members of the Committee on  
13 Constitutional Business (CCB) concerning CCB’s examination of the minutes of the  
14 Standing Judicial Commission (SJC) (*M49GA*, p. 32–33); and  
15

16 **Whereas**, the PCA has delegated tremendous power to the SJC and retained only CCB’s  
17 annual review of the SJC minutes as the sole and exclusive check to ensure that the  
18 SJC has not admitted any “prejudicial statements of fact” or committed any “actions  
19 which in substance appear not to conform to the Standards of the Presbyterian Church  
20 in America, or to be out of accord with the deliverances of the General Assembly”  
21 (*RAO* 14-11.d.(2); 17-1); and  
22

23 **Whereas**, permitting minority reports from CCB to be heard, and allowing a minority report  
24 to be moved as a substitute for the report of the committee, is a crucial procedure for  
25 the General Assembly to retain in order to make full use of the Assembly’s limited  
26 review of SJC proceedings; and  
27

28 **Whereas**, *RAO* 19-2, as written, requires that minorities from any committee should be given  
29 “the privilege of presenting the minority report and moving it as a substitute for the  
30 portion of the majority report affected,” according to the principles of interpretation  
31 outlined in *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* (12th ed.) 56:68.(8); and  
32

33 **Whereas**, nevertheless, the general provision about minority reports in *RAO* 19-2 could be  
34 amended to clarify that the rule pertains to all committees, except as specifically  
35 provided for elsewhere in the rules; and  
36

37 **Whereas**, while Committees of Commissioners, Overtures, and RPR already have specific  
38 prohibitions and limitations placed on minority reports from within those committees  
39 (*RAO* 14-6.h; 15-6.s; 15-8.g; 16-7.h), the Assembly should also specify that minority  
40 reports from the Nominating Committee should not be permitted, since any  
41 commissioner retains the right to make additional nominations during the General  
42 Assembly (*RAO* 8-4.i);

1 **Therefore be it resolved**, that the 50th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in  
2 America amend the *Rules of Assembly Operation* 8-4.h, 17-1, and 19-2 as follows  
3 (underlining for new wording; strike-through for deletions):  
4

5 **8-4.h.** The committee shall present its nominations to the Assembly through  
6 the *Commissioner Handbook* or *Supplement*. This presentation shall include a  
7 brief statement regarding each nominee. A minority report from the Nominating  
8 Committee shall not be permitted.  
9

10 **17-1** (para. 4) The minutes, but not the judicial cases, decisions, or reports, of  
11 the Standing Judicial Commission shall be reviewed annually by the Committee  
12 on Constitutional Business. The minutes shall be examined for conformity to  
13 the “Operating Manual for Standing Judicial Commission” and RAO 17,  
14 violations of which shall be reported as “exceptions” as defined in RAO 14-  
15 11.d.(2). With respect to this examination, the Committee on Constitutional  
16 Business shall report directly to the General Assembly. If exceptions are taken  
17 with respect to a case (whether by the report of the Committee on Constitutional  
18 Business, or by a minority report that the Assembly substitutes for the  
19 committee report; see RAO 19-2), the Assembly may find this a ground to direct  
20 the Standing Judicial Commission to retry the case.  
21

22 **19-2.** Each chairman shall lead the Assembly in a brief prayer before making  
23 his report.  
24

25 Except as otherwise specifically provided in these rules, when ~~When~~ a minority  
26 of ~~a~~ any committee wishes to present a minority report, the member reporting  
27 for the minority shall have the privilege of presenting the minority report and  
28 moving it as a substitute for the portion of the majority report affected.  
29

30 So that RAO 8-4.h, 17-1, and 19-2, as amended, would read:  
31

32 **8-4.h.** The committee shall present its nominations to the Assembly through  
33 the *Commissioner Handbook* or *Supplement*. This presentation shall include a  
34 brief statement regarding each nominee. A minority report from the Nominating  
35 Committee shall not be permitted.  
36

37 **17-1.** ...The minutes, but not the judicial cases, decisions, or reports, of the  
38 Standing Judicial Commission shall be reviewed annually by the Committee on  
39 Constitutional Business. The minutes shall be examined for conformity to the  
40 “Operating Manual for Standing Judicial Commission” and RAO 17, violations  
41 of which shall be reported as “exceptions” as defined in RAO 14-11.d.(2). With  
42 respect to this examination, the Committee on Constitutional Business shall  
43 report directly to the General Assembly. If exceptions are taken with respect to  
44 a case (whether by the report of the Committee on Constitutional Business, or

Overture 22, First Presbyterian Church Session, Montgomery, Alabama

1 by a minority report that the Assembly substitutes for the committee report; see  
2 RAO 19-2), the Assembly may find this a ground to direct the Standing Judicial  
3 Commission to retry the case.

4  
5 **19-2.** Each chairman shall lead the Assembly in a brief prayer before making  
6 his report.

7  
8 Except as otherwise specifically provided in these rules, when a minority of any  
9 committee wishes to present a minority report, the member reporting for the  
10 minority shall have the privilege of presenting the minority report and moving  
11 it as a substitute for the portion of the majority report affected.

12  
13 *Submitted to Southeast Alabama Presbytery at its called meeting, March 7, 2023, by TE Reed*  
14 *DePace, commissioner to Southeast Alabama Presbytery, on behalf of the Session of*  
15 *First Presbyterian Church, Montgomery, Alabama.*

16 *Rejected by Southeast Alabama Presbytery at its called meeting, March 7, 2023 (RAO 11-10).*  
17 *Attested by /s/ TE Kevin Corley, stated clerk, Southeast Alabama Presbytery.*

18 *Approved for submission to the Presbyterian Church in America's General Assembly by the*  
19 *Session of First Presbyterian Church of Montgomery, Alabama, at its stated meeting on*  
20 *March 16, 2023. Attested by /s/ RE Graeme DePace, Clerk of Session.*