

1 **OVERTURE 46** from the New York State Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
2 “Add *BCO* 29-5 on Public Allegations without Prior Reporting to the Court of  
3 Jurisdiction as Probable Violations of the Ninth Commandment”  
4

5 **Be it resolved** that the following paragraph be added to *BCO* 29 as 29-5 (underlining for  
6 additions):  
7

8 29-5. Any public statement made outside of a court of the Church, alleging an  
9 offense or unconstitutional action of a church, Presbytery, agency, committee, or  
10 individual member of the PCA that is not first reported to the court of original  
11 jurisdiction (ordinarily after the reporter has made a reasonable effort to contact  
12 the alleged errant entity or individual to potentially clear up the matter) shall be  
13 considered a probable violation of the ninth commandment and an offense under  
14 this chapter to be addressed by normal judicial process (*BCO* 31, etc.).  
15

16 Rationale:  
17

18 1. Unfortunately, we’ve gone pretty far astray in controlling our tongues and pens in public  
19 when compared to the duties and prohibitions of the 9<sup>th</sup> Commandment as described in  
20 *Westminster Larger Catechism* 144 and 145. The goal of this Overture is to try to bring us  
21 back.  
22

23 2. Before we take allegations to social media, podcasts, or blogs, we should first follow the  
24 proper channels we’ve agreed to in our Constitution for raising sins, errors, and constitutional  
25 violations. This is not to say that we can never speak publicly about sin and error, but it says  
26 that an effort to follow the proper procedure must be attempted first.  
27

28 Q. 144. What are the duties required in the ninth commandment?

29 A. The duties required in the ninth commandment are, the preserving and promoting  
30 of truth between man and man, and the good name of our neighbor, as well as our own:  
31 appearing and standing for the truth; and from the heart, sincerely, freely, clearly, and  
32 fully, speaking the truth, and only the truth, in matters of judgment and justice, and in  
33 all other things whatsoever; a charitable esteem of our neighbors; loving, desiring, and  
34 rejoicing in their good name; sorrowing for, and covering of their infirmities; freely  
35 acknowledging of their gifts and graces, defending their innocency; a ready receiving  
36 of good report, and unwillingness to admit of an evil report, concerning them;  
37 discouraging tale-bearers, flatterers, and slanderers; love and care of our own good  
38 name, and defending it when need requireth; keeping of lawful promises; study and  
39 practicing of whatsoever things are true, honest, lovely, and of good report.  
40

41 Q. 145. What are sins forbidden in the ninth commandment?

42 A. The sins forbidden in the ninth commandment are, all prejudicing the truth, and the  
43 good name of our neighbors, as well as our own, especially in public judicature; giving  
44 false evidence, suborning false witnesses; wittingly appearing and pleading for an evil  
45 cause; out-facing and overbearing the truth; passing unjust sentence; calling evil good,

1 and good evil; rewarding the wicked according to the work of the righteous, and the  
2 righteous according to the work of the wicked; forgery; concealing the truth; undue  
3 silence in a just cause, and holding our peace when iniquity calleth for a reproof from  
4 ourselves, or complaint to others; speaking the truth unseasonably, or maliciously to a  
5 wrong end, or perverting it to a wrong meaning, or in doubtful and equivocal  
6 expressions, to the prejudice of truth or justice; speaking untruth, lying, slandering,  
7 backbiting, detracting, tale-bearing, whispering, scoffing, reviling, rash, harsh, and  
8 partial censuring; misconstruing intentions, words, and actions; flattering, vain-  
9 glorious boasting, thinking or speaking too highly of ourselves or others; denying the  
10 gifts and graces of God; aggravating smaller faults; hiding, excusing, or extenuating  
11 of sins, when called to a free confession; unnecessary discovering of infirmities;  
12 raising false rumors, receiving and countenancing evil reports, and stopping our ears  
13 against just defence; evil suspicion; envying or grieving at the deserved credit of any,  
14 endeavoring or desiring to impair it, rejoicing in their disgrace and infamy; scornful  
15 contempt; fond admiration; breach of lawful promises; neglecting such things as are  
16 of good report; and practicing or not avoiding ourselves, or not hindering what we can  
17 in others, such things as procure an ill name.

18  
19  
20 *Adopted by the New York State Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 31, 2026*

21 *Attested by RE John VanVoorhis, Stated Clerk*