

1 **OVERTURE 7** from the Pacific Northwest Presbytery—**REVISED** (to CCB, OC)
2 “Amend *RAO* 16 Regarding RPR’s Reporting on Presbytery Records”
3

4 **Be it resolved** that the 53rd GA amend *RAO* 16-7 as shown below with conforming changes
5 made to *RAO* 16-3.e.(8) and 16-4.c.(3) (underlining for additions; ~~strikethrough~~ for
6 deletions):
7

8 **RAO Article XVI - Review of Presbytery Records**

9 **16-7. Guidelines for Reporting on Presbytery Records**

10 1. The Committee has authority:

- 11 a. To approve a Presbytery's minutes as being without any exceptions.
12 b. To determine an exception of form and inform the Presbytery of such.
13 c. To determine an exception of substance and cite the Presbytery to respond
14 to the Committee.
15 d. To determine whether a Presbytery's initial response is satisfactory, and if
16 not, cite the Presbytery to respond again to the Committee.
17 e. To recommend to the Assembly that a second Presbytery response be judged
18 unsatisfactory (*RAO* 16-10.c).
19 f. To recommend to the Assembly whether the provisions of *OMSJC* 15
20 should be initiated in a *BCO* 40-5 matter.

21 2. The report of the committee shall be concise. It shall include the following:

- 22 a. A list of the minutes, by presbyteries, received by the committee.
23 b. A list of the presbyteries which have not submitted minutes, if any.
24 c. ~~A recommendation concerning the minutes of each presbytery, which The~~
25 report on each Presbytery, which shall include:
26 1) Minutes approved without exception;
27 2) Minutes approved with exceptions of form, which shall be reported
28 directly to the presbytery;
29 3) Minutes approved with exceptions of substance, which shall ~~be~~
30 ~~presented to the General Assembly, which presentation shall include~~
31 citation of any relevant scriptural and/or constitutional references, and
32 provide the committee’s rationale for finding the exception of substance;
33 4) Responses to (a) exceptions of previous ~~Assemblies Committees~~, if any,
34 or (b) responses to findings of unsatisfactory responses by previous
35 ~~Committees or Assembly, if any;~~
36 ~~5) Recommendations concerning all responses to exceptions taken by~~
37 ~~previous Assemblies that have not been disposed of suitably.~~
38 d. Any other recommendation to the Assembly.
39 e. A statement of the division of the vote on each.
40 f. Any recommendation which may affect the budget of the Assembly shall be
41 referred to the Committee of Commissioners on Administrative Committee.
42 g. A list of members present.
43 h. Minority Reports
44 1) With respect to any recommendation to the Assembly under 1.e. or 1.f.
45 above, prior to a recess or adjournment of the Review of Presbytery

1 Records Committee following the adoption of said recommendation,
2 any member of the committee may indicate an intention to file a
3 minority report by giving notice to the chairman.

- 4 2) The minority report, from at least six (6) members of the committee,
5 must be filed with the chairman of the committee and the office of the
6 Stated Clerk of General Assembly not more than seven (7) days after
7 the adjournment of the RPR Committee meeting.

- 8
9 16-3.e 9) Minutes of executive sessions are not exempt from the general
10 requirement that presbytery's actions shall be recorded in the
11 presbytery's minutes and that these minutes (even if kept in a separate
12 section on executive sessions) shall be submitted to the General
13 Assembly for review (*BCO* 13-11; 14-6.c; 40-1). Presbytery may ask
14 that the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records deal with these
15 minutes confidentially. ~~However, any exceptions to these minutes must
16 be submitted to the General Assembly through the normal procedures.~~

- 17
18 16-4.c. 3) [Presbytery shall submit] A letter stating Presbytery's response to the
19 ~~Assembly~~ Committee concerning disposition of any exceptions of
20 substance taken by the past ~~Assembly~~ Committee.

21
22 So that the amended paragraphs will read as follows:

23
24 **RAO Article XVI - Review of Presbytery Records**

25 **16-7. Guidelines for Reporting on Presbytery Records**

- 26 1. The Committee has authority:
27 a. To approve a Presbytery's minutes as being without any exceptions.
28 b. To determine an exception of form and inform the Presbytery of such.
29 c. To determine an exception of substance and cite the Presbytery to respond
30 to the Committee.
31 d. To determine whether a Presbytery's initial response is satisfactory, and if
32 not, cite the Presbytery to respond again to the Committee.
33 e. To recommend to the Assembly that a second Presbytery response be judged
34 unsatisfactory (*RAO* 16-10.c).
35 f. To recommend to the Assembly whether the provisions of *OMSJC* 15
36 should be initiated in a *BCO* 40-5 matter.
37 2. The report of the committee shall be concise. It shall include the following:
38 a. A list of the minutes, by presbyteries, received by the committee.
39 b. A list of the presbyteries which have not submitted minutes, if any.
40 c. The report on each Presbytery, which shall include:
41 1) Minutes approved without exception;
42 2) Minutes approved with exceptions of form, which shall be reported
43 directly to the presbytery;

- 1 3) Minutes approved with exceptions of substance, which shall include
2 citation of any relevant scriptural and/or constitutional references, and
3 provide the committee’s rationale for finding the exception of substance;
4 4) Responses to exceptions of previous Committees, if any;
5 d. Any other recommendation to the Assembly.
6 e. A statement of the division of the vote on each.
7 f. Any recommendation which may affect the budget of the Assembly shall be
8 referred to the Committee of Commissioners on Administrative Committee.
9 g. A list of members present.
10 h. Minority Reports
11 1) With respect to any recommendation to the Assembly under 1.e. or 1.f.
12 above, prior to a recess or adjournment of the Review of Presbytery
13 Records Committee following the adoption of said recommendation,
14 any member of the committee may indicate an intention to file a
15 minority report by giving notice to the chairman.
16 2) The minority report, from at least six (6) members of the committee,
17 must be filed with the chairman of the committee and the office of the
18 Stated Clerk of General Assembly not more than seven (7) days after
19 the adjournment of the RPR Committee meeting.
20
21 16-3.e 9) Minutes of executive sessions are not exempt from the general
22 requirement that presbytery’s actions shall be recorded in the
23 presbytery’s minutes and that these minutes (even if kept in a separate
24 section on executive sessions) shall be submitted to the General
25 Assembly for review (*BCO* 13-11; 14-6.c; 40-1). Presbytery may ask
26 that the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records deal with these
27 minutes confidentially.
28
29 16-4.c. 3) A letter stating Presbytery’s response to the Committee concerning
30 disposition of any exceptions of substance taken by the past Committee.
31

32 **Rationale**

- 33
34 1. A deliberative Assembly with over 2,000 commissioners cannot reasonably consider 500
35 recommendations contained in a 215-page RPR Report that is posted online 12 days before
36 the Assembly convenes. (ShareFile indicates it was uploaded this year on 6/12/25.)
37
38 2. Last year, RPR's Report recommended 410 exception-of-substance citations for 73
39 Presbyteries, and 90 recommendations to find 32 Presbyteries' first responses
40 Unsatisfactory. This required 105 minutes of GA floor time.
41 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r345Hdcojo4>.
42
43 3. In addition to the sheer number of recommendations, any of which can be removed from
44 an omnibus motion at the request of a single individual—even if the RPR vote was
45 unanimous. Theoretically, the Chattanooga GA could have had 10 minutes of debate on all

1 400+ exception of substance recommendations. Last year, the 60+ member RPR committee
2 was unanimous in its overall vote on 74 Presbyteries.

- 3
- 4 4. It's important to remember that *RAO* 16-8 stipulates: "Neither the report of the committee
5 nor the General Assembly's approval or disapproval of this report establishes doctrinal
6 precedent."
7
- 8 5. This amendment does not decrease RPR authority, nor does it increase it much. The most
9 important issue has been and will remain whether a presbytery's *second* response is
10 Satisfactory. And this would not delay any decision on such. After this change, when RPR
11 asks presbytery to respond to an exception of substance citation, it is asking as a committee,
12 and not as the GA, per se. But the presbytery is still required by the *RAO* to respond to the
13 RPR Committee.
14
- 15 6. RPR does not need to be a commission of the Assembly. If any presbytery declines to
16 respond to the RPR Committee, it will eventually come before the GA as an RPR
17 recommendation to find the presbytery's second non-response Unsatisfactory. And RPR
18 would also have *RAO* authority to judge a presbytery's minutes to be "without [any]
19 exception." That's essentially what's currently done, as it is extremely rare to have anyone
20 split that RPR recommendation out of omnibus, i.e., to debate the *commendation* of a
21 presbytery.
22
- 23 7. Here's how this would affect the RPR Report to the Louisville GA. The 2026 RPR would
24 prepare its report in the same format as 2025 (with hundreds of recommendations). But if
25 this *RAO* change is enacted by the Louisville GA on Tuesday night, all those RPR
26 recommendations would become approved—by RPR—under the newly adopted provision,
27 except any that recommend the GA find a Presbytery's second response Unsatisfactory.
28

29 To illustrate, if this proposed amendment had been in place in Chattanooga, there would
30 have been no RPR recommendation that came to the floor, but the full RPR Report would
31 have recorded all those 500 RPR actions.
32

33 Finally, just in case this amendment is not enacted, the Louisville GA docket will need to
34 initially provide the same amount of time for the RPR Report as in the past. But if it is
35 approved and enacted on Tuesday night, June 23, 2026, the amount of RPR docket time
36 needed on the Louisville Docket would decrease substantially.
37

38

39 *Approved at Pacific Northwest Presbytery's Stated Meeting on October 10, 2025.*
40 *PNW appointed an Overtures Commission with authority to revise/refile if deemed necessary.*
41 *Attested to by: TE Jerid Krulish, Clerk, Pacific NW Presbytery*
42 *Revision approved by a PNW Overtures Commission with authority to do so on April 9,*
43 *2026.*
44