

Dear SPJ Delegate:

The Press Club of Long Island plans to propose an amendment to the proposed bylaws changes, which will be considered by delegates in Anaheim. This information is being provided to you in advance of the meeting so that we may expedite discussion.

In summary, the PCLI proposal would require the new board to fill one of its available appointments with a sitting Regional Coordinator (if one is not chosen through the election process).

The SPJ Board of Directors (and Governance Task Force) is not recommending this amendment. It is recommending the proposed bylaws that was shared with chapters in July ([which can be found here](#)). Rather, the Press Club of Long Island intends to exercise its right to propose an amendment from the floor during the closing business meeting.

When the chapter proposes this amendment, delegates will be asked to vote whether it should be included in the proposed bylaws changes. A no vote would mean the delegates would be voting on the original board recommendation. A yes vote means the delegates would be voting on the original board recommendation WITH the addition of the PCLI proposal.

If you have any questions, please contact Task Force Committee members [Irwin Gratz](#), [Patti Gallagher Newberry](#) or [Joe Skeel](#). Questions for the PCLI chapter can be directed to [Bill Bleyer](#).

LONG ISLAND CHAPTER'S PROPOSED AMENDMENT (In underlined italics below)

Article Seven

Board of Directors

Section One. The board of directors shall be composed of the national officers, four directors to be elected at large to serve staggered terms of two years, and two directors, who may be members or non-members of the Society, appointed by vote of the officers and elected at-large directors to serve terms of one year, or until their successors have been appointed. In any year during which no student or academic institution faculty member is serving as an officer or at-large director the officers and at-large directors shall appoint a student or faculty member to serve as an appointed director. *And in any year during which no regional coordinator is serving as an at-large director, the regional coordinators shall select one of the regional coordinators to serve as an appointed director.*

#### **Rationale**

The current proposal guarantees that there would be an academic voice on the national board. If one of the at-large positions is not held by an academic, then the national board would be required to give one of its two appointed seats to an academic. There is no reason why a similar arrangement cannot be made for a regional coordinator.

There needs to be at least one voting regional voice on the national board so that the regional and chapter concerns don't get ignored.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT LONG ISLAND CHAPTER'S PROPOSED AMENDMENT

***If an at-large board seat is dedicated to a regional coordinator elected by the other coordinators, won't other constituencies want a dedicated board seat as well?***

Highly unlikely. The majority of SPJ members are members of chapters, both pro and student, so they would be represented by the regional coordinator board member we have proposed. The other large consistency, academics, is already getting a guaranteed board seat under the board's revamping proposal. There's really no other group of any size that could reasonably ask for a board representative.

*Can we point to issues where having a regional/chapter voice on the board was crucial?*

There have been no recent occurrences where the chapters needed a direct or indirect regional voice. But there have been issues in the past that prove the need for a chapter/regional voice through a regional coordinator. In the late 1980s, before most of those involved now in SPJ governance were involved, the board proposed a steep membership dues increase over the vociferous objections of the chapters, which feared a large drop in membership. The board's position was basically "we know what is best for SPJ and the chapters." This led to a near- revolt by the chapters at the Chicago convention and several of the "rebels" getting on the board to force the board to become more responsive to the chapters and provide more interaction before taking action. Although the board and leaderships has been more open to feedback and collaboration in recent years, there's no guarantee that this will always be the case in the future. So it is important that the regional coordinators—and by extension the chapters—have a seat at the board table so their concerns cannot be ignored.

Dedicating one at-large seat to a regional representative still leaves plenty of opportunity for the board to select individuals with specific expertise to fill the other at-large seats.