



## Resolution 04-04-25

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**SUBJECT:**                   **To Establish a Task Force to Consider Consolidation of Southern and Mid-South Districts**

(Reference Overture 04-04-25 printed on page 198-200)

**WHEREAS,**               Synod Bylaw 4.1.1.3 States:

4.1.1.3 The Synod decides when and whether a district shall be formed, divided, realigned, or merged with another or other districts, or dissolved; determines the boundaries of a district; and approves the name of a district.

(a) A proposal calling for the formation, division, realignment, merger, or dissolution of a district or districts may be initiated by a national convention of the Synod or the Board of Directors of the Synod.

(b) Such proposals shall

(1) be submitted to the President at least six months prior to a convention of the Synod;

(2) be produced in consultation with the Department of Rosters, Statistics, and Research Services;

(3) include a substantiated description of the nonviable aspects of the current district(s) on the basis of general principles of viability adopted from time to time by conventions of the Synod, and shall specify the problems or factors which make the adoption of the proposal advisable or necessary;

(4) provide evidence that the proposed change is the best of the options available;

(5) provide a specific and realistic development plan for the proposed district(s), including detailed proposals for staff personnel and financial operations;



(6) be the object of an evaluation prepared by the Board of Directors of the Synod and submitted to the convention; and

**WHEREAS,**

The Synod in convention in 2013 passed a revised list of “General Principles for Judging the Viability of a District” in resolution 7-4a which states:

1. Provide resources for the district president to carry out ecclesiastical supervision as defined in the synod’s Constitution (Art. XII) and Bylaws (Bylaw 1.2.1 [g]) in a reasonable and timely manner.
2. Provide resources for the district president in carrying out the minimum requirements for official visits to each of the member congregations as outlined in Bylaws 4.4.4ff., including coming to the pastors and member congregations at least once every three years as a brotherly adviser, “reminding them of the joy of serving in the mission and ministry of the church.”
3. Provide appropriate guidance and support to member congregations for participating in the mission God has given to the Church, including how that is carried out in the various missions and ministries of the church.
4. Provide encouragement and needed congregational services (e.g., stewardship, conflict resolution, crisis counseling, financial counseling, calling process, collaborative efforts, networking, nourishment, and help with evangelistic outreach, etc.) to member congregations, and provide advice and counsel to member congregations struggling to carry out their core functions.
5. Adapt to new circumstances and meet changing needs related to the mission and ministry of the church.
6. Meet its financial responsibilities and obligations and receive sufficient financial resources from its membership to (i) support the mission and ministry of the church in the district, and (ii) financially assist the mission and ministry of the Synod.
7. Find itself to be of a size and configuration to be effective, efficient, and capable of serving all who make up its constituency?
8. Provide adequate assistance and support to allow the district president to carry out the functions and obligations of the office of district president as



set forth in the Bylaws.; and

- WHEREAS,** The presidents and staff of the Mid-South District and the Southern District have served faithfully. With an increasing workload and reduced staff and resources; and
- WHEREAS,** A study conducted by a task force with the specific assignment of the board of directors of synod to examine the pros and cons of a possible merger of The Mid-South and Southern Districts of the LCMS would be beneficial in deciding how best to go forward in service to the congregation of both districts: and
- WHEREAS.** The economic condition of the congregations, Districts, and agencies in the Southern and Mid-South District have become lessened over the past decades; and
- WHEREAS,** The number of churches that are able to continue to function as independently, self-supporting congregations is diminishing, and
- WHEREAS,** The commitment from congregations to support the work of the Mid-South and Southern Districts is less than the operating revenue needed to continue providing the required services to the Districts' workers, congregations, schools, and agencies need with minimal staffing. Therefore, be it
- RESOLVED,** That Board of Directors of the Mid-South District and Southern District appoint representatives from their respective districts, and along with necessary Synod personnel, determine the feasibility of, pros and cons, and changes that would be needed for a consolidation of the districts and report their finding to the respective Board of Directors at least one year prior to the 2028 District Conventions; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That during the next triennium, each district evaluate itself through its officers, board of directors, and congregations of the district in light of the general principles, and provide that evaluation as part of the district president's report to the next 70<sup>th</sup> Regular Convention of the Missouri Synod; and be it finally
- RESOLVED,** To thank district presidents, past and present, for their faithful and diligent service as ecclesiastical supervisors, and to pray that their service may continue to flourish among us; and be it finally



**RESOLVED,**

That the Mid-South District and Southern District submit this memorial to the 2029 convention of the Synod.

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Rev. Kevin Conger

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Mathew Pitsch