



Thursday, June 10, 2021

Proposals to Pacific Mountain Regional Council

Please submit by: June 10th, 2021

Proposals to Pacific Mountain Regional Council

We recognize that individual members, Communities of Faith, Covenantal Ministries, Regional Committees/Councils/Groups, and Regional Council Members may want The Pacific Mountain Regional Council or Executive to take action on a specific issue or concern. You might have something to share for education, or desire a conversation about a specific topic. You might want to have some education and conversation about a topic leading towards taking action. A “proposal” is the formal request for any of these.

The Manual (2021), Section F, describes in detail how a proposal may be submitted. The template below also provides a way for creating a proposal. Proposals can be submitted before the Regional Council meeting, to be circulated in the Regional meeting resource, or a proposal can be submitted to the chairperson of the Business Committee before the scheduled close of submission of new business during our Regional Meeting. See the agenda for the specific close of business time. Any proposals received after the deadline will be forwarded directly to the PMRC Executive.

Who Can Make a Proposal?

- **Proposals by Member(s) of a Community of Faith** (F.1.2.1). Any Full-member of The United Church of Canada through their local Community of Faith Governing Body. The governing body has several options to choose from when evaluating a proposal. (See section F.1.2.1 and F.1.3.1)
- **Proposals by Others** (See section F.1.2.2)
 - A proposal may also be started by:
 - a member of the Regional Council; (F.1.3.3)
 - a committee or other church body of the Council; (F.1.3.4) or
 - the Regional Council. (F.1.3.2)

How do I/we craft a proposal?

We are asking you to submit your proposal in a very focused way.

- **Name the solution your proposing up front.** This way we can read the rest of the proposal with the solution in mind.
- **Name the type of proposal:**
 - Education – the major intention is to educate the Regional Council about something important.
 - Conversation – the major intention is for the Regional Council to discuss a question or concern.
 - Decision – the desire is that a decision will be made to take action. You must have a clear outcome or solution as part of a decision proposal including financial implications.

- **Why is this issue important?** Provide the background needed to consider the proposal in two (2) pages or less. What's the issue or challenge or gap being identified? Why is that the case? What ENDS Policy supports the proposal? Is there a need for a revised or new ENDS Policy?
- **What might the cost be?** Estimate the potential cost. Everything we do has a cost. It might be time from staff and volunteers. It might be budgetary. Being mindful of the cost is an important part of every proposal.
- **Is there a required format for a proposal?** Yes, to help people engage the topic as easy as possible all proposals must use the found below.

Things to keep in mind:

The Policy Committee of the Executive will be available at the General Meeting to help ensure your proposal is clear and focused enough to achieve the good conversations the meeting wants to have.

In order to make the best use of the meeting's time, The Policy Committee may also group together Proposals that deal with the same issue or topic, have the same purpose, or desired outcome. The Committee may generate an Omnibus Proposal that address the matter raised.

Proposals from individual community of faith members or governance groups must follow the steps in F.3.1.1 and include a copy of the motion to transmit with the proposal.

Name of person submitting this proposal

Robert Hart

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Proposal Name

Jubilee in a Land Now Their Own: forgiveness of refugee travel debt

Source

Outreach, Peace and Justice Committee

Community of Faith

Knox United, Terrace

Type of Proposal

For Decision (I want The Region to make a decision or take an action)

Proposal: What's the solution to the issue/challenge/gap identified?

Proposal

- Develop, as part of its justice ministry, a strategy and resource within PMRC to address the \$10,000 debt inequity related to refugee travel loans.
- Request that General Council develop a strategy and create a network of communities across the denomination engaging in this area ministry.
- Request the Canadian gov't change its policy regarding billing UCC-sponsored refugees up to \$10,000 for the travel expenses of being moved from refugee camps to Canada as Permanent Residents.

Background: What information do you think people need to have in order to understand the issue and how your proposal addresses it. Is there support or a gap in existing ENDS Policies? Please limit information to 1000 words.

Background

Of the approximate 180 United Churches in BC, over a hundred have been involved in the sponsorship of

refugees.

While few refugee families object to repaying their costs to get to Canada and while the government is quite humane and reasonable about how they collect the money, two things stand out from a social justice point of view. First, poor/powerless people from another country/culture are hardly likely to object but are also not in a position to appreciate the long-term needs they will face in a high-cost country. Secondly, social policy is at its most effective when it allows people to choose how they would adapt their infinitely varied strengths to the infinitely varied circumstances of their need.

Translated, refugee families will find all sorts of good uses for the money that will strengthen their adaptation and success in this country and this would be a far better use of it than its minuscule effect on government cash flow.

Methods: (note that this is an example of one approach that will be developed further as part of the project)

a) Create a model letter that participating churches then adapt to their experience.

b) Ask each church group who has sponsored a refugee family, (or has an interest in the project's aims), to adapt the model letter to their experience, send it to appropriate government and media, meet with their MP and follow up as appropriate, involving both their church membership and the refugee family with whom they worked.

This approach allows one well-researched letter to go a long way, creating maximum effect for minimum effort. Used by participating churches simultaneously, letters describing different refugee experiences but asking for the same policy response will be sent to government within a focussed time frame and then followed up at the regional and national level.

Each refugee group will consider whether and how they involve their church community, for example, asking them to simultaneously send in support letters, increasing member involvement and the weight of witness.

c) Each participating church will be asked to share its experience with the others so that we can learn from one another and build solidarity within the Region.

d) To strengthen the case made to government, the project will design a short, participative research questionnaire to gather more information on what family needs have gone unmet because of the requirement to repay travel costs to the government.

Estimated Cost: If this is a proposal for decision, what is your best estimate implementing this proposal might cost financial or in time and effort?

Estimated Cost

This project runs on the volunteer time donated by constituent groups who sponsored refugee families. Close coordination with regional and national work is a given. This project falls within existing staffing priorities.

Community of Faith (if applicable)

Concurrence (agree with proposal)

Confirmation

I am ready to submit this proposal

Pease submit by: June 10, 2021