

SPONSOR(S): Steering Committee

CONTACT: Gloria Mattera

SUBJECT/TITLE: Amendment - Convention Rules, in response to COVID-19

TYPE OF PROPOSAL, EXPECTED APPROVAL THRESHOLD: (as per [6-2](#)):
Amendment to Presidential Nominating Convention Rules, 2/3 threshold

REQUESTED PROPOSAL DECISION-MAKING TIMELINE: three weeks

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE: Owing to the COVID-19 crisis, the Green Party of the United States (GPUS) has decided to hold a virtual presidential nominating convention on July 11, 2020 - instead of a face-to-face convention as originally conceived. This will necessitate doing some practical things differently, including with the credentialing and voting processes; and this will necessitate one-time amendments to the Convention Rules in a few places to allow it.

The goal with these proposed amendments is to maintain how democracy is practiced in the GPUS, and limit changes to operations and timelines, with a specific focus on noon Eastern Time on Thursday, July 9 as the timing for a variety of deadlines, in order to give the convention organizers time to organize everything based upon this information to be ready for Convention Day on July 11. These amendments will sunset after the convention.

Additionally there are a few places in the Convention Rules where other clean-up changes need to be made, including removing a conflict between different GPUS rules documents regarding the number of alternates that caucuses are allotted, and removing various outdated text referring to past years.

The rationale behind all of these proposed changes follows:

Part I: Proxies - The traditional reason to provide for proxy voting at in-person GPUS Presidential Nominating Conventions, has been so that states and caucuses that can not financially afford to send a full delegation to the convention in order to cast all of its votes, can send a smaller number and thus not suffer a financial penalty in order to cast most or all of its allotted votes. Under existing Convention Rules, a delegate may cast a proxy vote in place of not more than one absent Delegate who is credentialed to participate in the Convention, as long as the total number of votes cast for that state does not exceed its allotted total.

With a move to a virtual convention, there will be no travel and lodging costs, and delegates or alternates will simply need to access a voting page on Convention Day to cast their convention votes. Therefore there is every expectation that every state party and caucus that wishes to send a full delegation will be able to do so, obviating the need to provide for proxy voting.

Additionally, to accommodate proxy voting in a virtual convention would present unnecessary complications, since the voting will be on-line instead of in-person. When the convention is held in-person, and a state party is allowed (for example) eight votes, the state party simply needs to receive credentials for at least four delegates (or alternate) who would then need to be present on the convention floor to cast those eight votes. But since the vote will be on-line, if proxies were to be used, instead of one person getting a password to cast a single vote, now one person would have to get two passwords (if it was a two-for-one proxy). If it was a case where it wasn't exactly two-for-one proxy, but say five delegates casting eight votes, that creates the issue of who is getting two votes on the voting page and who not, and if the presidential nomination goes to a second round, the decision of who is getting to cast the multiple votes could make a difference in the final result.

For all these reasons, proxy voting would be eliminated on a one-time basis with this proposal.

Part II: Alternates, timing - The traditional reason to provide for alternates at in-person GPUS Presidential Nominating Conventions, has been so that in the event that a delegate can not attend who was already credentialed to attend, that another member of their state party or caucus can attend in their place (as a credentialed alternate.)

With a virtual convention there is less expectation of the need for alternates; but it may still be possible that someone credentialed as a delegate may experience an unforeseen change of circumstances beforehand, and not be available on Convention Day Saturday, July 11.

Under existing Convention Rules at an in-person convention, substitution of an alternate for a delegate can literally happen in real time at the credentials table outside of the convention hall. During a virtual convention, it will not be possible for this to happen in real time for a variety of logistical and staffing reasons, including because it would involve changing out on the convention voting page who is entered in as a voting delegate and then providing them new passwords without any guarantee that they will receive them, all while GPUS staff and contractors will be busy running the virtual convention live at the same time.

In order to provide for alternates, but at the same address the logistical limitations of an on-line convention, alternates will be allowed to substitute for delegates as long as their state party or caucus reports to the Credentials Committee (at delapp@gp.org) the name of the credentialed alternate and which delegate they will be substituting for no later than noon Eastern Time on Thursday, July 9, and preferably before.

Part III: Alternates, correct number - Existing Convention Rules 3-1.1 state that a caucus is entitled to two delegates. Existing Convention Rules 3-1.2 state that a caucus is entitled to as many alternates as it has delegates.

National Committee proposal #871 created two conflicts with these rules, by placing conflicting numbers of delegates and alternates for caucuses in the wrong place in GPUS rules documents, in Article VIII of the Rules and Procedures, rather than amending the Convention Rules.

Proposal #871 stated that caucuses would receive four convention delegates, not twos, creating a conflict with 3-1.1. But Proposal #871 also stated that even if caucuses have four delegates, they are only entitled to two alternates, creating a conflict with 3-1.2, which says that if caucuses get four delegates, they would be allotted an equal number of alternates.

Removing this conflict is important so that there is no dispute over how many delegates or alternates a caucus is entitled to, so that each caucus can designate their correct number. And if there was a dispute over how many delegates and/or alternates a caucus is entitled to, that could lead to a challenge in the credentialing process based upon this dispute, taking up scarce valuable time of the Credentials Committee on an otherwise avoidable dispute.

To address this, this proposal amends the Convention Rules to provide for four delegates for caucuses, and thus four alternates. At the time time, it removes the incorrectly placed language in the Rules and Procedures that placed the number of convention delegates there instead in the Convention Rules, and the language that would have limited caucuses to only half of their allotted delegates instead of the full number as provided for in the Convention Rules.

Finally the terms 'delegate(s)' and 'alternate(s)' appear differently throughout the Convention Rules - sometimes with the first letter capitalized, sometimes not, and perhaps most potentially confusingly, sometimes 'alternate' appears as 'delegate-alternate'. To remove any potential for confusion about the meaning of these terms, in all instances the Convention Rules shall refer to Delegate(s) or Alternate(s), with the first letter capitalized, and delegate-alternate shall be replaced by Alternate.

Part IV: Credentialing

Much of the granting of physical credentials under existing Convention Rules 4-6 happens in person at the convention. This proposal would amend 4-6 on a one time basis to provide for that part of the credentialing process to happen virtually, and that some of the technical specifics of how to do that will be worked out by GPUS Committees, staff and contractors.

Part V: Credentialing Challenge Process

The process for credentials challenges is described in great detail with specific timelines in the existing Convention Rules, with pre-convention processes and timelines that won't be feasible in a virtual convention. This proposal would add language providing for flexibility the processes and timelines for credential challenges under Convention Rules 4-7 through 4-14; where depending upon how many challenges are actually filed the Credentials Committee will report a timeline and teleconference process to the involved parties and to the Steering Committee, with the objective that all credentialing challenges are ruled upon by the Credentials Committee by midnight Eastern Time, Thursday evening, July 2.

Part VI: Not Require Hard Copy of Delegate Application

Owing to issues about increased health risk by requiring state parties and caucuses to mail hard copies of their Delegate Applications, and for the Credentials Committee secretary to receive potentially contaminated mail, 4-3.2 will be amended on a one time basis to allow that an electronic image will be sufficient of the signature of state party or caucus officers certifying the authenticity of the minutes of their state party convention, or other body authorized to name the delegation, which documents the delegates' selection.

Part VII: Responsibilities of State Delegation Reporters

Under current Convention Rules, the role of the State Delegation Reporter revolves around the Reporter making a literal report from the floor of the votes of their delegation, with the member of the delegation physically there with the Reporter, and to coordinate such efforts, existing Convention Rules require that the Reporter attend a meeting with Convention organizers 24 hours beforehand to go over logistics. In a virtual convention, there will be special challenges in making these reports to coordinate this process, so one a one time basis, this rule will state that such meetings with Reporters can be called at least ten days in advance of the Convention, to give more time to ensure needed logistical coordination.

Part VIII: Platform Approval Process

The process for approval of the platform is described in the Convention Rules by reference to other GPUS rules documents. However, the Convention Rules reference the wrong section of GPUS Bylaws, as a result of the bylaws being amended since the Convention Rules were passed, but this not being reflected in the corresponding language in the Convention Rules. Additionally there is reference an outdated Platform Committee document from 2004, instead of a new section in the GPUS Rules and Procedures passed via Proposal #953 in 2019 year to replace it. Additionally the Convention Rules reference approving the 2008 platform, when it should simply reference approval the platform presented that year. This proposal would correct all of these errors in the Convention Rules so that the correct platform approval process is referenced.

Then there is virtual convention timing. GPUS Rules and Procedures 12-1.7 Presidential Nominating Convention states “The Platform Committee will schedule platform hearings in a workshop format at least a day before the final vote, for discussions, questions, and answers concerning changes and additions to the platform.” This proposal would on a one-time basis, change that to at least two days before the final vote

Finally the Convention Rules 5-8.2(b) reference processes for delegates to speak to the platform and to make motions from the floor to strike a provision of the platform via processes and timelines that won't be feasible in a virtual convention. This proposal would amend 5-8.2(b) on a one time basis to provide for that part of the platform process to happen virtually, and that some of the technical specifics of how to do that will be worked out by GPUS Committees, staff and contractors.

Part IX: Presidential Candidate Speeches

The process for Presidential Candidate Speeches is described in the Convention Rules 5-9 with processes and timelines that are not feasible in a virtual convention. This proposal would amend 5-9 on a one time basis to provide for that part of the credentialing process to happen virtually, and that some of the technical specifics of how to do that will be worked out by GPUS Committees, staff and contractors.

Part X: Section 5-10 Nominating a Presidential Candidate

The process for Nominating a Presidential Candidate is described in the Convention Rules 5-10 with processes and timelines that won't be feasible in a virtual convention. This proposal would amend 5-10 on a one time basis to

provide for that part of the credentialing process to happen virtually, where electronic petitions would need to be submitted to the Election Administrator by noon Eastern Time on Thursday, July 9, and that some of the technical specifics of how to do that will be worked out by GPUS Committees, staff and contractors.

Part XI: Section 5-11 Nominating a Vice Presidential Candidate

The process for Nominating a Vice Presidential Candidate is described in the Convention Rules 5-11 calls for “a show of raised hands by the delegates to approve the nomination of the proposed Vice Presidential candidate.” This proposal would amend 5-11 on a one time basis to provide for that part of the credentialing process to happen virtually, and that some of the technical specifics of how to do that will be worked out by GPUS Committees, staff and contractors.

This proposal would also amend 5-11.2 to clarify that one a one-time basis, that the deadline to clarify in writing that a vice-presidential nominee is willing to accept the nomination, et. al, is noon Eastern Time on Thursday, July 9.

Part XII: Section 5-13 Adjournment of the Convention

Convention Rules 5-13 require a 2/3 vote to adjourn the convention. This proposal will empower the presiding officers to declare the convention adjourned after the conclusion of the scheduled agenda, without requiring a vote.

Part XII: Effectuating the ability to contact Convention Delegates and Alternates

There are multiple occasions within existing Convention Rules where there is the opportunity to gather petition signatures to initiate an actions - including to strike a provision from the platform, for a candidate to speak at the convention who does not have at least one delegate pledged to vote for them from each of three states, and to nominate a new presidential candidate if NOTA wins a round of voting. At a face-to-face convention, delegates may see petition signatures in person. At a virtual convention, this will have to happen on-line, and there will need to be some ability for delegate to be able to contact each other electronically to seek such petition signatures.

The responsibility to create a process for delegates to be able to contact each other electronically to seek petition signatures shall be delegated to the Credentials Committee, with technical support from GPUS staff and contractors.

Part XIII: Consistent numbering

GPUS rules documents use roman numerals for numbering Articles, and in most places the Convention Rules use roman numerals to reference various Articles in GPUS rules documents. However in a few instances, roman numerals are not used. This proposal would also rectify this and use roman numerals consistently throughout the Convention Rules.

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PROPOSAL: That the National Committee approve the following multi-part proposal, which are summarized below in .pdf format, with additions in **green bold text** and delegations in ~~red-strike-out text~~.

https://gpus.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/GPUS_Convention_Rules_amendment_2020_05.pdf

Additionally since this proposal includes one time changes for 2020 and some amendments that would last after 2020, these two links show what the Convention Rules would look like in 2020 and in 2024; again with additions in **green bold text** and delegations in ~~red-strike-out text~~. This provides an alternative way of reviewing the proposed amendments.

<https://gpus.org/convention-rules-2020-convention/>

<https://gpus.org/convention-rules-2024-convention/>

Part I: Proxies

On a one-time basis for the 2020 Presidential Nomination Convention only, that the Convention Rules will be amended so that Section 5-6.2 Proxies will be considered not in effect, and thereby no proxies will be allowed for the 2020 Convention. That Convention Rules "Section 5-6.2 Proxies" be amended to read "Section 5-6.2 Proxies - Not in Effect in 2020"

Part II: Alternates - timing of

On a one-time basis for the 2020 Presidential Nomination Convention only, that the Convention Rules will be amended so that a credentialed alternate may replace a credentialed delegate on a person-for-person basis as long as their state party or caucus reports to the Credentials Committee at delapp@gp.org who the alternate is and for whom they will be substituting no later than noon Eastern Time on Thursday, July 9, and preferably before.

3-1.2 The Presidential Nominating Convention shall additionally consist of a number of alternate delegates, where the number of alternates allocated to each state, territory, or accredited caucus shall be equal to the number of delegates so allocated. **A credentialed alternate may replace a credentialed delegate on a person-for-person basis as long as their state party or caucus reports to the Credentials Committee at delapp @ gp.org who the alternate is and for whom they will be substituting no later than noon Eastern Time on Thursday, July 9**

3-3.1 ~~Beginning in the year 2015,~~ The Apportionment Tabulation Committee as defined in Article 8 of GPUS Rules and Procedures is authorized and directed to perform the tabulation for allocation of Delegates to the Presidential Nominating Convention in the odd years preceding presidential election years, for the presidential election year next succeeding.

Part III: Alternates, correct number

That Convention Rules 3-1.1(c) be amended from "2 delegates selected by and from the ranks of each accredited GPUS caucus" to "four delegates selected by and from the ranks of each accredited GPUS caucus"

3-1.1 The Presidential Nominating Convention shall consist of 400 +/- 2 Delegates, to be allocated as follows: a) **four** (4) Delegates from each of the states where there is not an accredited state party, or where there is an accredited state party which is considered inactive under GPUS rules; b) **two** (2) Delegates from each of the unincorporated organized United States territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and United States Virgin Islands; c) ~~2~~ **four** (4) Delegates selected by and from the ranks of each accredited GPUS caucus; d) the remaining number of Delegates from states with an accredited and active state party, to be allocated based upon the formula delineated in Section 3-2;

and that Rules and Procedures 8-1.7 shall be amended to remove "Identity caucuses shall automatically be apportioned four delegates and two alternates to the Presidential Nominating Convention."

Part IV: Credentialing

On a one-time basis for the 2020 Presidential Nomination Convention only, that the Convention Rules Section 4-6 Preliminary Credentialing of Delegates be amended with additions in green and cross-outs in red:

4-6.1 Until the adoption of the Credentials Report, the Convention shall consist of those applicants granted preliminary credentials by the Credentials Committee.

4-6.2 Credentials shall be issued **electronically** before the Convention by the Credentials Committee.

4-6.3 Each applicant delegate or delegate-alternate must be a member of a delegation that itself has been granted preliminary credentials by the Credentials Committee and must identify themselves with a state or school-issued picture ID ~~or are identified by the chair or other officer of their state delegation or caucus.~~

4-6.4 To receive credentials, each delegate or delegate-alternate must also sign **electronically** the Credentials Roll that pledges them to support the rules of the Convention.

4-6.5 "Credentials" shall mean **an electronic receipt from the GPUS, together with a password to access the convention voting page** ~~a color-coded, visible card which permits a delegate issued the credentials~~, which permits a delegate issued the credentials - or an alternate bearing alternate credentials who is from the same state or caucus as the delegate issued the credentials - the right to vote on any matter before the convention.

4-6.6 The responsibility to creating and conducting the electronic credentialing capability shall be delegated to the Credentials Committee, Annual National Meeting Committee and GPUS staff and contractors.

Part V: 5-4.2 Responsibilities of State Delegation Reporters

5-4.2(a) Attending such preliminary meetings organized for State Delegation Reporters as may be called within **ten days** ~~twenty-four hours~~ preceding the convening of the Convention, and

Part VI: Credentialing Challenge Process

On a one-time basis for the 2020 Presidential Nomination Convention only, the Credentials Committee shall be empowered to adapt the credentials challenges timeline and process; that Convention Rules 4-7 be amended to state in its introduction (before 4-7.1), that

“Notwithstanding any other language in 4-7 through 4-15, the Credentials Committee shall be empowered to propose an adapted credentials challenge timeline and process that takes into account the number of challenges, the reduced timeline and earlier deadline necessary to accommodate a virtual convention, and shall submit their plan to the Steering Committee for Review.”

Part VII: Not Require Hard Copy of Delegate Application

4-3.2 Each Accredited Caucus or state Green Party (or grouping of Greens where there is no state party) that desires to credential a delegation to the Presidential Nominating Convention shall submit ~~both an original and duplicate hard copy of their Delegate Credential Application by U.S. Mail, as well as~~ an electronic application by email. **The electronic version shall include an image of the letter bearing the actual signature of the state party or caucus officers certifying the authenticity of the minutes.** No application shall be accepted unless ~~both original and duplicate and an~~ electronic version **s is are** submitted.

Part VIII: Platform Process

5-8.2 Approval of the Platform shall be by the process as specified by ~~the Green National Committee in Article II.2~~ Article IX of the Bylaws **and Article XII of the Rules and Procedures of the Green Party of the United States and by this Section.** ~~; and in accordance with the Platform Timeline & Process, the process as established by the Green National Committee September 15, 2002. The voting threshold for approval shall be 2/3 as defined in Article V. Voting Rules of the Bylaws of the Green Party of the United States.~~

5-8.2(a) The Platform Committee Co-Chairs or other spokespersons designated by the Platform Committee shall be afforded not more than ten minutes to present the report of the Platform Committee and proposed ~~2008~~ Platform to the Convention. The presenter(s) for the Platform Committee shall also be afforded the final ten minutes of debate or discussion for closing remarks before the question of adoption of the Platform is put to the Convention.

5-8.2(b) Discussion on the proposed Platform shall be limited to one hour. No delegate may address the Convention for longer than two minutes on any provision of the draft Platform. To address the convention, a delegate is required to register, with their name, delegation, draft Platform provision to be addressed, and their position on such provision with the Convention facilitation team not later than **noon Eastern Time on Thursday, July 9** ~~the convening of the Convention plenary session scheduled to consider the Platform~~. A delegate may make a motion ~~from the floor~~ to strike a provision from the platform if they have also presented signatures of at least 10 percent of convention delegates in support of that motion at the time they register to speak **by noon Eastern Time Thursday, July 9. The responsibility for creating and conducting the registration-to-speak and the motion-to-strike-a-provision-from-the-platform capability shall be delegated to the Credentials Committee, Annual National Meeting Committee and GPUS staff and contractors.** The vote on a motion to strike a

proposed amendment shall require a 2/3 threshold. Removal is limited to provisions amended in the current cycle. No new provisions may be introduced from the floor.

5-8.2(c) The voting threshold for the adoption of the Platform shall be 2/3 of Convention Delegates, as defined ~~in Article II. 2. and~~ [Article V](#). Voting Rules of the Bylaws of the Green Party of the United States.

GPUS Rules and Procedures 12-1.7 Presidential Nominating Convention candidates passed in 2019, it references “The Platform Committee will schedule platform hearings in a workshop format **no later than Thursday, July 9 at least a day before the final vote**, for discussions, questions, and answers concerning changes and additions to the platform.”

Part IX: Presidential Candidate Speeches

5-9.2 Any candidate seeking the Presidential Nomination of the Convention who wishes to address the convention who does not have at least one delegate pledged to vote for them from each of three states, may alternatively submit a petition signed by a number of credentialed Delegates equal to at least 3% of the total credentialed Delegates, and coming from at least 7 states, declaring each signers' intention to vote for the candidate named in the petition in the first round of voting. **The responsibility for creating and conducting the electronic petition signing capability shall be delegated to the Credentials Committee, Annual National Meeting Committee and GPUS staff and contractors.** Such petitions must be submitted to the Election Administrator by ~~6:00 pm-noon~~ **Eastern Time on Thursday, July 9 the day immediately preceding the convening of the Convention**; and Delegate signatures that appear on more than one petition will be disqualified on the petition of said delegate's choice.

5-9.6 A caucus of the delegates who favor the no nominee position will choose the No Nominee speaker and report the name to the Election Administrator by ~~9:00 AM of the morning of day the Nomination is scheduled.~~ **noon Eastern Time on Thursday, July 9.**

Part X: Section 5-10 Nominating a Presidential Candidate

~~**5-10.3** Half-votes from delegates assigned with such will be counted in the first round.~~ Succeeding rounds will count only whole votes.

5-10.5(a) No candidate shall be eligible to receive votes who has failed to declare in writing to the Election Administrator their intention to accept the nomination if offered and to cooperate with each member state party of the Green Party of the

United States to have their name placed on each ballot line to which a member State Party may be eligible, **and who has done so by noon Eastern Time, Thursday, June 9.**

5-10.10 Should None of the Above (NOTA) receive the majority of votes in a given round, ~~the Election Administrator shall permit a reasonable period of time before the next round for new nominations to arise from the floor.~~ **new nominations may be made based upon an electronic petitions as described below, received by noon Eastern Time, Thursday, June 9.** Any such candidate nominated must be eligible as defined in [5-10.5\(a\)](#) and submit ~~a~~ **an electronic** petition signed by a number of credentialed Delegates equal to at least 3% of the total credentialed Delegates, and coming from at least 7 states, declaring each signers' intention to vote for the candidate named in the petition in the next round of voting. **The responsibility for creating and conducting the electronic petition signing capability shall be delegated to the Credentials Committee, Annual National Meeting Committee and GPUS staff and contractors.**

Part XI: Section 5-11 Nominating a Vice Presidential Candidate

5-11.2 To be eligible for consideration for the Vice Presidential nomination, a candidate must declare in writing to the Election Administrator their intention to accept the nomination if offered and to cooperate with each member state Green Party of the Green Party of the United States to have their name placed on each ballot line to which a member State Party may be eligible, **and must do so by noon Eastern Time on July 9. (One time basis)**

5-11.3 Once the Presidential nominee has proposed a Vice-Presidential nominee, the Election Administrator shall call for a **virtual** show of raised hands by the delegates to approve the nomination of the proposed Vice Presidential candidate. **The manner in which there may be a virtual show of raised hands shall be delegated to the Credentials Committee, Annual National Meeting Committee and GPUS staff and contractors.**

Part XII: Section 5-13 Adjournment of the Convention

~~On the vote of a simple two-third majority, the Convention may recess till a time certain, or adjourn.~~ **The presiding officers shall be empowered to declare the convention adjourned after the conclusion the nominations of the presidential and vice presidential candidates and any other scheduled agenda items, without requiring a vote.**

Part XIII: Effectuating the ability to contact Convention Delegates and Alternates

The following language shall be added to 5-8.2(b), 5-9.2, 5-10-10

The responsibility to create a process for delegates to be able to contact each other electronically to seek petition signatures to initiate this petition process shall be delegated to the Credentials Committee, with technical support from GPUS staff and contractors.

Part XIII: Consistent numbering

Roman numbers are used throughout the Convention Rules to reference Articles in GPUS Rules Documents.

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IMPLEMENTATION/TIMELINE/RESOURCES: Effective immediately, including applicable to the 2020 credentials process. GPUS webmaster would archive existing Convention Rules, update Convention Rules to reflect all changes in this proposal, then after the Convention archive that version of the Convention Rules and update the Convention Rules to show only the permanent amendments and not the one-time ones.

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REFERENCES: Existing GPUS Presidential Convention Rules <http://www.gpus.org/convention-rules>

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