

CONSTITUTION OF THE TEXAS YOUNG DEMOCRATS

Firmly believing that the ideals and principles of the Democratic Party provide the best guides to peace, security, liberty, dignity, and prosperity for the people of the Great State of Texas, we the members of the Texas Young Democrats, in order to foster and perpetuate those ideals, to stimulate an active interest in the political process, to promote the involvement of young people in all aspects of the political arena, and to provide the highest degree of justice and social welfare for the citizens of our Great State, do associate ourselves together and do ordain and establish this Constitution for the Texas Young Democrats.

Article I Chartered Organizations

Section 101 Chartered Organizations

The Texas Young Democrats shall be composed of local, autonomous organizations (clubs). To charter as distinct entities, clubs representing counties with populations over one hundred thousand (100,000) must consist of ten (10) or more members, and clubs representing counties with populations of one hundred thousand (100,000) or fewer must consist of five (5) or more members.

Section 102 Duration of Charter

A club's charter shall be in effect from convention to convention.

Section 103 Residency Requirements

All members of the Texas Young Democrats may elect to be a member of the local club of their residence, place of business, or school. County clubs may include members from adjoining counties, which contain no local clubs.

Section 104 Charters

Section 104 (a) Definitions

The Official Charter represents the club's official affiliation with the Texas Young Democrats. This affiliation bestows the privileges and benefits associated with the relationship as defined by this document and the By-laws. The Interim Charter represents a club's temporary status as an affiliated group due to that club's absence from the Permanent Roll of the preceding State Convention.

Section 104 (b) Official Charter

Clubs shall charter by their attendance at the State Convention as evidenced by the Permanent Role of the Convention; provided, however, that no club shall be deemed to have been seated which is not represented at the convention by at least one (1) registered delegate.

Section 104 (c) Interim Charter

Clubs shall receive an interim charter by presenting the necessary documents to and receiving an affirmative vote from the State Executive Committee at one of its regular meetings. Clubs that possess an interim charter are entitled to all privileges and benefits associated with an Official Charter affiliation with the exception of voting participation in the Temporary Committees of the State Convention.

Section 104 (d) Application

Application for charter shall be made by submission to the State Executive Committee or State Convention, whichever may be appropriate, of a credentials packet containing the elements required by the By-laws.

Section 105 Districting

For the purpose of electing members of the State Executive Committee and the Regional Directors, all affiliated clubs will be assigned to the Texas Young Democrats Region that corresponds to the club's physical location. A club whose members represent more than one Region may choose the Region within which it will cast its votes; provided, however, that no club may cast votes in more than one Region.

Section 106 Chartering and Membership Fees

Texas Young Democrats will not charge individual clubs membership or chartering fees.

Article II Membership

Section 201 Age Requirement

Membership in the Texas Young Democrats shall be open to any Democrat not less than fourteen (14) years of age and not greater than forty (40) years of age at the time of the opening of the State Convention.

Section 202 Categories

Section 202 (a) Regular Membership

An individual who has membership in an affiliated organization is deemed to be a member of the Texas Young Democrats upon the chartering of that organization with the Texas Young Democrats for the present year. The member shall be counted in awarding delegates to the various affiliated clubs. Each member shall have regular membership in only one club at a time.

Section 202 (b) Secondary Membership

Secondary membership shall be available to any individual holding a regular membership in another club. This individual shall designate if his or her membership in a club is secondary, and their membership shall not count in determining that second club's delegate count. The number of secondary memberships shall not be limited.

Section 202 (c) Independent Membership

Independent membership shall be available to any individual who wishes to participate in Texas Young Democrats but is not a member of an affiliated organization. Such persons will be allowed to "pool" themselves and vote under the guidelines set out in Section 305(a).

Section 202 (d) Honorary Membership

Honorary Membership in the Texas Young Democrats may be bestowed upon any individual who shall have demonstrated a commitment to the highest ideals of the Democratic Party and who shall have performed extraordinary service to the Texas Young Democrats. The State Executive Committee shall elect individuals to this status by an affirmative vote of three-quarters (3/4) of its membership. Honorary members shall be accorded full, non-voting, floor privileges at any meeting of the Texas Young Democrats.

Section 202 (e) Life Member

Any person who professes to support the Texas Young Democrats and the Democratic Party may enter into a Life Membership upon the donation of two thousand and five hundred dollars (\$ 2,500.00), in aggregate, to the Texas Young Democrats. Life members shall be accorded full, non-voting, floor privileges at any meeting of the Texas Young Democrats.

Section 203 Application for Membership

Each club may prepare its own application for membership, provided, however, that it contains the necessary requirements for membership in the Texas Young Democrats.

Section 204 Caucuses of Texas Young Democrats

To further enhance the issues, education, and action of certain constituency under the Texas Young Democrats, our organization shall create caucuses to represent certain groups and issues. The purpose of a caucus is to meet, discuss, and organize action on particular constituency issues(s) within the Texas

Young Democrats. Likewise, these caucuses are to enhance the knowledge of our membership through their participation on important issues affecting each of these constituencies.

Article III State Convention

Section 301 Authority

The State Convention shall be the highest authority of the Texas Young Democrats, subject to the provisions of this Constitution.

Section 302 Purpose

The purpose of the State Convention shall be to elect the Officers and the Regional Directors to the State Executive Committee; to adopt a platform and resolutions which embody the basic principles of the Democratic Party and which set forth the positions of the Texas Young Democrats on current issues of statewide significance; to establish and amend the rules of the Texas Young Democrats; to amend this Constitution and By-laws or to ratify those amendments proposed by the State Executive Committee; and, to take such action as it deems necessary and proper to effect the operations of the Texas Young Democrats.

Section 303 Time and Place

The Texas Young Democrats shall hold its State Convention in April. The Convention shall be held in Austin at a time and place selected so as to maximize participation. This shall be decided by a three-fourths vote of the Executive committee.

Section 304 Call

The Call for the State Convention shall be issued over the signature of the President no later than February 1 to all affiliated clubs and such unaffiliated clubs as the President may be able to contact.

Section 305 Delegates

Section 305 (a) Delegate Strength

Each club placed on the Temporary Roll of the Convention shall be allotted delegates on the following stratified system: Groups with 5-9 members (only ~~county~~ clubs from counties with less than 100,000 residents) receive two votes; groups with 10-19 member receive two votes; groups with 20-39 members receive three votes; groups with 40-59 members receive four votes; and groups with 60 or more members receive five votes. Independent members will be combined into a voting pool that shall receive one vote, if the pool is less than five members, or two votes, if the pool has five or more members.

Section 305 (b) Delegate to Vote Ratio

The voting strength of each club shall be limited to the lesser of:
the number of each club's members present at the convention;
the maximum number of delegates as defined by section 305 (a); or the number of delegates present at each vote.

Section 305 (c) First-time Charters

Groups chartering for the first time with the Texas Young Democrats will receive one delegate vote at their first convention then will receive the full allotment of delegates starting at the next convention. This provision shall be revocable by the Temporary or Permanent Credentials Committee of the State Convention upon the satisfaction of the requirements laid out in the By-laws.

Section 306 Officers

Section 306 (a) Temporary Officers

The State Executive Committee shall designate a Convention Director and such assistants as may be necessary to plan, to arrange, and to conduct the necessary work of the Convention.

Section 306 (b) Permanent Officers

The Permanent Officers of the Convention shall be the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Parliamentarian. The President of the Texas Young Democrats shall open and preside over the State Convention until such time as the Temporary Roll has been adopted and a Permanent Chair of the Convention shall be elected. The Permanent Chair shall appoint the Vice Chair, Secretary, Parliamentarian, and Chairs of the Convention Committees.

Section 307 Committees

Section 307 (a) Temporary Credentials Committee

The President, with the majority approval of the State Executive Committee, shall appoint a Temporary Credentials Committee at the winter quarterly meeting of the State Executive Committee. The Temporary Credentials Committee shall hold a public meeting at a time and place approved by the State Executive Committee to open and examine all credentials, to note any lack of conformity with the requirements of this Constitution or By-laws, and to establish a Temporary Roll for the convention that will be reported to the State Executive Committee.

Section 307 (b) Permanent Committees

The Permanent Committees of the State Convention shall be the Committee on Credentials, the Committee on Rules, the Committee on Platform and on Resolutions, and the Committee on Nominations. The membership of each Permanent Committee except the Committee on Credentials shall consist of one delegate from each club placed on the Permanent Roll of the Convention and a Chair appointed by the Permanent Convention Chair. The membership of the Permanent Committee on Credentials shall consist of one delegate from each club placed on the Temporary Roll of the Convention and a Chair appointed by the Permanent Convention Chair. The Permanent Convention Chair shall appoint a Vice Chair to a Committee if such a position is needed to insure that the Committee consists of an uneven number of members.

Section 308: Unit Rule Use and Endorsements

The use of the unit rule, unilateral endorsements, and/or the practice of instructing delegations shall not be permitted at any level of the convention process that members of Texas Young Democrats may participate without the prior approval of the TYD Executive Committee

**Article IV
State Executive Committee**

Section 401 Authority

The State Executive Committee shall be responsible for conducting the affairs of the Texas Young Democrats in the interim between Conventions.

Section 402 Membership

The State Executive Committee which shall be composed of the President, Executive Vice President, Financial Vice President, Membership Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, National Committeeman, National Committeewoman, State Regional Directors Chairman, President Emeritus, and ten Regional Directors specified in Art. VI, and Chairs of the TYD Caucus as voting members. Judicial Directors and Presidential Appointees are non voting members of the Executive Committee

Section 403 Election, Term of Office, Vacancies

Section 403 (a) Election

Members of the State Executive Committee shall be elected at the annual State Convention in accordance with Sections 501 and 601. Regional Directors shall be elected by those delegates from clubs chartered within the various Regions at Regional Caucuses of the State Convention.

Section 403 (b) Vacancies

When a vacancy occurs among the Officers, the President shall appoint a member of a chartered club to fill the Office upon majority approval of the State Executive Committee at their next meeting. When a vacancy occurs among the Regional Directors, the Regional Directors, as a Committee of the Whole, shall appoint a member of a charter club to fill the position upon recommendation by the President and majority approval of the State Executive Committee.

Section 403 (c) Order of Succession for the Presidency

When a vacancy occurs in the Office of the President, for whatever reason, the Executive Vice President shall succeed to the Presidency. If the Executive Vice President cannot take office, then the Financial Vice President shall succeed the President. If the Financial Vice President cannot take office, then the Membership Vice President shall succeed the President.

Section 404 Removal from Office

Members of the State Executive Committee may be subject to removal from office for misfeasance, malfeasance or nonfeasance of assigned duties; or, for violations of any law or rule of the Texas Young Democrats and the Democratic Party of Texas; or, for committing a felony under the laws of the State of Texas while in office; or, for failure to maintain decorum while acting in a capacity as an officer of the Texas Young Democrats.

Section 405 Duties

The State Executive Committee shall carry on the activities of the Texas Young Democrats between State Conventions in compliance with this Constitution, By-laws, rules and regulations adopted in accordance therewith, and with the directives of the Convention.

Section 406 Meetings

Section 406 (a) Regular Meetings

The State Executive Committee shall meet to transact business four times each year. Notice of the date, time, and place of each meeting shall be issued to each member of the State Executive Committee at least thirty (30) days prior to said meeting.

Section 406(b) Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the President or upon written request of a majority of the member of the State Executive Committee. Notice of such meetings shall meet the requirements specified above.

**Article V
Officers**

Section 501 Election of Officers

The State Convention of the Texas Young Democrats shall in April of every year elect an Executive Vice President, a Vice President for Membership, a Vice President for Finance, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a State Regional Directors Chairperson. The President and National Committeeman shall be elected to two-year terms in odd numbered years. The National Committeewoman shall be elected to a two-year term in even numbered years. The officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the delegates present with runoffs if necessary.

Section 502 Duties

The officers of the Texas Young Democrats must execute the duties necessary to operate Texas Young Democrats between Conventions. They must use utmost good faith in carrying out their individual responsibilities outlined in the By-laws.

Section 503 Appointed Officers

The President may appoint such officers as needed to accomplish the task of operating Texas Young Democrats. These officers are non-voting members of the State Executive Committee.

Article VI

Regional Directors

Section 601 Election of Directors

The State Convention of the Texas Young Democrats shall in April of each year elect ten (10) Regional Directors. Those delegates from clubs chartered within the various regions shall elect each Director from single member regions.

Section 602 Regions, Apportionment

The State shall be divided into ten regions. A Redistricting Committee on Apportionment shall realign the ten regions every decade following the redistricting of the Legislature.

Section 603 Duties

The Regional Directors shall be responsible for coordinating activities within their individual region. They must use utmost good faith in carrying out their individual responsibilities outlined in the By-laws.

Article VII **Judicial Committee**

Section 701 Membership

There shall be a Judicial Committee, which shall be composed of a Chair and one member of each Region who shall be elected at the Regional Caucus at the Convention.

Section 702 Officers

The Chair of the Judicial Committee shall be appointed by the President of the Texas Young Democrats subject to the majority approval of the State Executive Committee. At its first meeting, the Judicial Committee shall elect a Vice Chair and an Executive Secretary from among its members.

Section 703 Duties

The Judicial Committee shall be responsible for the resolution of disputes arising within the Texas Young Democrats; for the adjudication of removal proceedings for officers; and for the interpretation of this constitution and by-laws.

Section 704 Meetings

Section 704 (a) Regular Meetings

The Judicial Committee shall be convened twice a year between State Conventions in conjunction with the State Executive Committee.

Section 704 (b) Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the Chair, the President, upon written request of one-third of the membership of the Committee, or upon written request of one-half of the State Executive Committee.

Section 705 Committees

The Judicial Committee may establish such ad hoc committees or special task forces as it deems necessary and proper to carry out its duties, either as prescribed by this Constitution and By-laws or as requested by the State Executive Committee.

Article VIII **Procedural Provisions**

Section 801 Quorum

Quorum of any body or unit operating under this Constitution or By-laws must be present for that body to conduct business.

Section 802 Proxies

Proxy voting and attendance by proxy shall be permitted. The Proxy must present to the body or unit a signed document from the absent member stating that the present member has the absent member's proxy. Proxies shall be transferable if so specified in the original proxy document. No single person shall serve as proxy for three (3) or more persons.

Section 803 Open Meetings Policy

Section 803(a) Meetings

All meetings involving the Texas Young Democrats, as a whole, shall be open to the public.

Section 803(b) Voting

All votes conducted by any body or unit of the Texas Young Democrats shall be open. There shall be no secret ballots.

Section 804 Open Records Policy

All records of the Texas Young Democrats are presumed to be open for inspection by the membership. Upon a classification by the State Executive Committee of certain records as confidential, such records will not be open for inspection until the earlier of the passage of five (5) years or a re-classification by the State Executive Committee.

Section 805 Loyalty Pledge

The Texas Young Democrats shall require a loyalty Pledge to the Democratic Party.

Section 806 Procedural Guarantees

Section 806(a) Anti-discrimination Standard

All activities of Texas Young Democrats, at all levels of the organization, shall be open to all members of Texas Young Democrats regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, age (except as provided in Article 2), color, creed, national origin, religion, ethnic identity, economic status, physical disability, or philosophic persuasion.

Section 806(b) Right of Access

The time and place for all public meetings of the Texas Young Democrats shall be publicized fully and in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested persons and parties.

Section 806(c) Right of Participation

Section 806(c)(1) Procedural Disclosures

The Texas Young Democrats shall publicize fully and in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested persons and parties a full description of the particular procedures and rules by which the organization operates.

Section 806(c)(2) Candidacy

The Texas Young Democrats shall publicize fully and in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested persons and parties a full description of the Offices within Texas Young Democrats slated for election, as well as, a disclosure as to the required qualifications and duties of such offices. At the winter quarterly meeting of the State Executive Committee, an election code will be approved and cover the following but not limited to: campaign expenditure limits, campaign code of ethics, nomination and disqualification process, campaign timeline, dispute procedures, etc. and will include a forum of all candidates of the Texas Young Democrats Executive Committee each candidate be given four (4) minutes to speak publicly prior to the day of the election. In addition, at that time, delegates will be allowed to ask each candidate in each contested race at least two question or and additional formatting and guidelines stipulated by the election code.

Section 807 Parliamentary Procedure

Robert's Rules of Order will be the procedural authority unless contrary to other provisions within this Constitution or By-laws.

Article IX Amendments

Section 901 Constitutional Amendments

The Texas Young Democrats in Convention may amend this Constitution by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of all delegates on the Permanent Roll. If the State Executive Committee has first adopted the amendment by a three-fourths (3/4) vote, a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all delegates on the Permanent Roll of the Texas Young Democrats in Convention shall be required to amend.

Section 902 By-law Amendments

By-laws shall be adopted to thoroughly explicate the principles espoused by this Constitution. The Texas Young Democrats in Convention may amend the By-laws of the Texas Young Democrats by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all delegates on the Permanent Roll. If the State Executive Committee has first adopted the amendment by a majority, a majority vote of all delegates on the Permanent Roll of the Texas Young Democrats in Convention shall be required to amend.

Article X Supremacy Clause

This State Constitution of the Texas Young Democrats shall be the supreme law governing this organization, and under no circumstances may the rules set forth in this document be suspended. No changes may be made to this Constitution except as provided in Article VIII above. Affiliated clubs retain all rights as to the organization and management of their local affairs free from interference from the Texas Young Democrats; provided, however, that the provisions of this Constitution shall take precedence in matter that govern the relationship of the affiliated clubs with the Texas Young Democrats.

Revised and adopted in Convention, April 15, 2000

Ratified in Convention, assembled, April 16, 2000

Revised and Amended in Convention, April 8, 2001 (§ 402 – internal addition. § 501 – internal addition)

Revised and Amended in Convention, April 21, 2002 (§ 402 – internal addition)

Revised and Amended in Convention, April 26, 2004 (§ 307(b) – internal modification. § 204 – addition)

Revised and Amended in Convention, April 23, 2006 (§ 201, 402, 501, 806(c)(2) – internal modification. § 308 – addition)

Revised and Amended in Convention, April 13, 2008 (§ 305(a) – internal modification)