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Delegate Debate Guide

In debate Delegates must be prepared to make the most of their time whenever she/he are recognized. This document contains tips and procedures for use during parliamentary sessions.

Prior to Debate:

Check the docket and read the bills that will be in your committee as soon as possible, preparing speeches for each topic.

Being Recognized:

A delegate will raise his/her placard to be recognized. Whenever a delegate is given the floor to speak, he/she must first address the chair by stating their name, the school she/he represent, and then addressing the chair.

“John Doe, representing Commonwealth School, Madam (or Sir) Chair”

Non-Debatable Technical Questions:

When recognized to ask a technical question, a delegate must stand, address the chair, ask their question in a clear and loud voice, and remain standing to receive their answer. Delegates may not respond in any manner to the answer. Questions deemed debatable will be declared out of order by the chair and will immediately recognize the next question.

What is a technical question?

A technical question is a question of fact. Technical questions can be answered “yes,” “no,” or with evidence such as statistics and scientific research. The best technical questions are tailored to the issue, but some apply to most bills. These include:

“Where will you get funding?”

“Who will enforce this policy?”

What makes a question debatable?

Questions that assume facts not already demonstrated, that call for an opinion or assumption, or that otherwise seek to discuss any topic that is not bound by fact are debatable. Questions that use the word “why” are almost always debatable. Vague examples include:

“Why will this solution work?”

“Wouldn’t another solution offer the same benefits?”

“Since this is good, isn’t that bad?”

Pro/Con Debate:



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During Pro/Con debate delegates are recognized for one minute, and have several options for what she/he can do with their time. The chair will alternate speakers who are in opposition and speakers who are in favor. Delegates should be prepared to be recognized at all times, though most speeches are given by volunteers. Once delegates are recognized and have addressed the Chair she/he may do one or two of the following: **speak**, ask the authors to yield to a **question (or series of questions)**, or **yield their remaining time** to another speaker or the Chair.

Speaking:

It is assumed that a delegate will speak when recognized. If a delegate wishes only to speak, he/she may do so after she/he have addressed the Chair.

Asking Questions:

Delegates may use the time she/he are allotted to ask the author questions. During Pro/Con debate questions may be debatable.

How do I ask questions during debate?

In order to ask the author a question (or series of questions) during pro/con debate after being recognized by the chair, a delegate must address the chair and ask, “**Will the author yield to a question (or series of questions)?**” The chair then asks the author if he or she will yield. If the author’s answer is yes, the delegate is then entitled to ask one or more questions. The author may say no.

May I interrupt the Author if she/he has answered my question?

Decorum and respect are always required, but if an Author has answered the question, the delegate who asked the question may thank the Authors to signify their satisfaction with the answer and then move on to the next question.

May I speak after I ask questions?

Yes. If a delegate wishes to speak after she/he asks the Author questions she/he must state their intent when requesting that the Authors yield. This is done by saying “**John Doe, representing Commonwealth School, Madam (or Sir) Chair. Will the author yield to a question (or series of questions)? I reserve my right to speak afterward.**”



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Yielding:

When a delegate is given time by the chair she/he are not required to use all of it themselves, but may yield to one other person. Yielding is the transfer of time from one delegate to another.

When can I yield?

Delegates may yield to another delegate after having spoken, or asked a question (or series of questions).

How do I yield after speaking?

Delegates must reserve their right to yield to another delegate after she/he addresses the Chair before she/he begins their speech or question. She/he must also indicate to which delegate he/she wish to yield. If a delegate wishes to speak and then yield she/he must address the Chair by saying “**John Doe, representing Commonwealth School, Madam (or Sir) Chair. I reserve my right to yield any remaining time to the delegate from Kentucky Academy.**”

Once she/he has finished speaking she/he must then say “**I yield any remaining time to the delegate from Kentucky Academy.**”

How do I yield after a question (or series of questions)?

Delegates must reserve their right to yield to another delegate after she/he address the Chair and request that the Authors yield. She/he must also indicate which delegate she/he wishes to yield to. If a delegate wishes to speak and then yield, he/she must address the Chair by saying “**John Doe, representing Commonwealth School, Madam (or Sir) Chair. Will the author yield to a series of questions? I reserve my right to yield any remaining time to the delegate from Kentucky Academy.**”

Once she/he has finished with their questions she/he must then say “**I yield any remaining time to the delegate from Kentucky Academy.**”

Motions & Amendments

Though an important part of the legislative process no Motions or Amendments will be considered in order at KYA due to time constraints.