

# MISSOURI STATE WOMEN'S POLITICAL CAUCUS BYLAWS

PROPOSED AUGUST, 2010

## ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be [the] Missouri State Women's Political Caucus [hereinafter] (referred to as MWPC), a state affiliate of the National Women's Political Caucus (referred to as NWPC).

## ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

1. The purposes of MWPC are:
  - A. To increase women's participation in the political process;
  - B. To increase the number of feminist women in elected and appointed positions;
  - C. To support women candidates who will work for women's issues and who will employ women in decision-making roles in their campaigns and office staffs;
  - D. To work for the repeal of laws which discriminate on the basis of sex;
  - E. To win equality for women;
  - F. To draft and support legislation that complies with the principles of human equality and that concerns the needs of women.
2. In pursuit of these goals, MWPC is dedicated to the eradication of sexism, racism, anti-Semitism, ageism, violence, poverty, discrimination against the disabled and discrimination on the basis of religion. Furthermore, MWPC is dedicated to ensuring reproductive freedom and freedom of sexual orientation.

## ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

1. Membership in MWPC shall be open to all people who support the purpose and goal of the organization and who pay dues by a method to be determined by the state board.
2. Dues:
  - A. State membership dues and categories of membership shall be determined by the state board.
  - B. A member in good standing is defined as one who is current in local, state and national dues.

C. Any person who resides outside a local caucus area may join the MWPC and the NWPC.

3. Local Caucuses:

A. Support the purposes and goals of the MWPC and the NWPC.

B. Shall be governed by local bylaws, approved by the state board, which shall, at a minimum:

1. Provide for a democratically-elected leadership;

2. Provide for holding regular, open meetings;

3. Not be inconsistent with state and national bylaws and policies.

C. Shall consist of at least six members.

D. Shall maintain an effective affirmative action program to make membership in the Caucus available to people of all races, creeds, colors, economic status, national origins, sexual orientations, political parties and ages.

E. Shall elect [three] two representatives and at least one alternate to the state board.

F. Shall furnish the state [and national] caucus with a mailing list and a roster of officers and/or contacts which will be shared with NWPC. This should be done quarterly, at a minimum. Notification of changes should be made to the state caucus when they occur.

G. Shall, if proposing to form in a community where another local caucus already exists, submit for approval by the state board its justification for the need for another local caucus in that area.

H. Shall be accepted as a local caucus by a majority vote of the state board when all of the above subsections of this section have been satisfactorily met.

4. Dual Memberships:

A. A member may belong to more than one local caucus by paying local, state and national dues to one local caucus and paying only local dues to any additional caucus joined upon proof of previous payment of state and national dues.

B. A member may represent only one local caucus on the state board or at a state convention in any one year.

- C. In the case when there are a significant number of members from a local caucus that do not live in Missouri, but who live in a state in which there is no state caucus, the local caucus may keep the state portion of the annual membership dues.

ARTICLE IV. STATE MEETINGS:

1. [The] MWPC shall meet [in convention] at least once every 2 years to renew programs and priorities and to elect state officers. In years without a general membership meeting, the state board shall provide an annual report to the membership.
2. State {Convention} Meeting:
  - A. Each [state] member in good standing must receive sixty days written notice of a state {convention} meeting. The notice is to include time, place and day of the [convention] meeting, a request for letters of intent from those wishing to run for state office; and a request for submission of any proposals of bylaw revisions.
  - B. Letters of intent to run for state office and proposals of bylaw revisions must be submitted no less than thirty days prior to the convention.
  - C. Each local caucus shall receive a second notice of [convention] the statewide meeting no less than fifteen days prior to the [convention] meeting which will include listings of proposed bylaw revisions and of those persons who have filed for state office elections.
  - D. A minimum delegation of six votes will be allotted to each local caucus for any vote at a state meeting.
  - E. Each caucus shall receive one additional vote for every ten members who have paid state dues.
  - F. [The state convention] A state meeting must have at least one representative from 60 percent of the caucuses in the state organization for voting purposes.

ARTICLE V. STATE BOARD:

1. Representatives on the state board:
  - A. The state board shall consist of [three] two democratically-elected representatives [or]and one alternate from each local caucus plus the state

officers. An effort should be made to establish multi-partisan representation in selection of delegates of each caucus.

B. A person who is active and interested in the state organization and lives in an area where no local caucus exists can become a voting member of the state board for a term of [one] two years upon meeting the following requirements:

1. Is a member of the state and national caucus.
2. The state board votes to accept the member.

2. Duties of the state board:

A. Shall conduct the business of the state organization.

B. Shall encourage and promote communication within the state.

C. Shall elect, from its membership, a representative and alternates to the NWPC Steering Committee for a term of [one year.] two years.

D. Shall elect [from its membership at the first meeting of each calendar year] a nominating committee at its first meeting of the year in which a state meeting is being held.

1. The committee shall consist of at least five members, with representation from each local caucus. If possible, the committee should be multi-partisan in its representation. Any candidate for state MWPC office shall be prohibited from membership on this committee.

2. The duties of the nominating committee shall be to coordinate nomination and filing procedures and to assure that at least one candidate files for each elective office.

E. Shall conduct a state [convention annually] meeting at least once every two years.

F. May call a statewide business meeting with twenty days written notice to each caucus for urgent business.

G. Will coordinate a program of affirmative action to make membership in the caucus available to people of all races, creeds, colors, economic status, national origins, sexual orientations, political parties and ages.

H. Shall have the power to remove a state officer and/or a national representative for:

1. Failure to perform the duties of the office.
  2. Conduct conflicting with the purposes and goals of the MWPC.
- I. Shall appoint a replacement to fill an unexpired term when a vacancy occurs due to the removal or resignation of a state officer or national representative.
3. The state board will [meet] communicate\* not less than three times yearly. A quorum for purposes of conducting business shall consist of one member, whether a state officer, representative or alternate from at least 60 percent of the local caucuses. \*meeting, email, phone conferences, etc.
  - [4. An established minority women’s organization, recognized on a state level, may request a non-voting representative on the state board. If the state board denies the request, the state board must send the request and a letter stating why the request was denied to the National Steering Committee.]

ARTICLE VI. OFFICERS:

1. Officers shall be elected [at the annual convention] by a majority of the voting delegates at a state meeting for a term of [one year] two years.
2. Duties of Officers:
  - A. President
    1. Coordinates and organizes the state board
    2. Chairs the state board meetings
    3. Chairs the state [convention] meetings
    4. Will be responsible for all meeting notices and for notifying each board member of state board meetings.
    5. May appoint a parliamentarian, historian, newsletter editor and [heads] chairs of standing and special committees, with the approval of the state board.
    6. Acts as ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee and except where otherwise specified in these bylaws.
    7. Performs such other duties as provided by the state bylaws and the state board.

B. Caucus development vice president

1. Coordinates organization of new caucuses
2. Coordinates and organizes communication with and support to local caucuses.
3. Serves as assistant to the president.
4. Shall perform the duties of the office of president (in the absence or inability of the president to serve)
5. Upon the resignation of the president, will serve as president until the state board can meet and elect a successor.

C. Records vice president:

1. Shall collect and be responsible for all official records including those of membership.
2. Shall provide for minutes to be taken at state board meetings.
- [3. Will be responsible for convention notices and for notifying each board delegate of state board meetings.]
3. Will receive and compile proposed bylaw revisions prior to the [annual convention] state meeting.
4. Shall file any necessary report on state activities with the NWPC.
- [5. Shall file current state board membership lists with the national office annually.]

D. Finances vice president:

1. Keeps an itemized accounting of all receipts and disbursements.
2. Shall disburse money upon approval of the state board.
3. Shall report at the state board meetings.
4. [With one other officer,] shall sign all checks drawn on the organization.
5. Shall file current state board membership lists with the national office annually.
6. May be bonded if necessary.

- E. Political vice president:
  - 1. Investigates, monitors and reports on Missouri state legislator races and the U.S. Congressional elections from Missouri to the state board and local caucuses.
  - 2. Serves as a contact for those candidates interested in caucus support, both at local and state levels.
- F. Legislative vice president:
  - 1. Researches current legislation in Missouri and U.S. congress that is identified with the purposes stated in these bylaws and report and disburse the information to state and local caucuses.
  - 2. Coordinates lobbying efforts with MWPC and with other groups on specific legislation.
  - 3. Initiates drafting efforts of specific legislation that is in accordance with the purposes of MWPC.

ARTICLE VII. CHALLENGES:

- 1. Challenges of local caucuses will be decided by the state board.
- 2. If the state board denies a local caucus request for membership, the request and letter stating the reasons for denial must be submitted to the NWPC.
- 3. State challenges will be heard by the NWPC.
- 4. Local challenges will not be voted on by the caucuses involved.

ARTICLE VIII. ENDORSEMENTS:

- 1. State caucus endorsement policies will comply with those of NWPC. The state caucus officers will ensure that each local caucus complies with state and national policies for endorsing women candidates.
- 2. The MWPC may endorse candidates under the following conditions:
  - A. The state board has notified each local caucus of the proposed race in which endorsement is to be considered no less than one week prior to the endorsement.
  - B. The endorsement is approved by a majority of the state board members. Proxy voting will be accepted for endorsement.

3. Local caucuses may endorse under the following conditions:
  - A. A local caucus may endorse in a race that is included in that caucus' geographic area. Geographic area is defined as that area from which the membership of the caucus is drawn.
  - B. A local caucus who wishes to provide assistance to a candidate who lives outside that caucus geographic area may endorse that candidate if there is no local caucus in the geographic area or if the local caucus in that area has already endorsed the candidate.
  - C. A local caucus may endorse a candidate in a statewide race only if that candidate has already been endorsed by the MWPC state board or if the state board has taken no action in that race within sixty days prior to the primary or sixty days prior to the general election.
  - D. A local caucus will endorse in its local name only.

ARTICLE IX. DISSOLUTION:

In the case of the dissolution of MWPC, the state board shall distribute any assets after the discharge of all liabilities to [one or more board caucuses or other organization that such board determines to have objectives similar to those of the] NWPC.

ARTICLE X. INDEMNIFICATION:

1. Generall, except as otherwise provided in this Article, the MWPC shall indemnify its officers to the greatest extent permitted. To the extent that State statute requires the Board of Directors to make certain findings before the MWPC is obligated or permitted to indemnify an officer, the MWPC shall have no liability to any such person unless the Board, acting in good faith, makes all required findings.
2. Notification: Promptly after receiving a written threat, demand, or notice that any person will commence or has commenced an action, suit or other proceeding for which MWPC may be obligated to indemnify a person under the Bylaw, the effected officer shall promptly give written notice to the President. A person's failure to promptly notify the MWPC president shall only relieve the NWPC of its liability under this Article to the extent that such delay or failure materially prejudices the MWPC's defense of such claim.
3. Not Exclusive: The indemnification provided herein shall not be exclusive of any other rights to which those seeking indemnification may be entitled under applicable law, the Bylaws or any agreement with MWPC or a vote of the membership.

## ARTICLE XI. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Unless otherwise indicated, the rules contained in the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the MWPC in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws.

## ARTICLE XII. AMENDING BYLAWS

1. The state and local caucuses must incorporate mandatory bylaw revisions from NWPC without a vote within six months of their passage.
2. The state board may submit bylaw changes for approval at any membership of MWPC, [Ample time shall be given to allow members to review proposed changes in writing before the vote] provided the timelines in Article IV are followed. Changes must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the [full] members present and voting.

### REVISIONS KEY:

[Bracketed text] = Text to be deleted

Underlined Text = Text to be added

