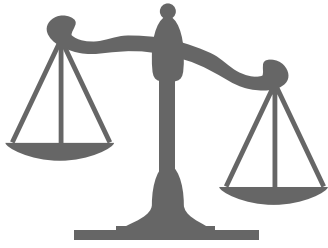


Representation



Unfair Representation on the General Boards and Agencies

Joe Wesley Kilpatrick

There are 667 directors of our 14 general boards, agencies, and commissions. Our five jurisdictions in the United States fill about half of these slots. Each general board, agency, and commission selects its own at-large directors, about 115 slots. Here are a few glaring injustices.

Exclusion of Central Conference Members from Nominating Committees

Our African and Filipino brothers and sisters constitute about 16% of the UMC. But our *Discipline* excludes them from most of the nominating committees that select the 115 at-large directors for our general boards, agencies, and commissions. Paragraph 1006(f) concerning our General Board of Church and Society is illustrative. The GBCS nominating committee includes 3 persons from each U.S. jurisdiction, but not from the seven central conferences. This is a clear, grievous wrong.

Disproportionate Representation on Nominating Committees

The illustration above is a rank injustice in its exclusion. But, giving 20% representation to each jurisdiction is also unfair, especially since there is no requirement that proportional representation be maintained among the at-large directors. The Western Jurisdiction contains about 5% of our membership. The Southeastern Jurisdiction contains about 30%, yet both have 20% representation on many nomination committees of the general boards, agencies, and commissions. As a result, the number of all Western Jurisdiction directors was increased by 90% to a full 11% of all directors, while the Southeastern Jurisdiction's total representation is 23%, well below its 30% fair share. This disparity exists even though the

Southeastern Jurisdiction has 400% more ethnic minority members than the Western Jurisdiction, demonstrates greater theological diversity, and grows!

Disproportionate Allocation of Regular Members to Large and Small Membership Annual Conferences and to Central Conferences

The current formula in Paragraph 705 assigns each U.S. annual conference at least 5 directors on the general boards, agencies, and commissions. This rule effectively robs the general church of many great leaders. They must sit frustrated on the sidelines and watch the game. For example, Red Bird Missionary Conference, our smallest annual conference with 1,351 members, gets five directors. Virginia, our largest annual conference with 340,231 gets nine. Further, picture the U.S.A. in two groups equal in membership, with one group being our larger conferences

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and the other our smaller conferences. Picture the large conference group allocated 31% of the regular directors and the small conference group 59%. To complete this picture of injustice, consider that the 16% outside the U.S. (50 small conferences) are allocated only 10% of the regular directors. That is, we favor small conferences IF they are in the USA! Mercy! □



Joe Wesley Kilpatrick is a self-employed CPA, elected five times to the General Conference from North Georgia. He is elected by the Southeastern Jurisdiction to serve on the Board of The United Methodist Publishing House where he chairs the Finance Committee.