

## **PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON DISABILITY ADVOCACY AND INCLUSION:**

***Resolved***, that the 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast affirms its commitment to the vision of our Baptismal Covenant, “to respect the dignity of every human being”, including persons with disabilities and their families; and

***Resolved***, that the 48th Annual Convention of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast affirms and supports the establishment of a Study Group on Disability Advocacy and Inclusion; the purpose of this Study Group will be to study the spiritual needs of persons with disabilities and their families living within communities served by the Diocese and to recommend actions to the Diocese for the full inclusion of persons with disabilities and their families within the life of the Diocese; and

***Resolved***, that the 48th Annual Convention of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast acknowledges the legacy of The Episcopal Church’s many legislative actions and program initiatives seeking advocacy for, and inclusion of, persons with disabilities into the life of the Church, and embraces the policies suggested by those legislative actions and program initiatives; and

***Be It Further Resolved***, that the 48th Annual Convention of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast approves for the Bishop to appoint a minimum of ten (10) communicants, including persons with disabilities, parents and family members of persons with disabilities, and others with experience working with persons with disabilities, who reside within the various sections of the Diocese, to serve as members of the Study Group; and that the Diocese encourages each congregation to designate a person or persons to be responsible for disability advocacy and inclusion within the congregation.

### **RATIONALE:**

This resolution would affirm the Diocese’s commitment to the vision of our Baptismal Covenant, “to respect the dignity of every human being”, including persons with disabilities and their families.

This resolution would affirm the establishment of a study group/program/committee/ministry on Disability Advocacy and Inclusion. Central to the establishment of this study group/program/committee/ministry is the full inclusion of persons with disabilities and their families into the life of the Diocese and its congregations.

This resolution would also acknowledge that The Episcopal Church has a legacy of numerous General Convention resolutions, policy statements and program initiatives that seek full inclusion of persons with disabilities and would commit the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast to aligning itself with these resolutions, policies, and programs.

Finally, the resolution would approve for the Bishop to appoint members of the Study Group/Program/Committee/Ministry and encourage each parish and mission to designate a persons or persons to be responsible for disability advocacy and inclusion. Assigning responsibility is a critical step on the path toward actually achieving full inclusion.

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