

## **GUIDANCE FOR OFFICERS ARBITRARY INTERPRETATION**

**DELEGATE:** I speak in favor of the Resolution, because it prevents the President General, the National Board of Management, and anyone else from changing the meaning of our Bylaws while we're not looking.

As we all know, the Bylaws govern who we are and how we operate. The Bylaws are our sacred rules. We come together in Continental Congress to debate and vote on Bylaw provisions, and those provisions represent our voice as an organization.

Those Bylaws can ONLY be changed by the delegates here in Continental Congress, after free and fair debate, and after notice has been provided to all members. This is a fundamental protection of membership. We are the members. We are the organization. We are in charge of the content of the Bylaws.

When a recent decision was made to enroll men who identify as transgender into membership in DAR, that change to our organization was not authorized in the Bylaws. A proposed Bylaw amendment was not drafted and sent to all members. The delegates at Continental Congress were not presented with the proposal to engage in free and fair debate. And no vote was taken in Continental Congress on this change.

Never, throughout the history of DAR, have the executive officers or the National Board of Management been permitted to circumvent the Bylaws or to change provisions of the Bylaws. And no proposed Bylaw Amendment has ever been allowed to be adopted or enacted without the vote of Continental Congress.

This resolution before us now simply states that the Bylaws mean what they clearly mean and what they have always meant, and that if a change is to be made, it shall be done through a proper Bylaw amendment, with notice, free-and-fair debate, and a vote of Continental Congress. Such things are done in the light of day, not behind members' backs, and not without members' knowledge.

The executive officers do NOT have the authority to interpret the Bylaws however they see fit. We don't have the luxury of interpreting the Bylaws anyway we see fit, and neither do the executive officers. The Bylaws are the Bylaws, and they say what they say. This resolution prevents the President General, the National Board of Management, and anyone else from changing the meaning of our Bylaws while we're not looking.

I urge you to vote in favor of the Resolution.