

Sons of Norway Referendum 2021

WHEREAS, the recently completed audit of Sons of Norway by the Minnesota Department of Commerce identified material deficiencies in the current SON governance model. These deficiencies were pointed out in previous audits and meetings with the MDOC, and there is now urgency to the discussion; and

WHEREAS, these regulators want to see governance structures that are more quickly adaptable to current market conditions in a rapidly evolving business environment which is not possible with the governance framework as it now stands; and

WHEREAS, 14 fraternal societies have made this governance change, to the direct election model, 3 as recently as 2020; and

WHEREAS, even though some change has been effected through a referendum process that is cumbersome and time consuming, these deficiencies became even more readily apparent during the past year with all of the issues brought to the fore during the Covid-19 pandemic, when local lodges, districts, the International Board and Lodge were largely unable to assemble, meet and govern in an efficient manner; and

WHEREAS, if SON is proactive and moves forward with a change in governance structure now, we have the option to define what the outcome of that change will be rather than having regulators step in and re-create SON in their image, potentially altering much of SON as we know it today;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Sons of Norway alter its governance model from the delegate assembly/International Lodge model to the direct election/International Board model.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the International President appoint a committee to make any necessary changes in the Constitution and Policy & Procedures of SON to reflect this governance shift.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that at the meeting of the International Lodge in 2022, elections will be held as outlined in the 2018-2022 edition of the SON Constitution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED in 2024, all benefit members will be entitled to vote on the slate of officers and directors for the 2024-2026 biennium, and this procedure will be established for future biennial International Board elections.