

FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE, INC.

CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE MANUAL

2023-2024

This document governs all Congressional Debate competitions sanctioned by Florida Forensic League, Inc. These guidelines have been prepared with the goal of providing tournament formats that ensure fair competition while also adhering to those practices that are considered basic tenets of Congressional Debate.

Originally prepared & revised for 2005-2006 by Jason C. Wysong, FFL President
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CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE MANUAL
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***Throughout this manual, the term "league official" shall be defined as the Tournament Director, or the person or persons who have been designated by the Tournament Director to direct the operation of a Congressional Debate. The term "league official" does NOT include a Parliamentarian, Scorer, or other judge.

I. PREPARATIONS FOR CONGRESS

A. *ENTRY INFORMATION*

General: Contestants participating in Congressional Debate may not compete in any other event.

Regionals and Novice State: The maximum number of entries per school is four (but can be increased to six at the discretion of each regional director). However, schools with a membership supplement may enter four additional students at the Novice State Tournament.

State Championship: Names of qualifiers will be submitted by the Regional Directors based upon the results of the Regional Qualifying tournaments.

B. *LEGISLATION SUBMISSION*

General: All legislation must conform to the nationally accepted National Speech & Debate Association (NSDA) format and standards for writing legislation (e.g. single page, double spaced, line numbers, etc.). A league official shall review the legislation for topical relevance and adherence to format, removing any legislation with an inappropriate topic or improper format. See Appendix A for legislation formatting guidelines and sample items.

Unless otherwise specified by league officials, all schools entering contestants in Congressional Debate at the Regional, State, or Novice State tournaments may submit legislation (bill or resolution) for the agenda. Each school may submit only one (1) piece of legislation, which must have a designated author. Legislation should be released no later than the Monday prior to the tournament.

C. *CHAMBERS*

General: The number of chambers that will be utilized at each tournament will be determined after the deadline for receipt of entries. The optimal size of each chamber should be 18-20 legislators, but the final determination will be made by a league official. All tournaments that utilize at least two (2) chambers will have one (1) elimination round, herein referred to as a "Super Session."

State Championship: There will be two (2) chambers of Congressional Debate unless entries fall below 20, in which case there will be only one (1). A Super Session will also be held.

Novice State: Regardless of the number of chambers, a "Super Session" will be held.

D. *SPLITTING SCHOOL DELEGATIONS INTO CHAMBERS*

General: At any tournament that utilizes two (2) or more chambers, contestants will be assigned to chambers so that the fewest number of contestants from the same school are placed into each chamber. Assignments will otherwise be made randomly, except that a reasonable attempt will be made to evenly distribute presiding officer nominees across all of the chambers. Every attempt should be made to make the chambers as quantitatively equal as possible. **Coaches may not assign (or request that tournament officials assign) certain contestants to specific chambers, nor may they request that certain contestants be placed in the same/different chamber.**

E. LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

Chambers will set their dockets at the beginning of each session. Legislation with authors/sponsors from a school in a chamber should have priority over legislation which does not have an author/sponsor from the school present.

F. SESSIONS, SCHEDULE, & LEGISLATIVE DAYS

General: Before the start of Session I, fifteen (15) minutes should be allotted for “Preliminary Business” (PO elections, judge arrival, seating chart, etc.). Additional time must also be allotted at the end of each session for “Orders of the Day.”

Regionals: There will be two (2) preliminary sessions.

--Regionals with one (1) chamber: Each session will have a minimum of two and one-half (2 ½) hours of debate time. Each session will count as a separate legislative day for purposes of recency.

--Regionals with multiple chambers: Each session will have a minimum of two (2) hours of debate time. Two (2) sessions will constitute a legislative day for purposes of recency. A Super Session with at least two (2) hours of debate divided equally between two (2) segments will also be held.

State Championship: There will be two (2) preliminary sessions, with each session divided into two (2) segments (a ten (10) minute recess will be held between segments). Each session will have three (3) to four (4) hours of actual debate time; time will be equally divided between the segments. Each preliminary session will count as a legislative day for purposes of recency. A Super Session with at least two (2) hours of debate divided equally between two (2) segments will also be held; the Super Session will be one (1) legislative day.

Novice State: There will be four (4) preliminary sessions. Each session will have a minimum of two (2) hours of debate time. Two (2) sessions will constitute a legislative day for recency purposes. A Super Session with at least two (2) hours of debate divided equally between two (2) segments will also be held; the Super Session will be one (1) legislative day.

G. PRESIDING OFFICER NOMINATION & SELECTION

Regionals & Novice State: All legislators are eligible to run for Presiding Officer. There will be one (1) PO per preliminary session. In the Super Session, there will be two (2) POs, with each serving for one (1) segment. There will be two (2) separate elections, with the second election starting immediately after the first has been concluded. The PO that wins the first election will select which segment he/she wishes to preside over. When a PO is not presiding over a segment, he/she may participate in floor debate.

State Championship: All legislators are eligible to run for Presiding Officer. There will be two (2) POs for each preliminary session and for the Super Session, with each serving for one (1) segment. There will be two (2) separate elections, with the second election starting immediately after the first has been concluded. The PO that wins the first election will select which segment he/she wishes to preside over. When a PO is not presiding over a segment, he/she may participate in floor debate.

H. JUDGES

General: Congressional Debate judges may be taken from any pool. A school's lack of Congressional Debate entries will not preclude its judges from being called to evaluate this event. Whenever possible, judges from schools that are not present in a given chamber will be utilized. All judges in Congressional Debate will be referred to herein as either "Scorers" or "Parliamentarians." The Scorers will evaluate each speech on the FFL Speaker Ballot. Each Scorer must evaluate every speech; **"alternate scoring" is not permitted.** Scorers will also evaluate the performance of the Presiding Officers. Every Scorer should also keep notes on each legislator's participation in questioning, decorum, etc. The Parliamentarians will ensure order and fairness in the chamber at all times while also evaluating the performance of the Presiding Officer.

Regionals and Novice State: Preliminary sessions will be evaluated by two (2) Scorers. Whenever a Super Session is held, the chamber will be evaluated by three (3) Scorers. In all sessions, one (1) of the Scorers will also assume the responsibilities of Parliamentarian.

State Championship: In the preliminary sessions, each segment will be evaluated by two (2) Scorers, with a new panel being utilized for each segment. Thus, contestants will be evaluated by four (4) different Scorers in each session. One additional official will be appointed as Parliamentarian for the entire preliminary competition. The Super Session will be evaluated by a panel of either three or five Scorers. These Scorers should be from five different regions from across the state, and should be void of conflict with all legislators in the Super Session.

II. GENERAL TOURNAMENT FORMAT

A. *NOMINATIONS PROCESS*

General: At the end of each session (or segment), the Scorers will secretly and independently rank the top eight (8) legislators in order of preference on the basis of overall performance. The Presiding Officer is always eligible for selection.

B. *CREDIT TABULATION SYSTEM*

General: The “credit system” is a conversion scale that uses the information provided by the Scorers on the Rank Form to reward legislators for outstanding performance. A legislator will receive “credits” each time his/her name appears on a Rank Form, as dictated by the scales below.

Credit System Scoring Scale:	1 st Place: 8 credits	5 th Place: 4 credits
	2 nd Place: 7 credits	6 th Place: 3 credits
	3 rd Place: 6 credits	7 th Place: 2 credits
	4 th Place: 5 credits	8 th Place: 1 credit

[N.B.: If, as noted above, a Regional Qualifying tournament needs to use a different number of selections in order to function effectively, the Regional Director shall modify this scale but the lowest rank legislator shall receive only 1 credit and each sequentially higher rank will earn 1 additional credit]

III. REGIONAL TOURNAMENTS

A. ADVANCEMENT PROCEDURE: Regions with One Chamber

As noted above, there will be two (2) sessions of Congressional Debate. Each session will be evaluated by two (2) Scorers who will rank the top eight (8) legislators at the end of the session. The rankings provided by the Scorers will be converted using the "credit system." After the conclusion of Session II, each legislator's credits for both sessions will be totaled. The legislators with the highest number of credits will be nominated for "Best Legislator" honors. The exact number of nominees will be determined using the following formula, which will ensure that an adequate number of qualifiers and alternates will be selected:

$$\# \text{ of nominees} = \# \text{ of qualifiers from the Region} + \text{two (2)}$$

If two (2) or more legislators have the same number of credits, the tie-breaking process described in Section V.A will be utilized.

This process will result in the selection of qualifiers for the State Championship Tournament, followed by the 1st and 2nd alternates.

B. ADVANCEMENT PROCEDURE: Regions with Multiple Chambers

As noted above, there will be two (2) sessions of Congressional Debate. Each session will be evaluated by two (2) Scorers who will rank the top eight (8) legislators at the end of the session. The rankings provided by the Scorers will be converted using the "credit system." A Super Session will be held after Session II; it will be used to determine the qualifiers to the State Championship Tournament.

After Session II, each legislator's credits for both sessions will be totaled. The legislators with the highest number of credits will advance to the Super Session, as follows:

- 2 chambers: Top six (6) advance (Super Session: 12 students)
- 3 chambers: Top four (4) advance (Super Session: 12 students)
- 4 chambers: Top three (3) advance (Super Session: 12 students)

If there are more than 4 chambers, an equal number of legislators from each chamber shall be advanced to the Super Session, which should remain as close to 12 students as possible. However, a Super Session must have a minimum of 12 students.

If two (2) or more legislators have the same number of credits, the tie-breaking process in Section V.A will be utilized.

As stated earlier, the Super Session will be evaluated by three (3) Scorers who will rank the top eight (8) legislators at the end of the session. The rankings provided by the Scorers will be converted using the "credit system." Credits are reset for the Super Session; totals from preliminary sessions do not carry over.

Each legislator's credits for the Super Session will be totaled. The legislators with the highest number of credits will be nominated for "Best Legislator." The exact number of nominees will be determined using the following formula, which will ensure that an adequate number of qualifiers and alternates will be selected:

of nominees = # of qualifiers from the Region + two (2)

If two (2) or more legislators have the same number of credits, the tie-breaking process described in Section V.A will be utilized.

This process will result in the selection of qualifiers for the State Championship Tournament, followed by the 1st and 2nd alternates.

IV. STATE TOURNAMENTS

A. *ADVANCEMENT PROCEDURE: State Championship Tournament*

As noted above, there will be two (2) sessions of Congressional Debate divided between two (2) segments. Each segment will be evaluated by two (2) Scorers. At the end of each segment, the Scorers will rank the top eight (8) legislators. The rankings provided by the Scorers will be converted using the "credit system." A Super Session will be held after Session II; it will be used to determine the State Champion.

In years where there are two (2) chambers, the top six (6) legislators from each will qualify to participate in the Super Session. Advancement to the Super Session is based on the following, with ties broken using the process described in Section V.A:

--Best (1) legislator in each session on "credit system"	2 total
--Top four (4) legislators overall on "credit system"	4 total
--Total:	6 (x 2)

In years where there is only one (1) chamber, the top (12) legislators will qualify to the Super Session by doubling the numbers shown above.

The Super Session will be conducted in the same manner as described in Section III.B above, except that there will be a total of eight (8) nominees for "Best Legislator."

B. *ADVANCEMENT PROCEDURE: Novice State Tournament*

As noted above, there will be four (4) sessions of Congressional Debate. Each session will be evaluated by two (2) Scorers who will rank the top six (6) legislators at the end of the session. The rankings provided by the Scorers will be converted using the "credit system." A Super Session will be held after Session IV; it will be used to determine the Novice State winner.

After Session IV, each legislator's credits for all sessions will be totaled. The legislators with the highest number of credits in each chamber will advance to the Super Session, as follows:

- 2 chambers: Top six (6) advance (Super Session: 12 students)
- 3 chambers: Top four (4) advance (Super Session: 12 students)
- 4 chambers: Top three (3) advance (Super Session: 12 students)

If there are more than 4 chambers, an equal number of legislators from each chamber shall be advanced to the Super Session, which should remain as close to 12 students as possible. However, a Super Session must have a minimum of 12 students.

If the number of entries and chambers dictate a semifinal round of Student Congress be held, league officials have jurisdiction to set the number of semifinal chambers and the number of advancing students from each preliminary chamber. An equal number of students from each preliminary chamber shall advance.

If two (2) or more legislators have the same number of credits, the tie-breaking process in Section V.A will be utilized.

The Super Session will be conducted in the same manner as described in

Section III.B above, except that there will be a total of eight (8) nominees for “Best Legislator.”

V. FINAL TOURNAMENT RESULTS

A. *TIE-BREAKING PROCESS: All tournaments*

For Advancement to a Super Session: The following process will be used in the event that two (2) or more legislators have the same number of credits when determining qualifiers for the Super Session (Regional tournaments with multiple chambers, State Championship, and Novice State).

- a. "Judge's Preference:" Each Scorer's Rank Form will be examined to determine which legislator ranked in a higher position. The legislator who ranked higher the most number of times will win the tie-breaker.
- b. "Reciprocals:" Each Rank Form will be examined to determine the ranking given by each Scorer to the legislators involved in the tie. These ranks will then be converted to decimals using the reciprocal values specified in the FFL IE/Speech Events Standing Rules. A legislator who was not listed (did not rank) on a Scorer's Rank Form will receive a decimal value of 0.0 for that specific Rank Form. The legislator who has the highest reciprocal value will win the tie-breaker.
- c. "First Place:" Each Scorer's Rank Form will be examined to determine whether any legislator involved in the tie ranked in first place. The legislator that ranked in first place the most number of times will win the tie-breaker.
- d. If still tied after "c," then all legislators still involved in the tie will advance to the Super Session.

For "Best Legislator" Nomination at the Conclusion of All Tournaments:

The tie-breaking process described above will be used in the event that two (2) or more legislators have the same number of credits when determining nominations for "Best Legislator" (after Session II at Regional tournaments with one chamber; at the end of the Super Session for Regional tournaments with multiple chambers, State Championship, and Novice State). If a tie remains after "c," then all legislators still involved in the tie will be placed into nomination.

VI. SUPER SESSION INFORMATION

A. *SUPER SESSION LEGISLATION*

General: Special legislation must be prepared for tournaments with a Super Session. A total of between three (3) and five (5) bills/resolutions should be prepared for a Super Session.

Regionals: Regional Directors will be responsible for creating the Super Session legislation; items that are used at the tournament may not be used in the Super Session. The time frame for announcement/distribution of this material will be at the discretion of the Regional Director.

State Championship & Novice State: A league official will be responsible for creating the Super Session legislation for these tournaments. The full text of each piece of legislation will be made available prior to the tournament at a time selected by the league official.

B. *SUPER SESSION DEBATE*

General: Debate on each piece of legislation will begin with a sponsorship speech. The sponsor for each item will be determined on the basis of recency. The sponsor of the legislation will be required to answer two (2) minutes of questions following his/her sponsorship speech.

VII. CONGRESSIONAL OPERATIONS

A. *PRESIDING OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES*

General: The Presiding Officer must be familiar with all operational procedures, especially those described in Sections VII.B and VII.C below. Specifically, the Presiding Officer must:

1. Maintain the official record of speaking order for the chamber,
2. Keep an accurate seating chart that includes an a record of speaking order,
3. Maintain an accurate legislative calendar,
4. Serve as the official timekeeper and give time signals to speakers,
5. Ensure order in the chamber, and
6. Assist the next PO in his/her preparation for the following session.

B. *PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE*

General: Unless a specific guideline is addressed in these rules, NSDA Rules and Robert's Rules of Order (in that respective order of preference) will be used to resolve disputes regarding parliamentary procedure. The NSDA Table of Most Frequently Used Parliamentary Motions will serve as the FFL's official guide for handling motions.

Chamber Titles: At all tournaments with one (1) chamber, that chamber will function as a Senate. Members of the Senate will refer to each other as "Senator" and the PO as "Mister/Madame President." At tournaments with multiple chambers, the appropriate tournament official will designate some chambers as "Senates" (with the guidelines above) and some chambers as "Houses." Members of the House will refer to each other as "Representative" and the PO as "Mister/Madame Speaker."

Speeches: A legislator may speak for an unlimited number of times during a legislative day. Note that NSDA rules may limit the number of speeches that may count for speaker point submission, but because these guidelines change frequently there will not be a limit as to the number of times that a legislator may give a speech. All speeches are three (3) minutes long; a grace period may apply at the discretion of the Presiding Officer. No speech may be interrupted unless the PO or another member of the chamber believes that the speech is "out of order," or unless a legislator makes a motion that may, according to the NSDA Table..., interrupt a speaker to be considered.

Speaker Recognition: Recognition of speakers will be based on the recency system. Recency requires that, when two (2) or more legislators wish to give a speech, the legislator with the fewest number of speeches for the legislative day will be recognized. If two (2) or more legislators have zero (0) speeches for the legislative day, the PO will use his/her discretion to determine which legislator will be recognized. If two (2) or more legislators have the same number of speeches for the legislative day, the legislator who gave his/her last speech the longest time ago (earliest in the legislative day) will be recognized. The only time that the recency system does not determine speaking order is

for authorship speeches, which are reserved for authors of legislation regardless of their recency status.

Questioning Periods: Authorship/Sponsorship: this is the “first constructive” speech on each item of legislation. The speaker has a maximum of three minutes for the speech itself. Afterwards is a full, mandatory two-minute questioning period by fellow legislators.

Affirmative and Negative Speeches: After the authorship/sponsorship speech for each item of legislation, alternating negative and affirmative speeches are given. The first negative speaker has three minutes to speak with a mandatory two-minute questioning period by fellow legislators. After that, each speaker is allowed a maximum of three minutes to speak, with a mandatory one-minute questioning period.

All questioning periods will be controlled by the PO, who will recognize legislators wishing to ask questions. The method of recognition will be left to the discretion of the PO but no legislator may be recognized to ask a second question (including consecutive questions) unless no one else wishes to ask a question. The PO may rule that any legislator who asks a “follow-up,” “two-part,” “extended preface,” or irrelevant question is out of order. At the discretion of the PO, speakers may ask for a clarification or a restatement of any question. No speaker may answer a question by responding with a question (rhetorical questions may be permitted at the discretion of the PO). The chamber has the authority to create or extend a questioning period for an individual speaker, but only if that speaker yields to questions. Under no circumstances may the chamber suspend the rules to create a questioning period for all speeches, nor to eliminate all questioning periods.

Rules of Voting: For all motions and questions that require a “simple majority” (50% + 1), the vote will be tabulated based on the number of legislators present and voting; abstentions should not be taken, nor counted, when determining the final results of the vote. For all motions and questions that require a fraction (1/5, 1/3, 2/3) of the chamber to support approval, the vote will be tabulated based on the number of legislators present in the chamber at the time of the vote. Instead of taking abstentions, the PO should count the number of legislators in the chamber at the time of the vote.

Methods of Voting: The Presiding Officer will use his/her discretion to determine which method of voting will be used to vote on a motion or question. Votes on final passage of legislation or amendments, motions for roll call votes, and the second required to consider amendments must be taken through a “recorded” method (hands or standing). Simple motions may be decided by voice vote, but any member of the chamber may demand a “recorded” vote by calling for a division of the chamber. Roll-call votes may be used by the PO or may be moved by any member of the chamber (requires a 1/5 vote to pass). A motion to appeal the decision of the chair will automatically result in use of the roll-call method. All tournament-required votes (elections) will be taken by secret ballot.

Tie Votes: The PO will not vote on any motion or question unless there is a tie vote on a motion or question that requires a “simple majority.” In those cases, the PO will have

the option of casting a deciding vote, which must be announced to the entire chamber. The PO may also choose not to vote in a tie situation, in which case the motion/question is defeated. On motions to appeal the decision of the chair, a tie vote will automatically cause the motion to be defeated (the PO can not vote in this situation).

Minimum Cycle: Once a bill/resolution has been called up for debate by the PO, it may not be disposed of until the PO has given the opportunity for an authorship speech, a negative speech, and a non-authorial affirmative speech.

Improper Speeches: Legislators may not speak on both sides of the same piece of legislation unless it is amended. Also, legislators may not give an affirmative speech if recognized for a negative speech and vice versa. While speaking on an amendment, legislators may not make references to or bring up arguments that relate to debate on parts of the legislation that do not pertain to the amendment. Finally, a legislator may not yield any of his/her speaking time to another legislator for any reason. If the PO determines that a violation has occurred, he/she shall rule that the legislator is out of order. The decision of the chair may be appealed. A legislator who is out of order must stop speaking and immediately relinquish the floor. He/she will receive a score of zero (0) for the speech, and the speech will count against the legislator's recency.

Amendments: Amendments must be submitted in writing using the FFL Amendment Form. Completed forms will be sent to the PO, who will read it to ensure that the amendment is properly formatted (see NSDA Table...). A motion to amend is required for action to begin—this motion may not be made until after the completion of the authorship speech and questioning. Once the motion has been made, the PO will designate the amendment by reading it aloud to the chamber. After consulting with the Parliamentarian, the PO must make a ruling as to whether or not the amendment is germane (it must not alter the intent of the legislation); both the PO and Parliamentarian must agree that the amendment is germane before such a ruling is made. If the amendment is accepted by the PO, there will be an immediate vote to "second" the amendment, which requires that one-third (1/3) of the chamber support its consideration. A successful second leads to consideration of the amendment through floor debate. Debate will begin with a three (3) minute sponsorship speech, which is followed by a mandatory two (2) minute questioning period. The author of the amendment is not guaranteed the sponsorship speech; recency will determine which legislator will be recognized to serve as the amendment's sponsor. After the sponsorship speech, debate will alternate between both sides until the previous question is called or until the amendment is disposed of in some other manner. The previous question may be called at any time during the debate on the amendment, even before the sponsorship speech is given. Once the previous question is called, a final vote on adoption of the amendment will occur. Amendments require a majority vote to pass. Whenever consideration of an amendment ends, debate on the legislation will continue at the point where it stopped when the amendment was moved.

C. DECORUM

General: All legislators are expected to act in a professional manner while in and around the chamber. The PO will have the authority to rule that any speech, question, answer, or comment that he/she deems to be offensive or inappropriate is out of order. Additionally, Scorers and Parliamentarians may take a legislator's decorum and/or conduct into consideration when completing their Rank Forms.

FFL CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE MANUAL

APPENDIX A

LEGISLATION FORMATS & SAMPLES

While the following information is mostly original material created for the FFL, the author wishes to note that portions were adapted from his previous work on the Congressional Debate Manual of the North Florida Catholic Forensic League.

FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE STANDARD BILL FORMAT

Title of Bill

1. Be it enacted by this FFL Congressional Debate here assembled that:
2. Section I: Concise statement of the new policy to be adopted.
3. Section II: Create subsequent subsections (as many as needed) to define any
4. important terms, lay out plans for implementation, and offer other
5. guidelines and requirements.
6. Section III: State the implementation date for the legislation.
7. Section IV: Designate a government agency or agencies responsible for
8. executing the terms of the bill, indicate how the financial costs of
9. the legislation will be funded, and what penalties (if any) will be
10. imposed for violations.
11. Section V: Provide a null and void clause.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by (Author's Name), (Author's School/Region)

FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE SAMPLE BILL

A Bill to Repeal the Power of the Federal Reserve System to Make Interest Rate Changes

1. Be it enacted by this FFL Congressional Debate here assembled that:
2. Section I: The Federal Reserve System shall lose its power to make changes
3. to interest rates.
4. Section II: The “Federal Reserve System” shall include the Board of Governors,
5. Regional Reserve Banks, branches, and the Federal Open Market
6. Committee.
7. Section III: This legislation shall take effect three (3) months after passage by this
8. legislative body.
9. Section IV: The U.S. Congress shall assume responsibility for interest rate changes.
10. The Federal Reserve System shall be permitted to make recommendations
11. to the U.S. Congress regarding changes in the interest rate.
12. Section V: All laws or portions of laws in conflict with the provisions of this
13. legislation shall hereby be declared null and void.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by Jason Wysong, University of Florida

FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE STANDARD RESOLUTION FORMAT

Title of Resolution

1. Whereas, Clearly state the problem your legislation is addressing; and
2. Whereas, Suggest the causes of the problem; and
3. Whereas, Describe the ways in which the problem manifests itself; and
4. Whereas, Explain why the problem is so difficult to solve; now, therefore, be it
5. Resolved, By this FFL Congressional Debate here assembled that: state your
6. recommendation for dealing with the problem.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by (Author's Name), (Author's School/Region)

Note: Although the resolution format shown here uses a four "whereas clause" format, you may choose to have as many whereas clauses as you want (the minimum number of clauses needed is two). The content of each clause is your choice; you are not required to follow the above structure.

FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE SAMPLE RESOLUTION

A Resolution to Discourage State and Local Governments from Hiring Private Contractors to Oversee Administration of Prisons

1. Whereas, Many state and local governments are contracting the operation of state
2. and local correctional facilities to private management corporations; and
3. Whereas, Numerous allegations of prisoner mistreatment have been lodged against
4. corrections officials employed by these corporations; and
5. Whereas, Inadequate supervision of prison guards by these private corporations is
6. contributing to high levels of alleged mistreatment; and
7. Whereas, Controlling governments have failed to ensure that basic standards of
8. humanitarian treatment are being properly observed by these corporations
9. and their employees; and
10. Whereas, Continued problems in these facilities could result in such dangerous
11. events as prison riots; now, therefore, be it
12. Resolved, By this FFL Congressional Debate here assembled that: all state and local
13. governments be discouraged from entering future contracts with private
14. corporations to provide management or operations services to correctional
15. facilities.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by Jason Wysong, University of Florida

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APPENDIX B

JUDGING PACKET

While the following information is mostly original material created for the FFL, the author wishes to note that portions were adapted from his previous work on the Congressional Debate Manual of the North Florida Catholic Forensic League.

FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE

INSTRUCTIONS FOR

CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE SCORERS

Serving as a Scorer at an FFL Congressional Debate is not a difficult task if you follow the procedures and guidelines stated below. Always remember that, if you are not absolutely sure that you understand your responsibilities, you should ask an FFL Official.

If you are called to serve as a Scorer at an FFL Congressional Debate, you should make sure that you find out what room the chamber is in and at what time the session is going to begin. You should try to arrive about ten (10) minutes early so that you can familiarize yourself with the room, the seating chart, and the procedures for the tournament.

You should sit facing the front of the room or the area that speakers will be using to present their arguments. You should try to sit as far away from the contestants and other observers as possible. At some tournaments, a table may be designated for your use.

If utilizing electronic ballots: Follow the procedures set by the specific tournament software provider for accessing, filling out, and submitting ballots.

If utilizing electronic ballots, as a scorer you will need to evaluate the performance of the Presiding Officer utilizing the procedures set by the specific tournament software provider for accessing, filling out, and submitting Presiding Officer ballots.

If utilizing paper ballots: Make sure that you have been given the FFL's "Congressional Debate Speaker Ballot." You will use this form to formally evaluate every speech that is given in the chamber. Each time a legislator is recognized for the purpose of making a three (3) minute speech on an item of legislation, you should complete a ballot for him or her. Make sure that you do not confer with any other official about the quality of any speech or legislator before, during, or after the session has ended.

1. Be sure to fill out all identification information on the ballot (e.g.: speaker's name, school, the session #, Bill or Resolution #, etc.). Also, make sure to circle the side that the speaker will be speaking on [Affirmative or Negative]).
2. Rank each speaker on a scale from 1 - 6 (1 is lowest; 6 is highest) in each of the five (5) categories on the ballot. You must also provide some written comments in the designated space.
3. At the end of the speech, assign a final score to the speech. This score should be based on the average of the scores you gave in the categories, as well as a reflection of the overall quality of the speech. Your final score must be a whole number between 1 and 6, so round accordingly.
4. For information regarding proper scoring of a speech, please see the "FFL Scorer's Rubric."

Also if utilizing paper ballots, as a Scorer, you will need to evaluate the performance of the Presiding Officer on the FFL "Congressional Debate Presiding Officer Ballot."

1. Make sure that you fill out the ballot properly. Provide all information that is

specifically requested.

2. Evaluate the Presiding Officer in terms of the four (4) categories provide on the ballot. You should write comments on the ballot as the session progresses (and can use the reverse side of the ballot to add comments). Specifically reference any errors that were made while also providing some positive feedback.
3. At the end of the session, give the P.O. a score from 1 - 6 points when evaluating "Fairness in Recognizing Speakers" and 0 - 2 points for each of the other three categories, by circling the number of points you think is appropriate. Then, add up all of the points and assign the P.O.'s final score on the "Overall Score" line.
4. Make sure that you sign the bottom of the ballot before you submit it.
5. For information regarding proper scoring of the P.O., please see the "FFL Presiding Officer Evaluation Rubric."

Your other major responsibility during the session is to note how well each legislator performs with respect to participation in questioning periods, level of involvement in parliamentary disputes, interaction with other legislators, decorum, behavior, and attendance. All of these factors should be considered when making selections for "Best Legislator" at the end of your period of service.

If you were told that you would be serving jointly as a Parliamentarian and a Scorer, you should also read the FFL's "Instructions for Congressional Debate Parliamentarians." This position requires the performance of a few extra duties, which are outlined in that document.

At the end of a session, Scorers will select the students who, in their opinion, were excellent speakers (as defined by the scores you have given on your ballots) and excellent legislators (defined by your assessment of each legislator's performance in the areas listed above). An FFL tournament official will tell you how many legislators you may select (depending on the tournament, you may be asked to name anywhere from one [1] to eight [8] legislators). Do not confer or collaborate with any other official when making your selections. Remember that the Presiding Officer is eligible for selection as one of the top legislators in the session. You can determine whether the P.O. should be placed on your rank form by answering the following question: *"Did the P.O.'s performance in the session benefit the chamber at least as much as the performance of the lowest-ranked speaker that I can nominate?"* If your answer is yes, then you should nominate the Presiding Officer.

When completing the rank form, make sure that you list the name and school of each legislator in order of your preference (1st Place, 2nd Place, etc.). If you list the names at random, your rank form will adversely affect the tournament results because each preference slot is worth more credit than the preference slots below it.

After the session is over, make sure that you have signed all ballots and rank forms. You can return all of your materials to the ballot check-in location, which will vary from tournament to tournament.

FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE

INSTRUCTIONS FOR

CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE PARLIAMENTARIANS

Being assigned the position of “Parliamentarian” in a Congressional Debate chamber often worries some judges who are afraid that they are not qualified or do not have enough experience to perform the responsibilities associated with the position. Often, these fears are unfounded. Only in very rare cases is a Parliamentarian asked to make a procedural ruling or determine the fairness of an action by the Presiding Officer. Because the FFL wishes to ensure fairness at all of its sanctioned tournaments, Parliamentarians who encounter difficult situations in their chambers are encouraged to go to the tab room and ask the designated FFL tournament official for assistance.

Most FFL tournaments combine the position of Scorer and Parliamentarian. Therefore, you should read the “FFL Instructions for Congressional Debate Scorers” first. At the State Championship tournament, one person will be assigned to the position of Parliamentarian for each chamber. Those Parliamentarians will serve for the entire preliminary competition.

As Parliamentarian, you are expected to keep a record of all speeches given during your term of service. Begin by noting the name of the Presiding Officer and awarding that person the first two (2) speeches of the session (# 1 & # 2). The first speaker that you hear will be recorded as # 3, the second speaker will be recorded as # 4, etc. Your records may be used in the event that a major controversy arises regarding the Presiding Officer’s fairness with respect to recognition of speakers.

As noted above, you may be called upon to make a ruling that will affect the course of debate in the chamber. You should treat this responsibility with complete seriousness. If a dispute arises, you may consult with the Presiding Officer in private. Generally, it is best to allow the P.O. to make the ruling that he or she believes to be correct UNLESS you know that the P.O.’s ruling directly contradicts the provisions of the FFL Congressional Debate Manual and/or Robert’s Rules of Order. Remember that, when in doubt, it is always best to consult an FFL Tournament Official.

As the Parliamentarian, it is NOT your right or responsibility to “run” the session. If you have concerns regarding the manner in which the chamber is being operated, you should share them with the P.O. in private – don’t share your concerns aloud with the entire chamber. You should initiate action in the chamber unless the P.O. has lost all control over the legislature.

FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE

CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE EVALUATION RUBRIC

FOR SPEAKERS

This form may be used by any official who would like assistance in understanding how to determine scores for speakers. Although judges are under no obligation to adopt the ideas put forth below, Scorers and Parliamentarians that are new to Congressional Debate should consider using it as a guide to distinguishing between various types of speeches.

Category 1: Delivery

A **"6" in delivery** should be given to speakers whose presentation is truly outstanding. There should be few pronunciation errors and vocal delivery should be strong but varied with respect to volume and emphasis. The speech should be fluid and must be "delivered" (not read). Eye contact with the chamber, effective gestures, and appropriate movement should be evident in the presentation. A **"5" should be given** to speakers whose presentation is strong, but which contains a few mistakes, including problems with pronunciation and enunciation. Vocal delivery is not as strong, but is still effective. The speech may be partially read or may not flow as well as it could. Eye contact, gestures, and movement should be present, but may not be as frequent or effective; in the case of gestures, they may come at awkward times. A **"4" should be given** to speakers whose presentation is satisfactory but unimpressive. The speaker has made errors in pronunciation and the speech is delivered in a monotone voice or is read word-for-word from prepared notes. Eye contact is minimal and gestures are either minimal or ineffective; movement is awkward and sometimes distracting. In rare instances, a **"3" may be given** to speakers whose presentation needs a great deal of improvement. This score should be justified with a WRITTEN explanation. Some of the factors could include a very short (less than 1 minute) speech with no display of eye contact, gestures, and movement. Also, a speaker who talks so softly that he or she can not be heard by anyone may be given a 3 if the other non-verbal portions of the presentation were less than satisfactory.

Category 2: Quality of Argumentation

A **"6" in this category** should be given to speakers who are able to effectively combine new arguments not previously discussed with refutation or response to points that were previously discussed. A **"5" in this category** should be given to speakers who offer new arguments and respond to old ones, but who do so in an unbalanced manner (too much refutation or too much new argument). A **"5"** may also be given for refutation and response which will not advance debate. A **"4" should be given** to speakers who either provide NO new arguments OR who provide NO refutation of previous arguments. A **"3" may be given** if the Scorer concludes that all of the arguments and assertions made by the speaker were already brought forth by previous speakers AND that there was no significant refutation of previous arguments.

Category 3: Organization & Unity of Speech

A **"6" in this category** should be given to speakers who demonstrate or adhere to a clear structure (intro., 2-4 points, conc.) that is easy to follow. The speech should have good transitions and should develop. A **"5" in this category** should be given to speakers whose organization is too loose (weak intro., no transition between points, no conclusion), or to speakers who ramble so far away from their central argument that the structure of the speech is lost. A **"4" in this category** should be given to speakers who demonstrate almost no structure (no intro. or conc., 1 point or no clear way to determine whether there was more than 1 point, etc.), or to speakers who indicate that they will speak on multiple points but then ramble so far off track that they fail to get to their later points before time expires. A **"3" in this category** should only be given if the Scorer was completely unable to understand the speech because it lacked structure entirely, so that the speaker had no central arguments or assertions.

Category 4: Evidence & Logical Basis for Statements

A “6” in this category should be given to speakers who make use of quantitative (public opinion surveys, crime statistics, etc.) and qualitative (expert testimony, editorial writing) support material in a persuasive manner. Evidence should NOT just be read; it should be analyzed and used to draw conclusions. All evidence should be properly cited. A “5” in this category should be given to speakers who either use a lot of evidence that is not very effective or persuasive OR to speakers who use only 1 (one) piece of evidence that is VERY effective and persuasive. A “4” in this category should automatically be given to speakers who use no quantitative or qualitative evidence. A “3” in this category should be given if it is also clear that the speaker did not attempt to use logic and reasoning to form arguments that could be supported without evidence.

Category 5: Overall Impact & Impression

This score should be based on the “gut feeling” of the Scorer after thinking about two general areas: quality of content in speech and quality of presentation of content.

Total Point Award:

The total point award is the number of speaker points awarded to the legislator for the speech. To obtain this score, either average the scores in the five categories and round accordingly OR give the same score that was placed in the “Overall Impact & Impression” category.

Assignment of Scores Less than “3”:

Scores of less than “3” in Congressional Debate **are not encouraged** and should only be given in **extreme circumstances**. This includes use of abusive language in a speech, use of a degrading personal attack on another legislator, or extremely short speeches (less than 45 seconds) that have absolutely no value to the chamber. Anytime a Scorer chooses to give a score of less than “3,” there should be **substantial written comments** on the speaker’s ballot, including a description of any specific incident(s) which would justify the score.

FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE

CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE EVALUATION RUBRIC

FOR PRESIDING OFFICERS

Factors to consider when entering scores for Presiding Officers in a chamber:

Fairness in Recognition of Speakers/Use of Recency System:

Earning high scores in this category requires that the P.O. make **no more than** one (1) speaker recognition error during his/her term of service. The P.O. must have also recognized speakers in a clearly unbiased manner. In general, the number of speeches given should have been disbursed equally throughout the room (geographically), equally between schools of the same size, and among individuals.

Earning adequate scores in this category requires that the P.O. make recognition errors that were significant in number and importance. The P.O. may also earn adequate scores if he or she recognizes speakers in a somewhat biased manner.

Earning low scores in this category requires that the P.O. make several errors in recognition. The P.O. must also have clearly shown that he or she was recognizing speakers in a completely unfair manner. The P.O. may also receive low scores if he or she is clearly biased in favor of his or her school.

Category 2: Knowledge of Parliamentary Procedure/Quality of Rulings:

High scores in this category require a P.O. has managed the session with outstanding efficiency. The P.O. must have clearly demonstrated that he or she is well-versed in parliamentary procedure; the P.O. should have made no errors in determining whether motions pass or fail, and should have had to “look up” rules only in **extreme circumstances**.

Adequate scores in this category should be given to any P.O. who demonstrates competency in parliamentary procedure but makes mistakes in determining the result of motions, knowing the process for acting on each motion, etc.

Low scores in this category should be given to POs who demonstrate that they have no significant knowledge of parliamentary procedure. The P.O. who receives low scores in this category should have made several major procedural errors and should have had to consult the Parliamentarian or the rules manual too often.

Category 3: Control of the Chamber:

Presiding Officers who maintain their authority in the chamber at all times, and who are able to effectively suppress outbursts in the chamber **should be given high scores**. Presiding Officers who are unable to maintain their authority, as evidenced by frequent outbursts in the chamber, **should be given adequate scores**. **Low scores** should only be given in **extreme circumstances**. If the Presiding Officer loses control of the chamber to the point that the Parliamentarian is forced to intervene to establish order, the P.O. should be scored low in this category.

Category 4: Delivery/Decorum:

High scores in this category should be given to Presiding Officers who speak loudly and clearly, who establish and maintain their authority, and who conduct themselves in a very professional manner.

Adequate scores in this category should be given to POs who are unable to concisely and clearly make rulings. The P.O. may have also taken up a style that results in his or her inability to establish authority and control. The P.O. may have also experienced a lack of confidence. **Low scores in this category** should be given in **extreme** circumstances only; a low score in this category is only justified when the P.O. acts in a completely unprofessional manner. If a low score is given, extensive notes should be made on the ballot.

FFL CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE MANUAL

APPENDIX C

TOURNAMENT FORMS

While the following forms are mostly original designs created for the FFL, the author wishes to note that portions were adapted from his previous work on the Congressional Debate Manual of the North Florida Catholic Forensic League.

FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE

CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE SPEAKER BALLOT

Instructions to Scorer: Please award each speaker a score of 1 to 6 (1 is low and 6 is high) in each of the five categories below. Use one ballot for each speech. The “overall” score should reflect both an average of the scores in the categories and the overall quality of the speech. Whole numbers must be used (no fractions are permitted). In addition to the numerical score evaluation, you should make as many written comments as possible. Please make sure that you complete all of the requested information.

SPEAKER’S NAME: _____ **SCHOOL:** _____

B/R # or Topic: _____ **SIDE:** Aut Spo Aff Neg

Chamber #: _____ **Session:** _____ **Segment:** _____

DELIVERY _____
--Seriousness of purpose, style, poise, & coherency

QUALITY OF ARGUMENTATION _____
--Does the speech advance debate? Or, does it merely rehash old points?

ORGANIZATION AND UNITY OF SPEECH _____
--Does it ramble? Does it develop?

EVIDENCE & LOGICAL BASIS FOR STATEMENTS _____
--Breadth of knowledge on subject; use of published evidence; reasoning skills.

OVERALL IMPACT & IMPRESSION _____

TOTAL POINT AWARD (1-6 SCALE): _____

COMMENTS:

Scorer’s Signature: _____

Scorer’s School: _____

FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE

CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE PRESIDING OFFICER BALLOT

Instructions to Official: Please evaluate the Presiding Officer of the session by assigning a score for each of the following evaluation categories. To obtain the final score, add the points from all categories (your total score will be between 1 and 12). In addition to the numerical evaluation, please make as many written comments as possible in the spaces provided..

Name of PO: _____ School: _____

Chamber #: _____ Session: _____ Segment: _____

Fairness in Recognition of Speakers:	1	2	3	4	5	6
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AUTHORSHIP/SPONSORSHIP SPEECHES HAVE AUTOMATIC PRIORITY.

AFTER THAT, GEOGRAPHY – AT THE START OF THE OPENING SESSION, THE PO SHOULD BE CALLING SPEAKERS FROM DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE CHAMBER / DIFFERENT SCHOOLS.

NEXT, NUMBER OF SPEECHES GIVEN - IF MULTIPLE LEGISLATORS ARE STANDING TO BE RECOGNIZED TO SPEAK, WHOEVER HAS GIVEN THE FEWEST SPEECHES HAS PRECEDENCE.

FINALLY, THERE'S RECENCY – IF MULTIPLE LEGISLATORS ARE STANDING TO BE RECOGNIZED TO SPEAK, AND HAVE GIVEN AN EQUAL NUMBER OF SPEECHES, WHOEVER HAS SPOKEN LEAST RECENTLY HAS PRIORITY.

*"Longest Standing" and "Activity in the Chamber" (number of questions asked by a student) are faulty speaker recognition systems and should **not** be used to determine a fair speaker order.*

Comments:

Knowledge of Parliamentary Procedure/Quality of Rulings:	0	1	2
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Comments:

Control of Chamber:	0	1	2
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Comments:

Delivery/Decorum:	0	1	2
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Comments:

OVERALL SCORE: _____

Additional Comments:

Parliamentarian's Signature: _____

Parliamentarian's School:

FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE

CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE RANK FORM

Instructions to Scorer: A tournament official will let you know how many legislators you need to rank. Typically, you will rank the top six (6) legislators (eight (8) if you are evaluating a Super Session) in the order that you felt they finished. Place each name and school code in your preference order (your top choice should go on the first line, your second choice on the second line, etc.) Failure to list your selections in preference order will adversely affect the tournament results, so double check this form before you submit it. **Remember that the Presiding Officer is eligible for selection. Do not, for any reason, reveal the names of your nominees and/or the order that you nominated them!!!**

Chamber #: _____ Session: _____ Segment: _____

1st Place: _____ School: _____

2nd Place: _____ School: _____

3rd Place: _____ School: _____

4th Place: _____ School: _____

5th Place: _____ School: _____

6th Place: _____ School: _____

7th Place: _____ School: _____

8th Place: _____ School: _____

The Presiding Officer of the session IS / IS NOT included in my rankings.

(circle one)

I certify that the above selections indicate my preferences based on my assessment of the quality of the overall performance of each legislator.

Scorer's Signature: _____

Official's School: _____

FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE
CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE AMENDMENT FORM

Author of Amendment: _____

B/R #: _____ Title of B/R: _____

Lines Affected: _____

Amendment Wording: _____

Accepted by P.O.: Y N # of Seconds: _____ Y N

Notes on Debate:

Final Vote: Yes _____ No _____ Pass Fail

FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE
CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE AMENDMENT FORM

Author of Amendment: _____

B/R #: _____ Title of B/R: _____

Lines Affected: _____

Amendment Wording: _____

Accepted by P.O.: Y N # of Seconds: _____ Y N

Notes on Debate:

Final Vote: Yes _____ No _____ Pass Fail