

Maine Forensic Association
Congressional Debate Manual
2010-2011

2010-2011 Maine Forensic Association Congressional Debate Manual

Table of Contents

An Overview of Congressional Debate.....	1
Changes in the 2010-2011 Debate Year.....	2
Bills, Resolutions, and Amendments.....	2-6
The Docket and Its Guidelines.....	6
Procedures and Motions.....	6-7
Presiding Officer Guidelines.....	7-9
Voting Procedures and Guidelines.....	9-10
Amendment Procedures.....	10
Submission of Legislation.....	10-11
Questioning of the Speaker in Congressional Debate.....	11
Judging Requirements for Congressional Debate.....	11
Scoring.....	12
Clashing in Congressional Debate.....	12
Misc.....	13
Registration for Tournaments.....	13
Preparing for a Speech.....	13-14
Methods of Practicing.....	14
Public Relations and Preparing for the Day.....	14-15
Code of Conduct Regulations.....	15-16
MFA & NFL Participation Requirements.....	16
State Tournament Regulations & Procedures.....	16
Resources.....	16-17
Glossary.....	17-19

What is Congressional Debate?

Congressional Debate is a Maine Forensic Association and National Forensic League sanctioned oratorical event in which students serve as legislators (either “senators” or “representatives”) and debate current issues facing the United States. Representative of the United States Congress, legislators learn how to research, debate, and use parliamentary procedure in order to affect positive change at the grassroots level and understand the political process and its inner workings. By participating in this event, students also become educated as to the process by which bills and resolutions become a law. Every session, legislators are presented with a new “docket,” or listing of bills and resolutions to be considered for passage.

Participating in Congressional Debate

Similar to the United States Congress, Congressional Debate participants are subdivided into two categories: Senators and Representatives. Designation is based upon experience as well as registration in the event. In the Senate, each participating school can register no more than two (2) students for any competition. All remaining participants should be registered in the House of Representatives, where there is no cap upon the amount of students registered per school. To be an NFL sanctioned event, at least four (4) schools must participate in the event. Students may qualify for the NFL National Tournament each year.

Changes in the 2010-2011 Debate Year

- There is no longer a motion for an open chamber. Any motion to this effect (other than a motion to rise to a point of personal privilege) should be deemed dilatory by the Chair.
- Sponsorship speeches have returned! Affirmative speeches (not authorships) will once again be referred to as sponsorship speeches; thus, the legislator affirming the legislation will be called a sponsor.
- The NFL officially discourages the extension of the questioning period. While not illegal, motions to this extent should be weighed by the Chair prior to being deemed dilatory or germane. Extending the questioning period, if allowed, should **not** be used as a means to take up remaining time in the session.
- Voting is no longer based solely on the cumulative total of speeches given. Rather, judges should preferentially rank their top eight (8) legislators based on participation, speech quality, speech content, and cordiality.
- Until recency (precedence) has been established, geography and activity will now be used to determine questioners and speakers. This policy is new this year to align with the NFL National Tournament guidelines and expectations during each session of congress.
- The parliamentarian will now rank the legislators (including the Presiding Officer) on a preferential ballot that includes the top eight (8) legislators of any given session.
- There is no longer a participation bonus of two (2) points awarded by the parliamentarian to each legislator who gives at least one speech.

Bills, Resolutions, and Amendments

The following table represents the basic similarities and differences between bills, resolutions, and Constitutional amendments. For more information, see the NFL Congressional Debate Manual at www.nflonline.org.

Type of Legislation	Purpose	Format (see pgs. 3-5)
Bill	<p>Mandate a certain action (or inaction) by passage; amend/change an existing law; or fulfill another specific duty.</p> <p>. A bill is made up of several statements that have the power of law. When debating a bill, current law should be taken into consideration. Format of a bill has the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A title Clause indicating who is debating it A series of statements that create/outline the intricacies of the law to be passed. Finished with the author's name. It needs to be submitted typed <p>2. According to the NFL Manual, a bill must be "an enumeration of specific provisions, which if enacted must be very specific about:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What is to be done How it will be done Who will be responsible for carrying out or enforcing the law Penalties for non-compliance Sources of funding The date(s) various provisions of the law will take effect <p>3. Limit the bill to specific provisions. Do not include argumentation in the bill (save that for speeches). "Whereas clauses" should not appear in bills.</p> <p>4. Bills must have a short descriptive title.</p> <p>5. When sending your Bills to your coach you must identify the author of the bill, the author's phone number or email address, and the date of the Congress for which the bill is being submitted</p>	<p>Title</p> <p>Enacting Clause</p> <p>Supporting Sections</p> <p>"Null and Void" Clause</p> <p>Submission Clause</p>
Resolution	<p>Support or condemn a certain action (or inaction) without the force of law; or state the general opinion of the Congress.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> They are usually generalized statements expressing the belief of the group adopting them, and they do not have the force of law. A resolution is the government going on record stating that something should be done about the problem. Resolutions have the same requirements as bills with the following exceptions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Resolutions begin: "Be it resolved by the Student Congress here assembled that..." Resolutions may include whereas clauses. Whereas clauses provide the principle for adopting the resolution 	<p>Title</p> <p>"Whereas" Clauses</p> <p>Resolved Clause(s)</p> <p>Further Resolved Clause*</p> <p>Submission Clause</p>
Constitutional Amendment	<p>Amend an amendment; add a Constitutional amendment; or repeal a constitutional amendment.</p>	<p>Title</p> <p>"Whereas" Clause(s)*</p> <p>Amendment Clause</p> <p>Submission Clause</p>

Defending a Bill or Resolution

Structure your speech: intro, body, and conclusion. Respond to criticism first, then build your new arguments, and **use as much evidence as possible**. Don't think you have to think in black and white, be ready to acknowledge minor flaws, and weigh benefits against costs/flaws, etc.

Attacking a bill or resolution

- a. Structure your speech: intro, body, and conclusion.
- b. You don't have to think in black and white.
- c. Suggestions for analysis
 1. Is the legislation too vague or unclear?
 2. Will the legislation solve the problem it was designed to?
 3. Will the bill cost too much for the benefits (Cost can be \$, social trade-offs, security risks, etc)?
 4. Is the premise of the legislation based on incorrect data (Be sure you can document the correct data) ?
 5. Is it possible to put the legislation into effect ?
 6. Will the problems (trade-offs) created by the legislation outweigh the benefits ?
 7. Is the legislation really within the jurisdiction of the federal government ?

Example A: Bill to Enact a Flat Tax

1. **BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:**
2. **SECTION 1.** The United States tax code is hereby amended to enact a flat tax of seven (7) percent.
3. **SECTION 2.** Tax revenue will remain collected by the Internal Revenue Service.
4. A. "Tax code" shall be defined as the taxes specifically related to the collection of federal income
5. taxes.
6. B. "Flat tax" shall be defined as a tax whose tax rate remains equal per each income tax bracket.
7. C. All current penalties will for tax evasion and other white collar crimes will remain in effect.
8. D. The capital gains and estate taxes will not be affected by the passage of this legislation.
9. E. The passage of this legislation will not effect states' respective income, capital gains, or estate
10. taxes.
11. **SECTION 3.** This piece of legislation will receive implementation for income earned after
12. January 1, 2011.
13. **SECTION 4.** All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

Introduced by A. B., ABCHS, Maine District

Example B: Resolution to Decrease Congressional Salaries

1. **WHEREAS**, United States Congresspersons receive exorbitant compensation packages; and
2. **WHEREAS**, the United States debt is spiraling out of control to the point of total economic
3. meltdown; and
4. **WHEREAS**, the United States Congress and its members should set an example of fiscal
5. responsibility; now, therefore, be it
6. **RESOLVED**, that the United States Congress here assembled recommend the passage of legislation
7. aimed at halving current congressional salaries.

Introduced by A.B., ABCHS, Maine District

Example C: Resolution Amending the 2nd Amendment

1. **WHEREAS**, the second amendment to the United States Constitution can be incorrectly interpreted
2. because of its vagueness; and
3. **WHEREAS**, in order to ensure the right to bear arms is protected under the Constitution; now,
4. therefore, be it
5. **RESOLVED**, That upon approval of two thirds of this United States Congress here assembled, the
6. following Constitutional Amendment be sent to the legislatures for state approval:
7. **SECTION 1**: The Second Amendment of the United States Constitution shall henceforth read, “A
8. well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, it shall be the right of every
9. non-felony convicted United States citizen to carry arms for the purposes of protection, sport, or
10. collection.”
11. **SECTION 2**: The ratification of this amendment would replace the current text of the second
12. amendment, which reads, “A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State,
13. the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.”

14. **SECTION 3:** This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as a Constitutional
15. amendment by the legislatures of three fourths (¾) of the several states within seven (7) years from
16. the date of its submission to the States by Congress.

Introduced by A.B., ABCHS, Maine District

The Docket and Its Guidelines

- Items considered for debate at a given tournament **must be e-mailed to Mrs. Aurelie Bush**, the Congressional Debate moderator, **at least ten (10) days prior the tournament** at edbush1@gmail.com.
- Bills should be correctly formatted (in NFL format; see above examples), which includes a 12 - point, Times New Roman font and one inch margins. It must be printable on an 8.5” x 11” sheet of paper and can be **no longer than one (1) page**.
- Bills **must be submitted by coaches only**. Student submissions will not be accepted.
- Typically twelve (12) to twenty-five (25) pieces of legislation are featured on any given docket; however, at the beginning of each session, a chamber rearranges to legislation to form a new docket.
- Prior to the convening of each session, each body (House or Senate) will rearrange the legislation in an order conducive to “cyclical” debate². Items with authors present will have precedence when setting the docket for the session. Following authorships, other legislation may be added to the docket.
- Only one student may give an authorship speech per house on a given piece of legislation. All other affirmative speeches are considered “sponsorship” speeches. In the event that there is not author present, the first affirmative speech is known as the first sponsorship speech.
- One set, the docket can be amended (see “Procedures and Motions”).
- The docket for each tournament will be established with input from the STUCO coaches & students. The moderator will accept input up until the day the bills/resolutions are due. The docket will be posted no later than the Monday before each meet on the Maine Forensic website, which is; www.maine forensic.com and they will also be emailed to all coaches.
- Bills get preference over resolutions when a docket is established at a Student Congress meet. Bills have the force of law while resolutions merely express the general beliefs of the Congress. The order of the docket per chamber will be set up as follows:
 - a. Bills written by students in each chamber will be debated first (chambers can determine the order. For example, if three people have written a bill in your chamber then the members can determine the order of those three, but they must be considered prior to any other item).
 - b. Resolutions that students sitting in that Chamber have written will be second

Procedures and Motions

1. Official convening of the session by the Parliamentarian.
2. Presiding Officer nominations by the chamber.
3. Presiding Officer begins by recording attendance, gives introductory comments, states his procedures, requests, and admonitions to the chamber.
4. Oath of Office (see below).

5. Chamber sets the docket for the legislative session.
6. Debate begins with an authorship (or sponsorship) speech followed by a first negative speech.
7. Cyclical debate continues on each piece of legislation that is to be debated in the given session.
8. Debate continues until a motion for a recess or required break for lunch (around noon or 12:30p).
9. Session adjourns for a lunch recess, typically forty-five (45) minutes in length.
10. Session re-adjourns and debate continues until required stoppage point, typically after five (5) hours of debate divided equitably amongst the two sessions of the day.
11. Session adjourns for the day and the tournament.

Procedures and Motions

Motion	Notes	Second Required	Votes for Passage
Table a bill	Ends debate on a bill, tabling it until un-tabled by a reverse motion.	Yes	Simple Majority
Un-table a bill	Reopen debate on a previously tabled motion.	Yes	Simple Majority
Call the previous question	End debate and proceed to voting.	Yes	2/3
Recess	Adjourns session for a specified amount of time.	Yes	Simple Majority
Adjourn	Adjourns session at to end tournament.	Yes	Simple Majority
Rise to a point of personal privilege	Correct a parliamentary error, clarify an action, or leave the chamber.	No	Decision of the Chair
Call for a "Division of the Chamber"	Verification by standing vote.	No	Decision of the Chair
Modify or withdraw a motion	Amend or rescind an un-seconded motion	Yes	2/3
Suspend the rules	Set the docket, annex time to the questioning period.	Yes	Simple Majority
Appeal the decision of the Chair	Force the Chair to entertain a motion deemed "dilatary".	Yes	2/3 Majority, Parliamentarian Digression
Call for a "Roll Call Vote"	Voice voting by each member of Congress.	Yes	Simple Majority
Suspend the rules & set docket	Suspend the rules and set the docket.	Yes	Simple Majority
Reinstate the rules	Reinstate the rules.	Yes	Simple Majority
Reconvene	Restart the session.	Yes	Simple Majority
Rescind a previous action	Rescind a previous action.	Yes	2/3

Presiding Officer Guidelines

- Runs the session according to Robert's Rules of Order
- Responsible for the general well being of the congress
- Charged with keeping congress running smoothly and efficiently, so as to make the best use of everyone's time.
- It is best to follow the rules of Parliamentary Procedure and to maintain a sense of fairness in the congress.

- Needs to keep records on precedence of each person in the chamber. An example of how to do this would be:

List Congress Members	Speech 1	Speech 2	Speech 3	Speech 4	etc.
Rep. Bush	2	5	8		
Rep. Jones	3	6	9		
Rep. Smith	1	4	7		

- The Presiding Officer (hereinafter “P.O.”) shall be elected by greater than one half (½) of his/her chamber.
- The P.O. shall begin the session by calling it to order (Say “This session shall come to order”).
- Seat legislators using the pre-approved seating chart provided by the parliamentarian.
- State the policies of the Chair, the procedures, and the schedule of the day.
- State gaveling procedure (standard NFL procedures call for one (1) tap at one minute remaining, two (2) taps at thirty seconds remaining, and three (3) taps at three minutes; after a ten (10) second grace period, state that you shall commence gaveling down the speaker).
- Administer the Oath of Office, which reads, **“I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America, against all enemies foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution; that I take this obligation free, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter, so help me God.”**
- Begin the session by requesting a motion from the chamber (the motion should be to suspend the rules and set the docket).
- Arrange the docket, first recognizing the legislation whose author is present, followed by legislation being sponsored by a legislator. When setting the docket, fairly and equitably call upon members of the chamber who wish to add legislation to the docket.
- Ask for a motion to reinstate the rules and proceed to the first item on the docket.
- When you are ready to begin, ask who would like to sponsor the first item of legislation.
- When you recognize speakers, use the third person. For example: “The chair recognizes Senator Sella for a period of three minutes followed by a mandatory two minute questioning period.” Following the speech, the P.O. should announce the time of the speech to the chamber. Then, the P.O. should ask legislators to stand to be recognized for questions.⁸ S/he should begin to recognize questioners equitably, based upon recency, activity, and geography.
- The P.O. may gesture for questioners to sit down when it is apparent time is running out. Afterwards, inform the questioners that the questioning period has expired and that the speaker may be seated.
- Next, ask for opposition speakers to rise. Call on a speaker, using precedence and equity for all legislators. It is appropriate to first recognize speakers who have consecutively sought to speak earliest.
- When you call on the last person seeking recognition to speak on a bill/resolution, it is appropriate to inform the chamber that since the last senator/representative who wishes to speak on this issue is preparing to speak, if no one objects following his/her speech, the chamber will move to the immediate previous question following his/her speech. (this way, a separate vote to call “previous questions” is unnecessary.)
- When it is time to debate the next legislation, say, “The next item of business is ---“ (title of legislation). Legislation should be considered in the order established on the agenda, unless it is laid on the table. Table should only be done to all a legislator time to construct a speech to continue two-sided debate, or introduce new information. It should **not** be abused to allow another legislator an earlier opportunity to get to a later agenda item. Time and prudence is spent by the entire chamber to set a fair and balanced agenda to give everyone an equal opportunity to debate their own legislation, and attempts to circumvent this should not be allowed. Use of the motion for previous question

should be discouraged, particularly when legislators have something new to contribute to discussion. When debate or discussion becomes repetitive, the P.O. should allow the previous question without reservation. When debate becomes one-sided, the previous question may be considered immediately, and should be encouraged.

- After a lunch/recess, call the chamber to order and proceed with a motion to reconvene.

Voting Procedures and Guidelines

- Using secret ballots, each legislator votes for one of the candidates for the office of Presiding Officer using the last name of the candidate. Each nominee should briefly address the chamber citing reasons why s/he should be elected to preside.
- Voting should only occur after all of the candidates (a maximum of four) for Presiding Officer have presided for one (½) hour of the session.
- Students vote by paper for **one** nominee at a time. After each vote conducted, unless **one** candidate has received a **majority** of the votes cast, the following procedure **must be followed**:
 - a. Separate the ballots into piles by candidate. Void ballots not containing names of candidates, or containing more than one name
 - b. The one candidate receiving the fewest votes shall be dropped.
 - c. If the **combined votes** of the **two lowest** candidates do **not equal** all votes of the **next** lowest candidate, **both** are eliminated.
 - d. If a tie exists for the lowest candidates and their total votes **exceeds** those of the candidate above them, have the chamber vote for the tied candidates (called a run – off election). If the chamber is still tied, keep voting.
 - e. If after casting five votes, the chamber still cannot break a tie, have the parliamentarian complete a preferential ballot, ranking all candidates nominated at the beginning of the election
 - f. A single ballot election can only determine one winner at a time. If subsequent places need to be determined, a new election process must begin, considering the remaining candidate. (Otherwise, their vote for majority is skewed because of the earlier winners' share in the previous election).

Voting for Motions and Legislation

- After the motion has been seconded, the Presiding Officer will proceed to the voting phase of the motion/legislation consideration.
- Voting on legislation may be done by roll call voting or standing voting.
- Roll call voting, standing voting, or “division of the chamber” voting may do voting on motions; each legislator casts one (1) vote.
- Legislators vote in affirmation, negation, or abstain from voting on a motion or a piece of legislation.
- Legislators not present when voting occurs should be counted as abstention votes, which count as votes in negation for tallying purposes.

Amendment Procedures

1. Amendments must be presented to the presiding officer written on an official amendment form with each section filled out. This must be done in advance of moving to amend.

2. The parliamentarian will recommend whether the amendment is “**germane**”; that is, it upholds the original intent of the legislation even with the amendment. Otherwise, it is considered “**dilatory**”. The title of the legislation may be changed.
3. A legislator can only move to amend between floor speeches. Once that motion is made, the P.O. will read the proposed amendment aloud and call for a second by one-third of those members present, unless he/she rules it **dilatory**. A dilatory ruling may be appealed.
4. Should legislators wish to speak on the proposed amendment, the P. O. will recognize each legislator as per the standing precedence in the chamber; however, the speech will **not** be counted toward their total, accordingly; however, it will count for precedence/recency).
5. Simply proposing an amendment does **not** guarantee an “authorship/sponsor” speech; and any speeches on amendments are followed by the normal one (1) minute of questioning.
6. Amendments are considered neutral and do not constitute an affirmative or negative speech on the original legislation.
7. If there are no speakers or the previous question is moved, the chamber may vote on a proposed amendment without debate.

Submission of Legislation

- All legislation **must** be submitted in **NFL format**. Any legislation submitted in an incorrect format will be rejected from consideration.
- It is expected that each participating school will submit at least **one** (1) item of legislation for consideration each tournament. It is strongly suggested, though, that each school submits more than one piece of legislation for consideration.
- In the event of an insufficient amount of new legislation, it is the prerogative of the moderator to add older, previously debated legislation to the docket.
- Once authored legislation has appeared on a docket it becomes the sole property of the Maine Forensic Association and cannot be resubmitted for consideration by a team at a future tournament.
- Only one (1) authorship speech may be given on a piece of legislation. That is, a piece of legislation may only have an authorship speech **once**. If the legislation appears on a future docket, the first affirmative will be considered a **sponsorship** speech.
- Submitting previously submitted legislation is **prohibited**. To submit legislation identical to that of previously debated legislation, there must have been **significant** changes made. The Congressional Debate moderator shall determine whether or not said burden shall have been met.
- If submitting a bill authored by a school in a different NFL district (i.e. Idaho Gem of the Mountain District), then one must denote the legislation’s origin and will be guaranteed the **first sponsorship speech** (it will not be considered an authorship).

Questioning the Speaker in Congressional Debate

- Authorship, first affirmative sponsorship, and first negative speeches are followed by a mandatory two (2) minute cross-examination period. All subsequent speeches shall be followed by a one (1) minute cross-examination period.
- All speakers receive up to three (3) minutes to present their arguments.
- Compound questions are strictly prohibited in order to facilitate fluid debate. Any compound question should be ruled as such by the P.O.

- If a negligible amount of time remains (i.e. 5 seconds remain), the Chair can “absorb” the remainder of time in accordance with the interests of the chamber in mind.
- To question, a legislator must rise and wait to be recognized by the P.O.
- Questions should be interrogative in nature. That is, clarification questions are permissible, but most “yes/no” questions should not be asked.
- Ask relevant questions. Judges keep a running tally as to relevant questions asked by each legislator.
- Judges consider the responses to questions when determining the overall score of the speaker. Responses to questions may negatively impact a speaker’s score.
- The speaker may ask the P.O. to ask the questioner to rephrase the question; however, this request should not be used in order to attempt evade answering the question.
- Suspending the rules to yield to a two-part question is strictly prohibited.
- Questions asked should only pertain to the speaker’s speech. Do **not** present contradictory evidence in a question; that information should be saved for speeches.
- When more than one speaker seeks the floor, the P.O. must follow the precedence/recency method. First, recognize students who have not spoken during the session, next recognize students who have spoken fewer times, then recognize students who spoke earlier (least recently)

Judging Requirements for Congressional Debate

- For every **five** (5) competitors, **one** (1) judge **or** parliamentarian must be provided.
- Judges provided **should be** unaffiliated; it is expected that judges disclose any potential conflicts of interest to the tab room staff and moderator prior to their designation to a certain chamber. Note the moderator and tab room staff reserve the right to assign judges to each chamber.
- Judges are expected to rank students on the preferential ballot **holistically**. Overall scores should **not** be the sole factor in determining the first, second, third, etc. place competitors.
- Schools registered in Congressional Debate who do not fulfill their judging requirements **may** be penalized by the Maine Forensic Association or the host school.

Scoring

1. **Judge Score/Cumulative:** The Moderator will tally up the scores each student received from each judge by using: a. One day Congress *or* final session: sum of each student’s 3 highest scores

Example of Total Cumulative Scoring in a One Day Congress

Speaker X gave 4 speeches and was scored the following by the judges:

	Speech 1	Speech 2	Speech 3	Speech 4
Judge A	4	6	8	4
Judge B	5	6	7	4
Judge C	4	7	7	8
Cumulative Total	13	19	22	16

Speaker X’s total score is 57, which represents the cumulative total of the 3 highest cumulative scores of three of the four speeches presented (19,22,16). The cumulative score on speech number 1 was 13 and is thrown out as it is the lowest cumulative score and is not one of the three highest.

2. **Judge Selection Only:** The moderator will present to the judges a list of the top eight students in each chamber. The judges will rank the slate of nominees (from 1 (being the best) to 8). The total ranks of the three judges will be added to determine the placement of the finalists. Ties will be broken in the following order:

- i. Judge’s preference of the converted ranks, reciprocals
- ii. The judges’ preference using the actual ranks.
- iii. The final tie breaker is the parliamentarian’s ranking.

3. Awards will be given for the top 3 students in each chamber.

Clashing in Congressional Debate

- To create debate, it is important that legislators **clash** during the questioning period and in speeches.
- Clashing is the juxtaposition of evidence contrary to that previously presented that analyzes why one piece of evidence is empirical to another piece of evidence.
- Legislators should leave a certain amount of time to address arguments made by the opposing side. However, the majority of a speech should not be devoted to clashing.
- Successful clashing does not simply present contradictory evidence that is well juxtaposed against the previously presented evidence. Additionally, it analyzes the empirical nature of certain evidence over other evidence
- Judges should consider clashing when scoring a speech given by a legislator; however, it is not the job of the author or the first affirmative (sponsorship) speech to clash; however, the authorship or first affirmative (sponsorship) speech should set the stage for a clash during cyclical debate.
- It is impossible to address all evidence and claims offered by the opposing legislators. While it is not the burden of a legislator to address all claims offered by the opposition, he/she should attempt to address as many as possible by grouping the arguments.

Miscellaneous

- The use of visual aids is permitted in the chamber during the session; however, said aids must **not** require electronic retrieval devices, such as a projector or lap top computer.
- All evidence used is subject to verification. The falsification or deliberate misuse of evidence is strictly prohibited and will be prosecuted by tournament officials accordingly.
- All electronic devices **must** remain off at all times during the legislative session. Texting or using a cellular phone is strictly prohibited during a session. Traditional timing devices (i.e. stopwatches, watches, etc.) are permitted.
- The Presiding Officer receives between 3-6 pt. Per hour and each legislator is based on a 1-6 point scale provided to the judges. The 1-6 point scale will be used at all tournaments **excluding** the National Qualifying Tournament, which uses a 1-6 point scale provided to the judges. The 1-6 point scale will be used at all tournaments **excluding** the National Qualifying Tournament, which uses a 1-8 point scale. At the National Qualifying Tournament, the Presiding Officer will receive between 4-8 pts. Per hour. Also, at all tournaments **excluding** National Qualifiers, the maximum amount of speeches scored is **five (5)** and the maximum amount of points receivable is (24).
- At each tournament, a legislator can have five (5) scored speeches. The first five (5) speeches are the only scored speeches.
- No more than two legislators can receive the same score (i.e. Senators Bush and Lapoint can receive 24 points but Senators Grass and Hill can receive 23 points).

Registration for Tournaments

- a. Timely pre-registration helps the host school make adequate preparations for Congressional Debate.
- b. **Pre-registration should indicate whether each student should be placed in the Senate or the House.** When registering competitors, indicate many years each one has debated before so that they each competitor is placed in the appropriate chamber. While the moderator will attempt to place competitors accordingly, he/she also reserves the right to move competitors to or from the House and Senate.

* More experienced students should be in the Senate. Each school needs to place no more than two (2) people in the Senate. Any competitor who has attended the National tournament, including the previous year's delegate to the NFL National Tournament's House of Representatives, is required to be in the Senate.

- c. Please contact the tournament director/ and state moderator with adds,drops and substitutions no later than Thursday before the meet. Note: there **is a nuisance fee if you drop after Thursday.**
- d. Pay your fees

Preparing a Speech

1. Your Topic: is this speech about something you already know? If so, take a blank piece of paper and write down as many facts as you can think about this subject.

2. If this is a topic you don't know much about, do a search using one of the website in this manual. Visit the sites that seem to speak to the topic and write down individual thoughts or ideas on a blank sheet of paper.

3. Take your sheet of ideas and write a three sentence introduction. If you were going to describe this, then what would you say? A key to giving a speech is a conversational tone. In the introduction, tell your audience what you're about to say.

4. In three subsections, the body, expand on your introduction. What is the first most important thing you want your audience to know? The second most important? The third? Keep referring back to your brainstorm page.

5. In the introduction you told people what you're viewpoints on the topic were. In the body, you told them again in detail. Now, you must conclude. In the conclusion, begin to wrap it all up. You want to finish your speech with a statement that persuades the chamber to vote your

way.

As a rule of thumb, a single-spaced, typed page should take 3 to 4 minutes to read through at the correct pace. If it takes less, you're going too fast.

Methods of practice

- Stand in front of a full-length mirror and try to look like a public speaker. Keep your posture straight, your hands in sight, and look into your own eyes. Tell yourself, "Gosh darn it, people want to hear what I have to say!" and then begin delivering your speech. Be conscious of the way you look in the mirror and adjust yourself accordingly as you're talking. Make sure that you're not being stiff, but always maintain an alert posture; if not, then audience will end up imitating your slump. Look into your eyes whenever you look up from your notes, and look up from your notes often. Also tape record or videotape yourself delivering the presentation. When you replay the tape, listen to determine if everything sounds coherent and logical, and watch the way you look while speaking. Look for eye contact, gestures, and weird facial tics.
- Gather together some friends, family, nuns and pets together, sit them down, and deliver your whole spiel to them. After it's over, ask them to give you some constructive feedback. Ask them to tell you about what you did well and what you need work on. Ask them to tell you what they didn't understand.
- Rehearse small sections of your speech throughout the day. If you've got 5 or 10 minutes go over parts of the speech in your mind.

- As you improve, see if you can memorize sections without relying on the notes at all. These memorized sections will give you prolonged time to connect to the audience.
- Once you feel very comfortable with the material, don't be afraid to ad-lib some parts when you feel like it. This is your speech and you can say whatever you want; as long as you're sure you can get back on track, try speaking off the cuff. It'll help you sound conversational instead of like a robot.

Public Relations & preparing for the day

- Your focus is to get along well with other people and work together to achieve a common goal. Introduce yourself to everyone at the tournament.
- You should not insult you fellow legislators; don't make derogatory comments.
- Compliment people if they deserve it.
- Dress appropriately and respectful clothing. Clothing such as jean skirts or Aerosmith t- shirts should not be worn. In other words, dress for success.
- Come with prepared research on the bills and be prepared to deliver good speeches.
- Answer questions intelligently, but **do not** make up facts or distort information.
- Vote for the best Presiding Officer. The job of the Presiding Officer should be given to the top competitors in the state, not your friend simply because he/she only researched one bill.
- Bring all materials needed for success. This includes books, articles, notes, prepared speeches, pens, and/or pencils, extra paper, a placard, the docket, etc.
Organize all of you material in some type of plastic box, Almanac, quotation books, and pocket dictionaries are great to use in speeches
Scratch paper
Smile and enjoy yourself

CODE OF SPEAKER CONDUCT REGULATIONS

The Maine Forensic Association believes that successful competition is dependent upon the students acting as ethical and responsible citizens. In order to underscore and clarify the value of these attributes, the following Maine Forensic Association's **Code of Ethics** has been adopted. The expectations of this code apply to every speaker, spectator, volunteer, judge and coach and extend to all forensic activities including the time a speaker is not in a round and any other situation in which the student's behavior directly affects the school discipline or the safety and welfare of others.

CODE OF ETHICS

An ethical person is defined by the MFA as:

Respectful of others and self,

Honest in all academic endeavors and interpersonal relationships,

Compassionate and tolerant in dealing with the limitations and suffering of others,

Responsible for personal actions as an individual and a member of the community,

Fair and equitable in their treatment toward others,

Courageous in the face of ethical challenges.

Respectful Conduct: People are able, valuable, and responsible and should be treated accordingly. Mutual respect among students and adults in the learning environment is the standard.

Honest Conduct: Seek to speak the truth, respectfully. Education should be a cooperative, collaborative activity where process is as important as product.

Respect: *I will treat myself and others with respect at all times.*

Offenses include but are not restricted to:

- Use of profane language or gestures directed at other participants that are offensive and/or intimidating
- Unwanted physical contact
- Direct or indirect bullying behavior
- Damaging or defacing either school property or personal property of others
- Threatening or demeaning others by words or actions

Honesty: *I will not lie, cheat or steal and will discourage others from doing so.*

Offenses include but are not restricted to:

- Theft of intellectual materials or plagiarism
- Theft or unauthorized use of others' property
- Unauthorized operation of computer (or similar device), password or account of another user
- Unauthorized searching on the computer (or similar device)

Compassion: *I will treat others with kindness, understanding, and tolerance.*

Offenses include but are not restricted to:

- Dialogue directed at another participant, or actions that communicate intolerance of differences in the beliefs, opinions or appearance of others
- Dialogue directed at another participant, or actions that communicate intolerance of differences in abilities of others

Fairness: *I will treat others, as I would like to be treated.*

Offenses include but are not restricted to:

- Inequitable treatment of others

Responsibility: *I will accept the responsibility for my actions.*

Offenses include but are not restricted to:

- Violation of MFA or school rules
- Withholding information that could harm individuals, the MFA or school property
- Inappropriate dress or behavior that interferes with competition
- Violation of the law (local, state and federal laws/statutes)

Courage: *I will strive for the courage to live by this code of ethics everyday.*

Membership Requirements for MFA and NFL

1. In order to participate in MFA (Maine Forensic Association) there is a membership fee that should be sent to the MFA treasurer
2. For membership in the NFL, which you must be in order to participate in the NFL qualifiers please contact Maine's NFL Chairperson.
3. The fee is \$99.00 a team plus a student one-time membership fee for NFL. **THIS MUST BE PAID IN FULL BEFORE DECEMBER 1, OF EACH YEAR IN ORDER TO PARTICPATE IN NFL QUALIFIERS. IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT THAT AFTER EACH MEET YOUR STUDENTS NFL POINTS ARE LOG IN WITH NFL.** You can go on line at www.nflonline.org, to register your team and place the NFL points after each meet. The State Moderator at the end of each meet will give each coach a copy of the NFL points for their team. It is the individual coaches' responsibility to log those points in. In order to participate in NFL qualifiers for Student Congress the student must have 25 points.

State Tournament

Student Congress will follow the same guidelines based on the NFL Student Congress manual. Schools will be able to bring the amount of students they would like; however there is a possibility that one chamber could consist of one school depending upon the numbers that attend. The Moderator will create the chambers.

Resources

Useful for writing and researching bills:

www.publicagenda.org

www.speakout.com

<http://206.10.173.197/> this site is from Issues 2000 which was kept going after the elections of two years ago. Check out the “issues” link for some well-written backgrounds on significant issues.

www.NYT.com

www.WashingtonPost.com

Website for coaches: Maine Principals Association = www.MPA.cc and the NFISDSA www.nfhs.org, and phone number is 1-317-972-6900.

Resources on Parliamentary Procedure and Congress

Dickson, Paul, The Official Rules, Dell Publishing, 1979

Fryer and Thomas, Basic Debate, National Textbook Co. 1980

Keesey, Ray E., Modern Parliamentary Procedure, Barnes and Nobles, 1974

Robert, Gen. Henry M., Robert’s Rules of Order, Scott, Foresman and Co. 1915

Resources for Congress Speaking

Baker, Daniel B., Power Quotes, Visible Ink Press., 1992

Camp, Wesley D., What a Piece of Work Is Man!, Prentice Hall 1990

Harnsberger, Caroline Thomas, Treasury of Presidential Quotations, Follett Publishing Co., 1964

Henning, Charles, The Wit and Wisdom of Politics, Fulcrum Publishing, 1989

Glossary

Abstention: a vote to remain indifferent as to the passage of an item of legislation or a motion. Abstention votes are considered votes in negation of the bill or motion.

Activity: a criterion used by the P.O. in order to determine questioners and speakers until precedence has been established based upon the amount of questions and speeches given.

Adjourn: to permanently recess the chamber at the end of the session.

Affirmation: a vote to support the passage of an item of legislation or a motion.

Amendment: a piece of legislation that must be passed by two thirds (2/3) of the Congress and by three fourths (¾) of the states in order to become a Constitutional amendment.

Audible Opposition: verbal opposition to a motion that must be seconded before being vote on by the chamber (After calling for a second, the P.O. should call for audible opposition). If present, the P.O. should request a motion for the division of the chamber.

Bill: a piece of legislation mandating a specific action by the Congress that has the force of law.

Clash: the juxtaposition of evidence contrary to that (evidence) previously submitted for consideration by a speaker that analyzes why the given piece of evidence is empirical in nature when compared to that (evidence), which has been previously presented.

Chair: alternate term used to refer to the P.O.

Cyclical Debate: debate occurring that follows the procedure of recognizing an affirmative speaker followed by a negative speaker.

Dilatory: the designation given to a motion that the P.O. deems inappropriate or irrelevant to the debate or the business of the chamber. Dilatory motions die with the designation of dilatory from the P.O.

Division of the Chamber: a standing, recorded vote taken only after audible opposition to a motion has occurred. To occur, a motion must be made for the division of the chamber.

Docket: the compilation of prospective legislation to be debated at a given tournament during a session of Congressional Debate. The term **docket** may also refer to the set of bills, amendments, and resolutions that are to be debated during a given session that have been requested to be placed upon it.

Geography: a criterion used by the P.O. in order to determine questioners and speakers until precedence has been established by using location.

Germane: the designation given to a motion that the P.O. deems relevant or appropriate to the debate or the business of the chamber. Germane motions proceed to the seconding and voting phases.

Grace Period: a period of five to ten seconds (as determined by the P.O.) during which a legislator may speak without receiving a scoring penalty from the judges.

House of Representatives: the lower body of Congress where an unlimited number of legislators from a given school can compete. Competitors in the lower chamber should be referred to as **representatives**; the P.O. in the House may be referred to as Mr. or Madam Speaker (of the House).

MFA: the acronym for the Maine Forensic Association, the association of schools that makes up the Maine District at the NFL National Tournament.

Motion: an action proposed by a legislator that must be seconded and voted on by the chamber.

Negation: a vote to negate the passage of an item of legislation or a motion.

NFL: acronym for the National Forensic League, the oldest national honors society devoted to recognizing middle and high school students who compete and excel in sanctioned events at the district level and at the national tournament.

Parliamentarian: a coach, parent, or tournament official tasked with running the chamber. S/he should guide the chamber and answer any questions concerning procedure or rules.

Point of Personal Privilege: a motion made to clarify a procedural action, question the decision of the Chair, or exit the chamber. To exit the chamber, one should say, "I rise to a point of personal privilege" and state the reason (i.e. "I rise to a point of personal privilege: exit chambers").

Preferential Ballot: the ballot provided to each judge in order holistically rank the eight (8) preferred legislators based on multiple factors, including oration ability, participation, cordiality, questioning, etc.

Presiding Officer: the student legislator elected by the chamber to oversee and maintain the chamber and its activities during the session.

Questioning Period (Cross Examination): the time period following a speech during which the speaker is questioned by the chamber at the discretion of the P.O.

Recency: a criterion used to by the P.O. in order to determine the next speaker or questioner once precedence has been established. It recognizes speakers who have spoken least recently first.

Recess: to adjourn the chamber for a specified amount of time, usually during a natural break in debate or for lunch.

Representative: a legislator who is a member of the lower chamber of congress, the House of Representatives. Schools may have an unlimited number of representatives.

Resolution: a piece of legislation without the force of law that expresses the general belief or will of the chamber only.

Roll Call Vote: a vote where each legislator individually orates his vote in affirmation, negation, or abstention or a piece of legislation.

Senate: the upper chamber of Congress, which is more informal in its procedures. Only two (2) legislators from a given school may compete; legislators in the upper chamber are referred to as **senators**, and the P.O. in the upper chamber can be referred to as Mr. or Madam President (of the Senate).

Senator: a legislator who is a member of the upper chamber of congress, the Senate. There should be only two (2) senators per school.

Session: a period of no more and no less than five (5) hours during which debate of legislation on the set docket occurs.

Setting the Docket: the process by which the P.O. calls on legislators to create a docket based upon the legislation presented on the full docket. The P.O. will add legislation with authors present first, followed by sponsored legislation.

Sponsor: the subsequent affirmative speakers after the authorship speech and the first negative speech. Legislation with no author present shall have a first sponsorship speech.

Table: to vote to set aside a piece of legislation for further consideration at a later time during the session. Prior to adjournment, all tabled legislation must be considered.

Un-Table: to (re) consider a piece of legislation that was previously tabled by the vote of the chamber.

Yield to a Two-Part Question: a motion made to suspend the rules to allow for a questioner to ask a follow-up question to the speaker after s/he answers his first question. A motion to yield to a two-part question is strictly prohibited. If made, the Chair should deem the motion dilatory