

## **Motion to be made at GSA Meeting on 16 April 2018**

### **Whereas the following facts are apparent at this time:**

1. The General Service Association (GSA) of ABA was incorporated in March 2003 under the Societies Act of the Province of Alberta, Canada. It is a non-profit Board which acts as a legal entity with registered By-Laws, and its 12-20 Directors (drawn from within ABA and from outside in roughly equal proportions) are elected annually by all ABA members who participate in the Annual General Meeting.
2. The purpose of the GSA is to be the central hub of ABA that makes unity possible, to serve the needs of the worldwide Fellowship of ABA, to manage all aspects of outreach worldwide, and to make all its decisions and actions in the best interests of all ABA members.
3. “A Service Structure for ABA” document was developed and adopted by the GSA in December 2010, and a Committee of General Service Representatives (GSRs) was created early in 2011, its mandate being to bring the voice of all ABA Groups worldwide to the GSA to guide the GSA in its decision-making process.
4. The purpose of this action by the GSA was to ensure: a) that all voices from the worldwide Fellowship of ABA would be heard, including all dissenting voices and minority opinions, and b) **that power could never be concentrated in the hands of a few ABA members, in particular those of ABA’s founders and pioneers.**
5. The GSA’s vision for the GSR Committee was that it would develop into a strong and mature body of GSRs, each with substantial sobriety, representing all ABA Groups worldwide, and that it would become capable of effectively directing the GSA in the service of ABA as a whole.
6. Despite dedicated service and concerted effort on the part of many GSRs, at this time the GSR Committee has not yet grown into the large group envisioned and has never throughout its seven years of existence represented more than a small fraction of ABA Groups

and members worldwide. The GSR Committee has always been plagued by problems of Groups poorly understanding the importance of ABA's service structure and thus failing to elect GSRs, GSRs failing to attend meetings regularly, difficulty scheduling meetings at times that suit GSRs from distant time zones, GSRs changing frequently and thus resulting in discontinuity, etc.

7. The GSR Committee currently stands as **a small group of ABA members, non-representative of the worldwide Fellowship, in which a great deal of power has become concentrated**—and has therefore developed the very problem it was created to prevent.
8. The GSR Committee does not yet appear to be capable of mature leadership, given that the minimum sobriety requirement for membership has been lowered to six months.
9. A small number of ABA members—some of whom are barely sober—wielding great power, could pose a grave threat to not only the unity but the very existence of ABA worldwide.
10. The GSA bears a sacred responsibility to do everything in its power to safeguard the unity and health of the worldwide Fellowship of ABA for current members and generations to come.

**I therefore move:**

- a) **that the GSR Committee be completely suspended at this time, with such suspension to be reviewed annually, and**
- b) **that the GSA immediately spearhead the formation of a Consultative Committee, chaired by a GSA Director and composed of as many ABA members as possible (sober at least two years) from around the world, to make a close study of the current structure and needs of ABA as a whole, carrying out extensive consultation with all members and Groups worldwide, and**
- c) **that the GSA, on the basis of the information gathered, develop a proposal for a more effective service structure than the one which currently exists, and**

**d) that, throughout the period of the GSR Committee suspension, all ABA members and Groups have direct access to the GSA by phone or emails which will be brought to the monthly Board meetings, and/or participating in the work of standing Committees, in order to have their concerns and needs addressed as they arise.**

Approved by the Board on April 16, 2018.