

**Proposed Amendment to the
University Interscholastic League Constitution & Contest Rules**

A. Brief Explanation of Proposed Amendment

This amendment would add Congress as a sanctioned contest for high school.

B. Factual and Policy Justifications

In 2012, the Legislative Council added Congress as a pilot contest in academics. There has proven to be a strong interest in this congressional contest by coaches and students, as demonstrated by participation statistics. The contest has drawn students from multi-disciplines including: speech, debate, social studies, agriculture and others. The contest has run League district and state championships effectively during the pilot process.

C. Proposed Amendment

Section 1008 of the UIL Constitution and Contest Rules would be created as follows effective August 1, 2016, pending approval by the Commissioner of Education.

The UIL Constitution and Contest Rules would be amended as follows effective August 1, 2016, pending approval by the Commissioner of Education:

CONGRESS:

- (a) PURPOSE OF THE CONTEST. THE PURPOSE OF THIS CONTEST IS TO ENCOURAGE THE STUDENT TO UNDERSTAND REAL-WORLD SOCIAL AND POLITICAL POLICIES DEBATED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF A LEGISLATIVE BODY MODELED AFTER THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS, WITH FORMAL DISCOURSE GUIDED BY PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE.
- (b) NATURE OF THE CONTEST. CONTESTANTS WILL FORMULATE LEGISLATIVE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS, DEBATE THEM, AND ADOPT OR REJECT THEM BY CASTING VOTES. SPEAKING IN LEGISLATIVE CONGRESS IS CONDUCTED WITHIN A STRUCTURED ENVIRONMENT OF SPECIFIC PROCEDURAL RULES.
- (c) STRUCTURE. CONGRESS WILL BE ORGANIZED INTO REGIONS ACCORDING TO THE TWENTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTERS (ESC) DESIGNATED BY THE TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY. ALL SCHOOLS, REGARDLESS OF UIL CONFERENCE, WILL COMPETE WITH EACH OTHER WITHIN THEIR SCHOOL'S REGION ESC UNLESS CONFERENCE ENTRY NUMBERS WARRANT SEPARATE CHAMBERS. REGARDLESS, EACH CONFERENCE COMPETING IN THE CONGRESSIONAL REGION WILL BE ELIGIBLE TO ADVANCE A MINIMUM OF THREE REPRESENTATIVES TO THE STATE CONGRESSIONAL COMPETITION.
- (d) CONGRESSIONAL REGION CONTEST DIRECTORSHIP. A DIRECTORSHIP OF FIVE FOR EACH CONGRESSIONAL REGION CONTEST WITHIN THEIR EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER REGION WILL CONDUCT THE REGION CONTEST. A CONGRESSIONAL REGION CLERK APPOINTED BY THE UIL STATE OFFICE WILL CHAIR THE DIRECTORSHIP. THE CONGRESSIONAL REGION CLERK SHALL BE THE FINAL AUTHORITY UNTIL THE CONGRESSIONAL REGION COMPETITION IS COMPLETED.
- (e) ENTRIES:
 - (1) REPRESENTATION. EACH SCHOOL DESIRING TO PARTICIPATE IN UIL CONGRESS SHOULD FILE AN INTENT TO PARTICIPATE FORM ON THE UIL WEBSITE NO LATER THAN DATE POSTED ON UIL CONGRESS WEBPAGE FOR THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR. FAILURE TO SUBMIT INTENT SHALL REQUIRE REGIONAL COMMITTEE APPROVAL IN ORDER FOR SCHOOL TO PARTICIPATE. EACH SCHOOL IN ALL CONFERENCES MAY ENTER THREE COMPETITORS IN THE CONGRESSIONAL REGION COMPETITION. TWO ALTERNATES MAY BE REGISTERED. ENTRIES SHALL BE SUBMITTED AT LEAST TEN CALENDAR DAYS PRIOR TO THE CONGRESSIONAL REGION COMPETITION VIA THE UIL WEBSITE. IN THE EVENT TEN OR LESS TOTAL CONTESTANTS PER CONFERENCE ARE

COMPETING IN A CONGRESSIONAL REGION, BOTH ALTERNATES FROM EACH SCHOOL WITH A FULL ENTRY IN THAT CONFERENCE MAY BE SEATED. ONLY ONE ALTERNATE MAY BE SEATED IF THERE ARE 11-15 ENTRIES WITHIN THE CONFERENCE.

- (2) ENTRIES SUBMITTED AFTER THE 10-DAY DEADLINE, REQUIRE MAJORITY CONSENT OF THE REGIONAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE.
 - (3) ELIGIBILITY. EACH CONTESTANT SHALL BE ELIGIBLE UNDER SUBCHAPTER M OF THE *UIL CONSTITUTION & CONTEST RULES*. ONLY STUDENTS IN GRADES 9 - 12 ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THIS CONTEST. SPEECH PLAN, SECTION 1000 OF THE *UIL CONSTITUTION & CONTEST RULES*, REGARDING SPECIFIC SPEECH ELIGIBILITY SHALL NOT APPLY TO THIS CONTEST. ENTERING THE CONGRESS COMPETITION DOES NOT IMPACT A STUDENT'S ELIGIBILITY TO ENTER ANY OTHER UIL HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC EVENT. (I.E., CX DEBATE, LD DEBATE)
 - (4) SUBSTITUTIONS. AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT MAY BE SUBSTITUTED FOR ANY NAME ON THE OFFICIAL REGION ENTRY FORM BY PROVIDING THE CONTEST DIRECTOR WITH A LETTER OR OFFICIAL SUBSTITUTION FORM SIGNED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT OR DESIGNATED ADMINISTRATOR CERTIFYING THE STUDENT'S ELIGIBILITY. THE LETTER SHALL BE PRESENTED TO THE CONTEST DIRECTOR BEFORE THE CONTEST BEGINS.
 - (5) LIMIT ON SUBSTITUTIONS. AFTER A GIVEN COMPETITION HAS BEGUN, NO SUBSTITUTIONS SHALL BE ALLOWED.
- (f) PLANNING THE REGIONAL CONTEST. IN ORDER TO MAXIMIZE PARTICIPATION BY ALL SCHOOLS AND PROVIDE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO ALL STUDENTS TO ENTER REGARDLESS OF THE EXISTING ACADEMIC CONFLICT PATTERN, THE CONGRESSIONAL COMPETITION WILL BE HELD DURING THE FALL/WINTER. THE CONGRESSIONAL REGIONAL DIRECTORSHIP, WITH INPUT FROM ALL PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS, SHALL SCHEDULE CONGRESSIONAL REGION COMPETITION ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIAL UIL CALENDAR. LOCATION AND ENTRY FEES WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE DIRECTORSHIP.
- (1) LEGISLATION. PARTICIPATING REGIONAL SCHOOLS ARE ENCOURAGED TO AUTHOR AND SUBMIT BILLS, CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, AND/OR RESOLUTIONS FOR DEBATE AND ARE ENCOURAGED TO AUTHOR LEGISLATION THAT HAS AN IMPACT ON THE STATE OF TEXAS. ALL LEGISLATION SUBMITTED SHALL MEET UIL FORMATTING AND SHALL BE THE ORIGINAL PRODUCT OF THE SCHOOL. PLAGIARISM INCLUDES: SUBMITTING LEGISLATION THAT WAS NOT AUTHORED BY THE STUDENT OR SCHOOL. DIRECT QUOTATION FROM A PUBLISHED SOURCE SHALL NOT BE ALLOWED IN SUBMITTED LEGISLATION. PLAGIARISM IS UNACCEPTABLE AND SHALL RESULT IN THE LEGISLATION BEING INELIGIBLE FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA, AND THE SCHOOL SHALL LOSE AUTHORSHIP SPEECHES FOR ANY ADDITIONAL LEGISLATION THEY HAVE IN THE DOCKET. IT SHALL BE THE DUTY OF THE COACH TO AFFIRM THAT THE LEGISLATION SUBMITTED IS ORIGINAL. LEGISLATION MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE REGIONAL CLERK BY THE DATE POSTED ON THE UIL CONGRESS WEBPAGE TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR REVIEW BY THE CLERK AND REGIONAL COMMITTEE, WHICH WILL DETERMINE THE LEGISLATION.
 - (2) SCORING CHAMBERS. A PARLIAMENTARIAN AND A MINIMUM OF TWO SCORERS SHALL SCORE EACH CHAMBER, UNLESS A WAIVER IS GRANTED. IN REGIONS WITH FEWER THAN 24 COMPETITORS, THERE WILL BE TWO SESSIONS WITH A SINGLE CHAMBER. THE SCORERS SHALL RANK STUDENTS AT THE END OF EACH SESSION. THE PARLIAMENTARIAN SHALL RANK STUDENTS ONLY AT THE END OF THE SECOND SESSION, RANKING ALL CONTESTANTS FROM 1ST THROUGH THE TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS IN THE CHAMBER. IN REGIONS WITH MORE THAN 24 COMPETITORS, THERE WILL BE ONE PRELIMINARY SESSION WITH MULTIPLE CHAMBERS AND ONE FINAL SESSION.
 - (3) ADVANCEMENT. FROM THE FINAL REGIONAL CHAMBER, EACH CONGRESSIONAL REGION SHALL ADVANCE THE TOP THREE CANDIDATES FROM EACH CONFERENCE TO STATE. CONGRESSIONAL REGIONS WITH MORE THAN 40 ENTRIES WITHIN A CONFERENCE WILL ADVANCE THE TOP CANDIDATES FROM EACH CONFERENCE BASED ON A RATIO OF ONE STUDENT ADVANCING FOR EVERY 10 ENTRIES IN A GIVEN CONFERENCE (40 - 49 ENTRIES = 4 STUDENTS ADVANCING TO STATE; 50 - 59 ENTRIES = 5 STUDENTS

ADVANCING TO STATE). THE RATIO APPLIES TO ALL STUDENTS ENTERED PER CONFERENCE AT THE CONGRESSIONAL REGIONAL TOURNAMENT. CONFERENCE ENTRIES SHALL NOT BE COMBINED FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING THE RATIO QUALIFYING FOR STATE.

- (4) ALTERNATES. A FIRST AND SECOND ALTERNATE TO STATE SHOULD BE NAMED FROM EACH CONFERENCE IN EACH CONGRESSIONAL REGION, IF POSSIBLE.
- (g) THE STATE MEET. IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE, EACH CONGRESSIONAL REGION AND EACH SCHOOL QUALIFYING A CONTESTANT TO THE CONGRESSIONAL STATE MEET SHALL BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:
- (1) LEGISLATION. AT THE COMPLETION OF CONGRESSIONAL REGION COMPETITION, THOSE STUDENTS FOR EACH CONFERENCE ADVANCING TO STATE COMPETITION SHALL SELECT ONE RESOLUTION OR ONE BILL TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE STATE CLERK TO BE CONSIDERED AS LEGISLATION FOR THE STATE MEET.
 - (2) STATE PARLIAMENTARIAN/CLERKS/SCORERS. EACH CONGRESSIONAL REGION (ESC) ADVANCING COMPETITORS TO STATE SHALL PROVIDE ONE QUALIFIED PARLIAMENTARIAN FOR THE DURATION OF THE CONGRESSIONAL STATE COMPETITION. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF STATE PARLIAMENTARIAN BY THE REGIONAL CLERK IS THE DEADLINE POSTED ON THE UIL CONGRESS WEBSITE. EACH SCHOOL QUALIFYING A LEGISLATOR SHALL PROVIDE ONE INDIVIDUAL QUALIFIED TO SERVE AS A SCORER/CLERK FOR THE DURATION OF THE CONGRESSIONAL STATE COMPETITION. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF STATE SCORER/CLERK BY EACH QUALIFYING SCHOOL IS THE DEADLINE ON THE UIL CONGRESS WEBSITE.
- (h) ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN CHAMBER: THE USE OF LAPTOP AND TABLET COMPUTERS AND OTHER ELECTRONIC RETRIEVAL DEVICES BY COMPETITORS IN UIL CONGRESS IS ALLOWED SO LONG AS WIRED OR WIRELESS CONNECTIONS ARE DISABLED AND REMAIN DISABLED THROUGHOUT THE CONTEST. RULES ARE SYNONYMOUS WITH THOSE IN UIL EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING. CELL PHONES AND SMART PHONES ARE PROHIBITED IN THE CHAMBER. TRADITIONAL TIMING DEVICES ARE PERMITTED.
- (i) VISUAL AIDS: IF ANY MEMBER USES VISUAL AIDS, THE VISUAL AIDS SHALL BE LEFT BEFORE THE CHAMBER AND SHALL BE AVAILABLE FOR USE BY ALL MEMBERS.
- (j) OPEN CHAMBER: UIL CONGRESS SHALL BE AN OPEN CHAMBER, BUT CONGRESS MEMBERS SHALL REQUEST AND MUST RECEIVE PERMISSION FROM THE PRESIDING OFFICER TO LEAVE THE CHAMBER. MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO LIMIT TIME ABSENT TO A STRICT MINIMUM. (I.E. 5 MINUTE BREAK)
- (k) CONGRESS SHALL BE PUBLIC. CONGRESS IS PUBLIC DISCOURSE. THEREFORE, ALL CONGRESSIONAL CHAMBERS SHALL BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. NO COACHING OR CHEERING SHALL BE PERMITTED DURING THE CONTEST.
- (l) RECORDING: SCHOOLS AND/OR INDIVIDUALS ARE PROHIBITED FROM RECORDING (AUDIO AND/OR VIDEO) REGION OR STATE CONGRESS SESSIONS. THE UIL RESERVES THE RIGHT TO RECORD FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES.

D. Potential Fiscal Impact of the Proposed Amendment to Member Schools

This contest can be administered with minimal cost involved: limited facilities are required to conduct the assemblies, only 2 judges (scorers) plus a parliamentarian are required for each session.

E. Legislative Council Consideration Effective Date

If approved by the Legislative Council and the Commissioner of Education, this amendment shall be effective August 1, 2016.