

House of Commons

Private Member's Resolutions (PMRs)

The House of Commons of Canada (HOC) is unlike all other committees offered at VMUN in that “resolutions” are submitted before the committee starts, similar to the practice of the actual House of Commons. The main purpose of the House is not to create resolutions, but to debate and improve on a pre-written draft proposed by a member of the House. These resolutions are known as **Private Member's Resolutions** (PMRs), and are **mandatory** for all Members of Parliament (MPs). There are no position papers in the HOC.

In fulfilling your duty to Canadians, you are asked to submit **two** PMRs addressing:

1. **Set Topic** (The Status of Indigenous Peoples)
2. **Open Agenda**

Treat these PMRs as you would MUN resolutions in their professionalism, detail, and thought. Similar to representing countries in MUN committees, you should also keep in mind your three main responsibilities that influence your position on any issue in the House:

1. Party
2. Portfolio
3. Constituency

Your PMRs must reflect these factors. A sample PMR can be found on page 4.

For the Set Topic PMRs, the **minimum requirement** is that your PMR contain **4 enacting clauses relevant to your portfolio and 1 clause inspired by your constituency** (e.g. Critic for Health has clauses on improving access to healthcare, etc.) However, all MPs are encouraged to go beyond this minimum requirement and think of comprehensive solutions when writing PMRs.

Set topic PMRs will be individually scrutinized by the House staff and synthesized so that all members of a certain party will contribute to their party's collective draft bill. These will be introduced during session. Open Agenda PMRs will also be individually scrutinized and House staff will select a certain number of PMRs from all submissions to be debated, time permitting, in the coming session.

All PMRs submitted by the due date will be considered for the Best Private Member's Resolution award.

Guidelines

Please adhere to the following formatting rules when writing your PMRs:

1. Typed in 12pt Times New Roman
2. Typed on a letter-sized template with 1-inch margins
3. No images, diagrams, symbols, watermarks, decorative borders, etc.
4. Saved as a **Word** or **Pages** document named *Political Party, Constituency, Set Topic/Short Title* (e.g. Green Party of Canada: Saanich-Gulf Islands, Moving Beyond Canada's Role as a Middle Power).

Your PMRs must have the following components only:

Name, Constituency, Portfolio, and Party

Your constituency, portfolio, and party is the “country assignment” you received from the USGs of Delegate Affairs.

Title and Short Title

Only for Open Agenda PMRs. Please keep it short, professional, and clear as to the actions of your PMR.

- Titles begin with ‘An Act...’ (e.g. An Act establishing the Royal Society of Arts)
- Short Titles always end with ‘...Act’ (e.g. Royal Society of Arts Act)

Pre-ambulatory Clauses

Pre-ambulatory clauses outline the reason for your PMR. They should be facts that support the proposal brought forth by the bill. Think of them as answering the question ‘Why do we need to pass this PMR?’ Thus, they should be based on facts, statistics, and research that illustrate the current reality upon which your PMR will improve.

- Each clause starts with ‘Whereas’.
- Clauses are separated with semicolons.
- Remember to cite your sources in the footnotes.

Enacting Clauses

Enacting clauses are the bread and butter of your PMR; they are the actions that improve the reality described in the pre-ambulatory clauses. As the pre-ambulatory clauses are the supporting facts, the enacting clauses shall be the argument. Keep in mind that they should be practical and realistic considering the capabilities of the federal government, and they should be very specific.

- Always cite the appropriate Federal agencies or departments to execute actions (e.g. Environment Canada will conduct a geological survey).
- When amending or repealing previous Acts of Parliament, specify the clauses of the Act affected (e.g. Clause 23(2) of the *Canada Act* is replaced with...)
- All clauses are numbered and in full sentences (ending with a period).
- Sub-clauses are also to be in full sentences and are listed alphabetically.

Submission

All PMRs must be submitted by **Friday, January 8, 2016**, two weeks prior to the conference. They are **mandatory** and awards will not be given to those who have not submitted PMRs.

Once you have saved your PMR as a **Word** or **Pages** document with the name *Political Party, Constituency, Set Topic/Short Title* (e.g. Liberal Party: Vancouver Centre, Oil Tanker Moratorium Act), email it to hoc@vmun.com as an attachment with a subject heading of *Political Party: Your Full Name, Constituency* (e.g. Liberal Party: Sheila Jones, Vancouver Centre). Please do not attach or write anything else in the email.

Open Agenda

After a Bill has been passed to address the set topic, the House will move to consider **Open Agenda** PMRs. One of the most important responsibilities of being Members of Parliament is to bring issues from your constituencies to the national limelight, and to faithfully represent your constituents' concerns in the HOC. Ministers of the Crown also have a responsibility to draft legislation to address the subject of their departments. The Open Agenda gives you the opportunity to fulfill the above and to bring issues that are important to you to the table.

Each MP is required to submit **one Open Agenda PMR** on any topic of his or her choosing. When choosing a topic for your PMR, make sure it is:

1. **Specific:** Something unique to your constituency or unique to your portfolio (e.g. Minister of Sport would propose a sports-related PMR, or an MP with a primarily crop-growing constituency would propose a PMR concerning agriculture). Try to avoid broad, national issues and focus on smaller, more local issues.
2. **Relevant:** Something current and unresolved, and preferably one that has had recent media attention. Make sure that it is an issue in Canada.
3. **Contentious:** A topic that will cause disagreement between political parties or different regions of Canada.

The HOC **will not** accept broad, convoluted Open Agenda topics for the interest of time, and these PMRs should be less detailed and researched than the Set Topic PMRs. The **maximum** length of an Open Agenda PMR is **5 enacting clauses**.

After receiving the Open Agenda PMRs, the House staff will choose a selection of the PMRs based on the above criteria to be considered for debate in the coming session. These PMRs will be released before the conference in what is known as an **Order Paper** so that you have ample time to consider them and conduct research.

After the Set Topic has been resolved, the House will debate and pass or reject several of the PMRs until the House staff call the session to a close. The amount of Open Agenda PMRs debated upon at the conference will be entirely time permitting.

Title

Plastic Bags and the Ecosystem

« title

Mr. J. Faust

« name

Vancouver–Kingsway

« riding

Preambulatory Clauses

Whereas: 100,000 animals from a variety of species are killed annually due to plastic bags littering their ecosystems;

Whereas: Multiple alternative ways of carrying groceries/transporting goods are available that are more environmentally friendly;

Whereas: 60-100 million barrels of the non-renewable resource petroleum are needed annually to create plastic bags;

Whereas: Petroleum is vital for the modern way of life and is needed in many other vital places;

Whereas: Millions of plastic bags are sent to landfills across Canada, never to be used again and taking tens of millions of years to decompose.

Enacting Clauses

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1. Plastic bags will be banned from distribution in stores across Canada.
 - a. Gradual strategies to replace plastic bags will be introduced throughout the following year in order to replace the need for plastic bags, these strategies are outlined in the following enacting clauses.
 - b. Enforcement of this ban will be principally controlled by the owners of each respective store across the nation.
 - c. Violation of this law will result in a fine of up to \$20 000 being levied on the business responsible.
 2. The Canadian government will hold a nationwide competition giving Canadians the opportunity to invent creative new environmentally friendly replacements for plastic bags.
 - a. The winner of this competition will have their design produced and used in stores across the country.
 - b. The creation of the new alternative will be funded and implemented by the Canadian government.
 3. The current plastic bag alternatives in use across Canada will continue to be encouraged and an investment of \$100,000 over the next five years will be put into place in order to develop these alternatives.
 - a. Current alternatives ranging from tote bags, paper bags, cardboard boxes to plastic crates.