

SOUTH DAKOTA DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this association shall be South Dakota Democracy in Action, hereinafter called SDDIA.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

- A. SDDIA is a grassroots movement of women working to bring about progressive change in South Dakota.
- B. SDDIA is a non-partisan coalition of women – Democrats, Republicans, Independents and others.
- C. SDDIA is committed to informing and energizing voters and creating a climate where progressive candidates are elected and constructive public policies are enacted.
- D. SDDIA advocates for:
 - Empowerment of women
 - Protection of civil liberties
 - Transparent and open government
 - Civil public policy dialogue
 - Native justice and racial reconciliation
 - Responsible environmental stewardship
 - Equal economic opportunity
 - Access to affordable health care
 - Strong public schools and higher education
 - Advancement of the arts
 - Global cooperation and peace.

ARTICLE III. GOVERNANCE

- A. The Bylaws, Norms, Guidelines for Consensus Decision Making, and Conflict Resolution Model of SDDIA shall govern this association and are binding on all affiliates, their members and committees. (See APPENDIX A)
- B. SDDIA integrates the strength of the circle based on respect for ourselves, each other and the group, and the recognition that each participant is valued equally and shares responsibility for the integrity and effectiveness of the organization.
- C. The work of SDDIA is accomplished primarily through affiliates and their committees.
- D. Positions may be taken by SDDIA and/or its Affiliates only through thoughtful research, education and thorough deliberation, thereby reaching consensus.
- E. SDDIA and its Affiliates are committed to coalition building with individuals and organizations and we encourage members to network with each other around issues that are consistent with our purpose.

ARTICLE IV. USE OF NAME & LOGO

The SDDIA name and logo shall be used only for activities approved by SDDIA and/or its Affiliates.

ARTICLE V. LEADERSHIP

- A. Leadership of SDDIA will be selected at the beginning of each annual meeting and will include two facilitators, one recorder, one treasurer, an email and list management team, and representatives from each Affiliate.
- B. Leadership will serve one-year terms.
- C. Leadership may serve no more than two consecutive terms.
- D. At the annual meeting of SDDIA, members will be selected by consensus to serve as SDDIA representatives on statewide committees. Affiliates may also choose to have independent representation on local or statewide committees.

ARTICLE VI. MEMBERSHIP

- A. Any woman who expresses a desire to be a member of SDDIA and/or its Affiliates and is committed to the purpose and governance of SDDIA is considered a member.
- B. SDDIA is comprised of the membership of all Affiliates.

ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS

- A. SDDIA will meet annually with other meetings scheduled as necessary by current leadership and/or the request of at least two Affiliates.
- B. Members and female guests are welcome to attend any meeting of SDDIA and/or its Affiliates at any time.
- C. Meetings may be held by conference call or electronically.

ARTICLE VIII. AFFILIATES & AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP GUIDELINES

- A. Groups seeking to become Affiliates of SDDIA must be accepted by SDDIA.
- B. Acceptance requires Affiliates to adopt and follow the SDDIA Bylaws, Norms and Guidelines for Consensus Decision Making.
- C. Affiliates may not charge dues or require meeting attendance.
- D. Affiliates must meet at regularly established times and in venues that respect the integrity and purpose of the organization and its members.
- E. Affiliate meetings must have written and disseminated agendas and minutes.
- F. Leadership of each Affiliate will include one or more facilitators, one or more recorders, a treasurer and an email and list manager.
- G. Acceptance requires Affiliates to develop and adopt Affiliate Membership Guidelines that are consistent with SDDIA's Bylaws. Affiliate Membership Guidelines will include polices on the following:
 - 1. Announcement of meeting times and locations.
 - 2. Description of leadership roles, responsibilities and terms of offices.
 - 3. Description of leadership selection process.
 - 4. Description of Affiliate standing committees.
 - 5. Description of financial policies including bank accounts and check writing policy.
- H. Affiliates may seek a variance from these guidelines.
- I. Affiliates choosing not to follow these bylaws will be considered coalition partners, as opposed to SDDIA Affiliates.

ARTICLE IX. COMMUNICATION POLICY

- A. SDDIA encourages members and Affiliates to maintain connection with each other.
- B. The agenda and minutes of each Affiliate will be sent to all members so members are informed and comfortable attending the most convenient meetings.
- C. SDDIA maintains one statewide email list managed by a Rapid City team that sends out all Affiliate meeting agendas and minutes, Action Alerts (email messages requesting action on behalf of SDDIA and/or its Affiliates), and FYIs (email messages with information from an individual or organization), provided by Affiliates and Facilitators.
 - 1. SDDIA and Affiliates include women on our email list by their request only.
 - 2. SDDIA and Affiliates do not share names with other organizations.
 - 3. Out of respect for individual Members' privacy, Members or Affiliates may not use SDDIA or Affiliate lists for any personal, financial, organizational or political purposes or without consensus by SDDIA or an Affiliate.
- D. SDDIA maintains one website managed by a Rapid City volunteer team and technical support. The website shall include the schedule of all Affiliate meetings and events as well as other events and information of interest.

ARTICLE X. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

- A. The fiscal year shall be from January 1 through December 31 of each year.
- B. Consensus is required for any expenditure and approval will be noted in the meeting minutes.
- C. The Treasurer will file all necessary and appropriate reports with the State of South Dakota.
- D. An audit will be conducted annually.

ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS

SDDIA is an evolving, dynamic, and self-correcting organization. As more Affiliates develop, these Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws may be amended as needed.

The provisions of these Bylaws may be amended at any SDDIA meeting following the SDDIA Guidelines for Consensus Decision Making, so long as amendments are consistent with SDDIA's purpose and Bylaws. Notice of proposed amendment will be sent at least 30 days prior to the meeting.

DATE ADOPTED AUGUST 26, 2007 – WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY

APPENDIX A

SOUTH DAKOTA DEMOCRACY IN ACTION NORMS

South Dakota Democracy in Action integrates the strength of the circle based on respect for ourselves, each other and the group, and the recognition that each participant is valued equally and shares responsibility for the integrity and effectiveness of the organization.

We respect the Individual:

- the right to diverse opinions
- the right to speak and be heard
- the privilege to listen to one another

We respect the Process:

- it is organic, ever changing and sometimes ambiguous
- it is spontaneous and energetic
- it requires time and discussion to reach optimum outcomes

We respect the Group:

- to recognize the value of collaboration and that each woman's and each committee's contribution is honored as part of our collective goal of working toward a better world

Speaker Responsibilities:

- to speak clearly and concisely
- to speak to the topic on the floor
- to voice concerns

Listener Responsibilities:

- to listen with full attention and refrain from side conversation
- to allow speaker to finish

Facilitator Responsibilities:

- to restate, reflect and clarify
- to monitor, nurture and protect the process
- to summarize and provide closure
- to call for silence or break for discussion if necessary

SOUTH DAKOTA DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

GUIDELINES FOR CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING

1. SDDIA's consensus decision-making process keeps power in the center of circle and not with individuals.
2. All insights, positions and concerns are valid and encouraged. Breadth of discussion is not personal criticism but promotes well-considered decisions.
3. Any member may "stand aside" from a decision.
4. Any member may voice dissent. Such dissent will be recorded in the minutes, without attribution.
5. Decision is reached when there is no further discussion *among the members present*.
6. In the absence of consensus, a decision will be postponed. When discussion has resumed and there is still a split, the proposal will be deferred or subject to the Conflict Resolution Model.
7. Consensus takes time, which is well spent because proposals that are wholeheartedly agreed to by a group are carried out wholeheartedly. The process requires maturity and flexibility, along with willingness to give way for the good of the group, to listen rather than hold forth, to invent rather than insist.
8. Facilitators will keep discussion on topic, call for a "go-round", silence or a break when needed.
9. Each decision reached by consensus will be clearly reflected in the minutes.

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CONFLICT RESOLUTION MODEL

Disagreements are inevitable within a circle of thinking women. These may occur during a meeting or upon reflection about a decision. Whenever a group member is dissatisfied with the process or disagrees with a decision, she will be responsible for bringing this to the attention of the whole group. In the event that a DIA member is approached by a fellow member outside the circle with a complaint or a comment that could generate conflict, even if unintended, she (the receiver) will be responsible for suggesting this be brought to the group as a whole, taken to a facilitator or resolved between the disputants using the Conflict Resolution Model. The integrity of the circle is threatened when conflict is left unresolved or taken outside the circle. Tools for resolving such conflict are, therefore, a necessary part of the consensus model. Conflict can lead to usable change. Conflict resolution allows the circle to practice peacemaking. The following model is taken from Fisher & Ury's *Getting to Yes*; it suggests four steps in resolving a disagreement:

- 1. Separate people from the issue in a dispute and focus on the latter.**
This point acknowledges that humans are not computers and that emotions can become entangled with the merits of the problem. Taking positions makes this worse as people's egos become identified with their positions. Placing blame on a fellow member(s) wastes time, energy and avoids the disputed issue. Separating personalities from the substantive problem allows disputing participants to see themselves as working side by side, attacking the problem and not each other. It may be useful to look at the issue from one another's points of view.
- 2. Focus on interests, not positions.**
The object of conflict resolution is to satisfy peoples' underlying interests. A negotiating position can obscure what a person really wants. Interests can be explored and expanded and participants thus avoid a hardening bottom line.
- 3. Invent options for mutual gain before deciding what to do.**
Searching for the one right solution blocks creativity and narrows vision. Postponing a decision removes more pressure. Brainstorming at least three possible options opens people to a variety of win - win solutions. These can be discussed and compared.
- 4. Insist that resolution is based on some objective criteria.**
Decision will be reached, independent of the will of either side and using as a fair standard the Mission Statement and Goals of Democracy in Action.

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OUR SIGNATURES HERE