

### **Overview:**

In an effort to make congress more accessible to all students, especially those from newer programs, we must look into limiting legislation packets. Overly long legislation packets do not encourage more debate, in fact they discourage it as newer students have no idea what to prep or where to spend their already limited time.

### **A look at the data from this season so far:**

MUHS congress: 11 bills (12 pages)

Madison West Congress: 11 bills (12 pages)

Sheboygan South congress: 18 bills (20 pages)

### **Rationale:**

- While many schools choose to submit the exact same legislation week to week and use the exact same speeches week to week, others do not. This can lead to an enormous amount of prep for students looking to continue growing their skills in congress. For younger students, prep takes longer which means they simply do not have time to complete adequate prep on all bills. For older students, they may be faster preppers, but they have lots of other commitments and can't commit the time to working on the bills.
- A longer docket does not encourage better debate, instead it leads to shorter, more surface level debates on more topics instead of substantive debate on a smaller number of topics. Frequently, sessions will include a bill where there is 1 to 2 cycles of debate on a bill just because the sponsor is in the room and they want to be able to deliver their sponsorship. Limiting the number of topics encourages students to do substantive prep on the smaller number of bills.
- Larger tournaments are moving to this model, with tournaments like Harvard, Glenbrooks, and other national level tournaments limiting bills and specifying which pieces of legislation are going into each session. We would not be out of line with other states and tournaments by creating this sort of rule.
- Beyond this, there is a non-standard time for publishing legislation, meaning schools can publish their packet at any time. By setting a minimum of a week, we are ensuring students have time to prepare for each tournament.

## **Proposal:**

Since most WFCA tournaments have two sessions of approximately 2 hours each, I propose the following:

- Tournament packets can contain no more than 3 bills per session (i.e. a 2-session tournament can only have 6 bills, a 3 session tournament can only have 9 bills)
- If a tournament will have a super session or an elim session, a separate docket that is only for elimination rounds must be published. This docket will follow the same setup of only 3 bills per session of elimination. Those bills may be selected from the submitted bills following the guidelines below.
- In order to build a packet, the host must follow the guidelines below:
  - Include at least one bill per school who submitted legislation
  - Legislation must follow the standard protocol for student congress legislation- no more than 1 page, a school/specific student listed as the author, and all appropriate formatting.
  - If there are more schools who submit legislation than this rule allows, the host school may choose the best pieces of legislation from those submitted, with no more than 1 from any given school. This may mean some schools do not have their bills on the docket.
  - The host school must prioritize other schools' legislation wherever possible. In other words, if 4 schools submit bills to a tournament that can only have 6 bills on the docket, the host school must remove their own from consideration in favor of the attending schools for the second piece of legislation.
  - If there are fewer schools who submitted than the number of bills allows, the school may choose additional legislation from any school who submitted legislation.
    - If
- Packets must be published by 4pm at least 7 days before the tournament. Publishing must include a post on the tournament site (on Tabroom or Speechwire) as well as an email blast to coaches.