

HOW TO: Make a Motion from the Floor Requesting Union Support for Conference Attendance

Usually, the best first step to request financial assistance from the local is to write a request letter to the Executive Board. **See Sample Letter and Letter “How To.”** Hopefully they will recommend financial support. Great! Be at the meeting to make sure the recommendation passes. However, if you are denied at the Executive Board or for other reasons, you may need to make the motion from the floor at your union meeting.

PRELIMINARY STEPS

1. Rally support beforehand: Contact other women in the local and ask them for help, talk to your contacts in union leadership, and talk to members that you know attend union meetings. Consult the bullet points on the Value of the Women Building California and the Nation to be persuasive as to why this activity builds the union.

2. Decide the range of financial support that is appropriate. You will want to specify a level of support in your motion. How many women in the local, how many want to attend? What are the reasonable expenses? Registrations of course, but consider travel, hotel and perhaps supplemental meals. Your motion might be to send 10 women with all expenses or to send 10 women paying registration and reasonable travel expenses or something else. If you attend union meetings regularly, you will have an idea of what conferences and events the union is paying for.

3. Motions concerning money may have a specific place on the agenda. Find out where motions concerning money may be made (usually “New Business.”) Attend your meetings; you will see how the meetings are run and be better prepared.

3. Rally supporters to attend the meeting. You need that support in the room. First, you need someone designated in advance to second the motion. Second, you may need some support to make sure that the Chair recognizes you from the podium. And you need votes to pass the motion. It is usually wise to let the President and Business Manager know that you are going to ask for support from the floor, unless they would specifically try to quash that request.

THE MOTION FROM THE FLOOR

1. To make a motion, you normally stand up, wait for the Chair to recognize you, and then state your motion. When to make the motion is important to avoid being called out of order and your motion ignored. You must also have a second to the motion for it to be heard. Below are ways to be in order.
2. The Conference may be mentioned from the podium in Correspondence or in the Business Manager’s or the Executive Board Meeting Minutes. The Chair will probably ask for “Questions of the Report (or Minutes)?” You should rise to be recognized and to ask that the matter of the Women’s Conference be held out for discussion as new business. Then the item should be called out in New Business (or you may rise to remind the Chair that you have an item under New Business) and you may make your motion.
3. You may rise to be recognized and make the motion under New Business even if the Conference has not been raised before.
4. If you have not been able to bring the motion under new Business, you may rise under “Good of the Order” or “Good and Welfare.” All topics concerning the union are in order. Although you may not be able to bring the motion, you will be able to speak about the importance of the Women’s Conference.
5. Remember to tell the membership some reasons that they should support the Women’s conference in your short preamble to the motion.

See also the web for Robert’s Rules of Order and union meetings.