



**Ancient Order of Hibernians
Virginia State Board
Office of the President**

23 August 2024

To: The Officers and Members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in Virginia
Subject: AOH National Convention Report-2024

Greetings Brothers,

SYNOPSIS: AOH National Convention--2024

The 102nd Biennial AOH-LAOH National Convention was held in Orlando, Florida from August 7—11, 2024.

Based upon our membership and number of Divisions, Virginia was assigned 32 Delegate positions. We were able to fill 15 of those positions with delegates and alternates. All the elected Virginia State Board Officers were present along with several Virginia Division Presidents, officers, and members. Thank you to all our Virginia Brothers who attended.

The main objective of the National Convention is to nominate, elect, and install the National AOH leadership for the next two-year period. In addition, business of the AOH is conducted to propose and adopt constitutional amendments and resolutions.

I had the privilege of nominating our own past Virginia State President, Brother Jay McCarthy as a candidate for National Director. Unfortunately, the ultimate vote did not go as desired, and Brother Jay failed to win election to the National Board.

National Officers for 2024—2026 are:

President: Sean Pender-- NJ
Vice President: Liam McNabb-- NY
Secretary: Ray Lynch--FL
National Treasurer: Dan Devinney--PA

Newly Elected National Directors:

Ryan Curry, Georgia
Patrick Ryan, Kentucky
Keith Reynolds, Florida
Rory Schulte, Montana
Tom Lambert, New York
Ed Dougherty, Pennsylvania



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All National Officers and Directors were installed by outgoing National AOH President Danny O'Connell, after a con-celebrated Mass attended by more than 500 AOH/LAOH members and guests on Saturday, August 11, 2024, at the Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando. A full installation banquet followed at which time the JFK Memorial Medal was awarded to Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania for his work on Irish and Irish American issues in congress.



<https://aoh.com/national-officers-2/>



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Father Edward J. Flannagan Human Dignity Award

An "Irish Nite" Dinner was held at the Rosen Hotel the evening prior to elections and the inaugural Father Edward J. Flannagan Human Dignity Award was presented to His Excellency, The Most Reverend Alphonsus Cullinan, Bishop of Waterford and Lismore Ireland. Bishop Cullinan's nomination states:

"Alphonsus Cullinan, Bishop of Waterford & Lismore, demonstrates an enduring commitment to "acknowledging the sanctity of Human Life from conception to natural death." From his unwavering commitment to the unborn to his outreach to those who suffer from poverty, homelessness, abandonment, or any form of societal neglect, Bishop Phonsie serves the people of Ireland and the world.

A preview of the new Father Flannagan movie "Heart of a Servant" was shown one evening and is highly recommended for all to see.

Resolutions & Constitutional Amendments:

Several Resolutions were adopted unanimously, mostly showing support for the Good Friday Agreement and opposition to the UK Legacy Act that would give amnesty for atrocities and crimes committed during The Troubles.

Several Constitutional Amendments were proposed, many of which were editorial in nature to help clarify and update various sections of the National Constitution.

One amendment passed proposing the addition of a Hibernian Hunger Chair position as an appointed officer.

One amendment passed which added; "Conviction of a felony or moral turpitude and improper conduct" as reasons to terminate membership, and two others concerned the time requirements for Tribunals and appeals, reducing the time requirements from 60 to 30 days (justified with today's electronic delivery). Passed.

One amendment that failed would have allowed a non-Irish father, grandfather, or great-grandfather of an AOH member to join.

By far the most contested amendment proposed changing membership requirements
From: .. "Be a practicing Roman Catholic"

To:... "Roman Catholic, who has received First Communion, confirmed, and living in harmony with the teachings of the faith".

There were numerous speakers both for and against, but the amendment narrowly passed and was adopted.



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National Committee Reports:

National Committee Chairs provided detailed reports during the convention regarding all aspects of AOH charity, publicity, membership, and scholarship programs.

A full list of Committee breakout Sessions is contained below, and all State Chairs are encouraged to check out the latest reports from the National to keep current on AOH efforts and initiatives.

The Virginia State Board along with several Virginia Divisions were recognized with token awards for FFAI contributions for the preceding year. The award is a hand-made replica of the “Entering Free Derry” mural made by former POWs of The Troubles.

The Fr. Lynch Division in Roanoke was specifically mentioned and recognized for expanding a \$1000 Hibernian Hunger grant from National to \$4000 for the local food bank.

Several young Hibernian scholarship recipients, along with Study Abroad, Young Ambassador, and Irish Way students, addressed the convention delegates and were all quite impressive and well spoken. The future of the Order is promising, and Division Presidents are encouraged to promote the various Study Abroad and scholarship opportunities available for young Hibernians, and the sons, daughters, and grandchildren of members in their divisions.

Breakout Sessions:

Catholic Action - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JDExVIGSXFY>

Charities and Missions - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zGsDum1E5bg>

Digital Coordinator - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVbvleE_vk0

Freedom For All Ireland - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPZjv7C1FHM>

Hibernian Digest - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dljyRaFj_M

Hibernian Hunger - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E142pEONzvQ>

History - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IhM5Yjz6N_w

Immigration - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SijtM81UNIE>



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National Organizer Part I - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzMo4-Bm41Y>

National Organizer Part II - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPktzYyitt0>

PEC - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3FXAhQu05s>

Project St. Patrick - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8zf4FP6h6G8>

Pro-Life - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fj_wMO_ClpU

Rituals and Degrees - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-s3aSBHrIY>

Scholarships and Irish Way - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCP02WMkGGg>

Veterans Affairs - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZTrvJDOzaGO>

Additional Notes & Observations:

- The Virginia AOH and LAOH participated jointly in a tri-state hospitality suite with our Brothers from D.C and Maryland at the Rosen center. This presented a great opportunity to meet and greet all the national officers and guests and allowed us a caucus location to hear from the candidates for office. We were joined by the single delegate from Delaware, and in the future we many wish to consider expanding from a “Tri-State” association to a DC & Del/Mar/VA group for greater coverage and fraternity.
- The Virginia AOH Hibernian Bear program was a huge success. We returned with only a couple of dozen bears of the 300 originally purchased. The little AOH bears were a popular item and their sale from our suite has helped to replenish our own convention fund for the next state convention in 2025. We were also very successful in offering our “Mama Bear & Basket of Cheer Raffle” tickets raising more than \$600 to offset the cost of the suite and refreshments. No further assessment or donations from Virginia Divisions will be required.
- One negative note involved the scheduling and general organization of events and amendment voting. It was proposed from the floor that future convention schedules and proposed amendments be published well in advance and disseminated to all state and county boards and divisions for consideration. This motion passed.



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Future Convention Locations:

Voting took place to determine the sites for the next two National Conventions.
The winners are:

- **2026 Omaha, NE Convention Center/ Hilton Hotel**
- **2028 Atlantic City, NJ Harrah's Hotel & Casino**



We Stand Stronger Together !

Our next scheduled Quarterly State Board meeting will be October 19, 2024!

In Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,

Robert A. Fay

Robert A. Fay, President
AOH Virginia State Board