JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE
54th National Convention
National Council Meeting
Philadelphia, PA
July 10, 2024

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT PROPOSAL

Part 1. This is an amendment to the Bylaws of the Japanese American Citizens League amending Article I, Sections 1-5, Article VI, Section 3(c)(2), and Article VII, Section 1(f) relating to Membership. This is also an amendment to the Constitution of the Japanese American Citizens League amending Article X, Section 1.

Part 2.
(a) Article I of the Bylaws of the Japanese American Citizens League is amended to read as follows:

ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. Active Members
a. Active Members shall be members in good standing of a Chapter recognized by the National Council.
b. Active Members shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of this organization, including the right to hold elective offices unless otherwise provided.
c. Active Members shall pay dues as follows:
   (1) National dues shall be set by the National Council, and remitted to National Headquarters; and
   (2) Chapter dues, if any, shall be set by each Chapter, and retained by each Chapter or rebated from National Headquarters.
d. Active Members may have their membership transferred to another Chapter without further payment of any fees by submitting a written request to the National Staff.
e. Reduced rates for couples or additional members of the same family (i.e., Couple/Family memberships) may be defined and established by the National Council. Couple/Family membership is defined as two adults and children 17 and younger.
f. Membership expiration dates shall be established by the National Board; and
g. Membership dues shall include an Active Membership card, a subscription to the Pacific Citizen – Digital Edition, and privileges of other special organizational services.

SECTION 2. National Associate Members
a. National Associate Members shall be persons eligible for membership in this organization if they either reside in areas where there are no Chapters or prefer not to maintain an active Chapter membership.
b. National Associate Members shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of this organization, including appointment to National committees and appointed positions, except the right to vote as a Chapter delegate or hold elective office.
c. National Associate Members shall pay membership dues to National Headquarters as set by the National Board. Membership dues shall include a National Associate Membership card, one year's subscription to the Pacific Citizen – Digital Edition, and privileges of other special organizational services.
d. Membership expiration dates for National Associate Members shall be set by the National Board.
e. National Associate Members may have their membership transferred to a Chapter as an active member without the
further payment of dues by submitting a written request to the National Staff.

SECTION 3. Youth/Student Memberships

a. Youth/Student: A member of a Chapter or the National organization who is 25 years of age or younger or is currently enrolled in a trade school, business college, college, university or other institution of higher learning at either the undergraduate or graduate level.

b. Youth/Student Members shall be entitled to all rights and privileges of this organization unless otherwise provided.

c. Youth/Student Members shall pay membership dues to be fixed by the National Board. Payment of this amount shall entitle the Youth/Student Member to a JACL Youth/Student Membership card, one year's subscription to the Pacific Citizen – Digital Edition, and special organizational services.

d. Youth/Student membership expiration dates shall be fixed by the National Board.

e. Youth/Student Members may have their membership transferred without further payment of fees by submitting a written request to the National Staff.

SECTION 4. National Premium Members

a. National Premium Membership Categories: Individuals who contribute in excess of the regular membership shall be known as National Premium Members according to categories defined by the National Council. National Premium Membership Category Dues shall include a membership card, one year's subscription to the Pacific Citizen - Digital Edition, and privileges of other special organizational services. National Premium Membership categories shall include:

   (1) Bronze Level;
   (2) Silver Level;
   (3) Gold Level; and
   (4) Platinum/Millennium Level

b. Life Trust Membership Categories: The National Board shall adopt consistent policies and rules governing the granting and recognition of Life Trust Memberships. JACL Millennium Club Members otherwise eligible as Life Members will continue their memberships as Life Members. Life Members may pay the difference to upgrade to higher life categories. Life Trust Membership Category dues shall include a membership card, lifetime subscription to the Pacific Citizen – Digital Edition, and privileges of other special organizational services. Life Trust Membership categories include but are not limited to:

   (1.) Sapphire Life Trust;
   (2.) Ruby Life Trust; and
   (3.) Diamond Life Trust

c. Apportionment of Dues: Apportionment of dues for National Premium Membership categories between National and Chapters shall be determined by the National Council.

d. Membership Dates: Membership expiration dates of National Premium Members shall be set by the National Board.

   (b) Article VI of the Bylaws of the Japanese American Citizens League is amended to read as follows:

**ARTICLE VI. NATIONAL BOARD**

SECTION 3. Vacancies

c. Vacancy Appointments:

   (1.) The President shall appoint Active Members of the organization to all vacancies among the elective officers of the Board. Such appointments shall be approved by the National Board. Appointees shall serve until the next election.

   (2.) The order of succession to a vacancy in the Office of the President shall be as follows: Vice President of General Operations, Vice President for Public Affairs, Vice President for Planning and Development, Vice President for
Membership, and Secretary/Treasurer. The successor President shall appoint an Active Member to fill the vacancy resulting from such succession, subject to (c) (1) of this section. In the case of temporary absences, that Officer assuming the Presidential Office does not leave a vacant seat but assumes two Offices until the return of the President.

(c) Article VII of the Bylaws of the Japanese American Citizens League is amended to read as follows:

ARTICLE VII. NATIONAL OFFICERS

SECTION 1. Duties of National Elected Officers:

f. Vice President for Membership: The Vice President for Membership shall be responsible for monitoring matters and committees relating to membership development and membership services. Such Vice President shall promote the enrollment of members.

(d) Article X, Section 1 of the Constitution of the Japanese American Citizens League is amended to read as follows:

ARTICLE X. NATIONAL OFFICERS

SECTION 1. Elected Positions

The elective National Officers shall be the President, four Vice Presidents, and the Secretary/Treasurer. The four Vice Presidents shall be respectively designated as:

"Vice President for General Operations";
"Vice President for Public Affairs";
"Vice President for Planning and Development"; and
"Vice President for Membership".

Part 3. Article I, Sections 1 to 5 are renumbered as Article I, Sections 1 to 4, respectively (i.e. Section 3 on Non-Profit Organization Members was removed and thus Sections 4 and 5 renumbered).

Part 4. This amendment shall become effective (IMMEDIATELY UPON ITS ADOPTION / AS OF

Part 5. Sponsor: ________________________________  Dated: ______________________________

Chapter Name / Youth Rep  (Optional)  Month/Date/Year

Sponsor by: ________________________________  E-mail: ______________________________

Printed Name (individual)

Signed: ________________________________  Title: ______________________________

Signature

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Part 6.

Moved: National Board
(Required) District Council - National Youth/Student Council - National Board
Moved by: Dominique Mashburn
E-mail: dmashburn@jacl.org
Signed:__________

Title: VP for Membership

Part 7.

Name the contact person authorized to communicate on behalf of the proponent with the Constitution & Bylaws Committee in order to discuss changes:

Name: Dominique Mashburn; Ashley Bucher
E-mail: dmashburn@jacl.org; abucher@jacl.org

Part 8.

Will there be any fiscal impact associated with implementation of this amendment? Yes.

- For the Bronze Level, we predict at least $3,475 net revenue in 2024 and $6,950 net in 2025.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2024</th>
<th>2025</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Membership Revenue</td>
<td>$4,500</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expense Refunds/Rebates</td>
<td>$1,025</td>
<td>$2,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,475</strong></td>
<td><strong>$6,950</strong></td>
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</table>

- We predict membership revenue will increase because of:
  - A) We believe that 50 Regular/Individual members will upgrade to Bronze Level in 2024 and 100 will in 2025. Regular/Individual member dues mode is $65 and Bronze Level will be $125, creating a $60 increase per member. We also believe that 25 Couple/Family members will upgrade to Bronze Level Couple/Family in 2024, and 50 will in 2025.

  **2024 Revenue**: 50 * $60 = $3,000 and 25 * $60 = $1,500, so $4,500 total
  **2024 Rebate (expense)**: 50 * $12 = $600 and 25 * $17 = $425, so $1,025 total

  **2025 Revenue**: 100 * $60 = $6,000 and 50 * $60 = $3,000, so $9,000 total
  **2025 Rebate (expense)**: 100 * $12 = $1,200 and 50 * $17 = $850, so $2,050 total

We have strong evidence that there will be many Premium Membership upgrades. There
were 158 Thousand Club ($200 level) members in 2019 and 204 in 2023. Also, in 2023, 603 members give an “additional gift” with their membership and they often round up to $100 or more.

- B) Spouse memberships standardize to Couple/Family memberships add an additional $13 per member ($32 spouse mode to $45 standard = $13 difference) times 103 spouse members equals +$1,339.

Currently, the Membership Department defines Couple/Family membership as two adults and children 17 and younger, and Spouse memberships are defined as two adults. If Spouse memberships are standardized to Couple/Family, we do not believe this will have a notable impact on the FIS. One reason is students applying for scholarships are already required to have their own separate Student/Youth membership, so we do not expect a decline in Student/Youth memberships with this change. Another reason is that Premium "and Spouse" members tend to lean older with kids older than 17, so we do not expect that standardizing Spouse Memberships to Couple/Family will change anything.

- C) With the new Diamond Life Trust Level, we expect about 6 people to upgrade from Century Life Trust ($5,000 level) (or some combination of upgrades from Century Life Trust and upgrades from annual membership levels) = $30,000. Recently, there has been an increase of membership upgrades from Thousand Life Trust to Century Life Trust, so we believe this assumption is logical.

Thus, for 2025 Fiscal Impact:

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bronze Level Upgrades:</strong></td>
<td>+ $9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spouse to Couple/Family Price Increase:</strong></td>
<td>+ $1,339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diamond Life Trust Upgrades:</strong></td>
<td>+ $30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL REVENUE:</strong></td>
<td>+$40,339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REBATE (EXPENSE):</strong></td>
<td>- $2,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2025 NET REVENUE:</strong></td>
<td>$38,289</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Revenue Estimates**
  - The above estimates are conservative. They give a conceptual framework of fiscal impact considerations, that is new revenue per category and rebates. Also, while we will thoroughly educate members on the name changes, we believe it may take a year or two for members to understand and decide to upgrade to the new levels.
  - We believe that visibility, clarity, and storytelling of membership changes will encourage further upgrades to new levels.
  - For example, we believe that there will be several new life upgrades per year. Since last year, 5 Thousand Club Life members upgraded to Century Club Life at $2,000 each totaling $10,000. If 2 members upgrade to Diamond Life Trust, at least $10,000 additional revenue will be gained.
  - We plan to run multi-channel upgrade campaigns to encourage upgrades at every level.

- **Staff Costs**
There will be staff costs but there will also be staff time savings which is why no additional staff cost is listed in the Fiscal Impact Statement.

The Fiscal Impact Form asked from and to which program staff hours will be moved to. Since staff costs are contained in the membership program, there is no cost to other programs and no additional staff costs. The form states: “*Reallocating hours and accompanying expense for existing staff from one program to another does not affect total budgeted revenues over expenditures. Please refer to biennial budget for current programs. ”

Staff will have to update members’ rates on various postings including website, renewal forms, and the database.

Staff will notify members and chapters with changes including categories, rates, and benefits. Particularly, life members must not only be informed that the category name has changed but also that they retain their benefits (i.e., lifelong subscription to the Pacific Citizen - Digital Edition).

Staff will save time in processing and posting renewals and rebates for spouse members and premium members.

Staff will need to change additional documents that mention “VP for One Thousand Club, Membership and Services”, such as the website, organization chart, budget, etc.

The National Council is voting to also approve the following categories, rates, and rebates. However, the dues and rebate amounts will not be added to the Bylaws and dues for National Associates, Youth/Student, and Life Trust memberships will be subject to approval by the National Board.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Memberships</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Dues</th>
<th>Rebate</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Memberships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student/Youth</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>Set by Chapter</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular/Individual</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>Set by Chapter</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple/Family +$45</td>
<td>$110</td>
<td>Set by Chapter</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premium Memberships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze Level</td>
<td>$125</td>
<td>$12</td>
<td>New level at $125 rate. Rebate is half of $250 level’s, plus $5 for the Couple/Family.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze Level Couple/Family +$45</td>
<td>$170</td>
<td>$17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Level</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td>$24</td>
<td>Name changed from “Thousand Club”. Dues increased by +$50.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Level Couple/Family +$45</td>
<td>$295</td>
<td>$29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold Level</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>Name changed from “Century Club”. Dues increased by +$150.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold Level Couple/Family +$45</td>
<td>$545</td>
<td>$55</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Part 9. Rationale (Provide a concise explanation of the reasons/background for the proposed change)

Article 1, Sections 1-4: The membership bylaws are in need of an update, as many sections no longer align with current membership department practices and would cost National Staff and Board valuable time if precisely followed. First, the Pacific Citizen is now also a digital/email subscription, so it is conducive for all couple/family, spouse, and youth/student members to receive the digital version regardless if they reside in the same physical household.

Second, the bylaws state that in order to change chapters, one must write the Executive Director; this is both a poor use of the Executive Director’s time and inconsistent with current practices (i.e., the membership department easily makes these changes).

Third, regarding National Associate Members - we believe anyone should be eligible to become a
National Associate Member even if there is a chapter near them. For example, the chapter may be inactive or the member may prefer to only be involved nationally.

Fourth, the Non-Profit Organizational Membership Category is not used in practice.

Fifth, the bylaws state that a percentage of Youth/Student membership dues shall be retained by the local Chapter; however in practice, only chapters that have chapter dues for Youth/Student memberships receive any rebate.

Overall, by making these updates to the bylaws, we will more accurately reflect how current membership business is conducted and save time, removing any discrepancies and clarifying its structure.

**Article 1, Section 5:** We propose the changes above from our mission and values: to be more inclusive, proactive, courageous, and view membership from an abundance mindset.

First, membership category names, especially for premium memberships, have been confusing to members for quite a while. The largest confusion is that Century Club is a higher level than Thousand Club even if 1000 is a higher number than 100. Some names are duplicative, such as Thousand Club and Thousand Club Life Trust, and many do not correspond to the rate, such as Century Club meaning 100 years, but the rate being $350 and not $100. We believe that updating these confusing names to be unique from one another, as well as adding new membership categories for those who are willing and able to give more, will encourage more members to upgrade to premium categories. The proposed names – Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum/Millennium – are simple and widely recognized to be standard giving levels in other organizations. We also believe that updating the premium dues structure to $125, $250, $500, and $1,000 will be more intuitive and have better spacing to capture as much revenue as members are willing to give.

Additionally, to streamline and modernize “spouse” memberships, we propose renaming them to “Couple/Family” memberships, which can be added for $45 (difference between Regular/Individual and Couple/Family) to Annual Premium Memberships. This would grow the revenue and be more inclusive of domestic partners, children, and modern families. This would also be more consistent. There are Thousand and Millennium Club spouses with different rates of $32 and $36, respectively. Also, there lacks a Century Club Spouse thus Century Club is paired with Thousand Club Spouse. Making all Spouse Memberships into a Couple/Family add on for $45 is simpler, standard, consistent, and inclusive.

Finally, we have changed the Life Trust categories to remove all confusion about the levels and inspire names that align with JACL’s leadership awards. Confusion comes from the names of the levels (Thousand and Century Club Life Trusts) that do not match the prices of $3,000 and $5,000 respectively. Also, confusion comes from having annual memberships called the same name. Lastly, having the Century Life level be higher than the Thousand Life does not make numeric orderly sense. The new names are based on JACL’s volunteer awards such as the Sapphire, Ruby, and Diamond pins at the $3,000, $5,000, and $10,000 levels. Members may upgrade levels by paying the difference. This has happened five times in the last year, adding $10,000 in revenue to JACL. Additionally, NAACP has a tied life membership system where members are encouraged to upgrade from Silver to Gold or Gold to Platinum Life levels by paying the difference.

Overall, these changes will make our membership categories more attractive, purposeful, and modernized, as well as increase revenue. Please see our [Membership Amendment folder](#) for detailed visuals and
additional context.

FAQ:

2024 vs 2023 Membership Amendment

- **How is this Membership Amendment different from last year’s?** The amendment is mostly the same, with the biggest difference being new Premium Category names and dues amounts (see newly renamed Section 4 of the Bylaws above). The new Premium Categories are Bronze Level ($125), Silver Level ($250), Gold Level ($500), and Platinum/Millennium Level ($1,000). Suggested by the EDC, we are confident that these new levels are more timeless and logical, as well as recognizable, standard giving levels across organizations.

Roles of National Board, National Council, and Chapters

- **How come some categories’ dues are set by the National Board and some by the National Council?** After a good amount of research, we can only assume. Here are our findings and conclusions in the roles and responsibilities:
  - National Council:
    - Regular dues
    - Family add-on regular dues
    - Premium dues
  - National Board:
    - Youth/Student dues
    - National Associate dues
    - Life Trust dues

- **How come the Youth/Student, National Associate, and Life Trust dues are decided by the National Board and the other categories by the National Council? Why didn’t you change this to be consistent?** We have gone back and forth on this over again. On one hand, we want consistency. We also want this CBL proposal to pass without controversy. Thus, standardizing all dues decisions to the National Council is both easier and more consistent. However, allowing the Youth/Student dues to be decided by the National Board (not council) gives the whole organization more flexibility and opportunities for student/youth promotions, for example, lowering the rate temporarily (i.e., a sale) to get more young members. Thus, we kept this provision.

- **In the table of memberships (see standard memberships, then the rebate column), what does “set by chapter” mean?** Chapter boards can decide their chapter dues. Most of them are $0 (no chapter dues, so $65 National Dues + $0 Chapter Dues = $65 Membership Dues). The mode is $5 (for example, $65 National Dues + $5 Chapter Dues = $70 Membership Dues). The highest is $17.

Premium Members

- **What happens to the current Thousand, Century, and Spouse members?** They will be transitioned to Silver and Gold (if they choose), and Couple/Family add-on memberships and will be notified.
  - New $125 Level: Bronze Level
  - $250 Level: Thousand Club → Silver Level (price increases by $50)
$500 Level: Century Club → Gold Level (price increases by $150)
$1,000 Level: Millennium Club → Platinum/Millennium Level

- **What is happening to Spouse memberships?** We will retire all of them and turn them into Couple/Family add ons for $45 each. This makes sense because of the add on from a Regular/Individual Membership at $65 to a Couple/Family Membership at $110: The difference is $45.
  - Thousand Club Spouse ($32 + Chapter Dues) → Couple/Family ($45)
  - Millennium Club Spouse ($36) → Couple/Family ($45)

- **What happens to the Rebate for Spouse members?** We changed all spouse memberships to a $45 Couple/Family membership with a $5 rebate. This is more consistent and standardized than the current system.

- **Won’t current Thousand and Century Club members, especially the older timers, be disappointed in retiring these categories?** This may be true but at this point most of our touchpoints with premium members describe that the categories are confusing. At the end of 2023, we surveyed premium members and found that 89.7% of respondents (70/78 people) would be okay with updating the category names. The Thousand Club was made in 1947 by George Inagaki and Hito Okada to get 1000 members (hence the club) to give $25 more for an additional $25,000. We are thankful to them and feel it is time to move forward. We plan to honor the history of retired categories on our website, in the *Pacific Citizen*, and other channels.

**Life Members**

- **What happens to the current life members?** Their memberships will be transitioned and they will be notified. For example, all Thousand Club Life Trusts will become Sapphire Life Trusts. Century Life Trust will become Ruby Life Trust. There are no additional fees and all benefits remain the same, mostly, subscription to the *Pacific Citizen* - Digital Edition.

- **Can you explain the Sapphire, Ruby, and Diamond names?** These levels are based on the already existing volunteer leadership levels such as the Ruby Pin (the order is Diamond, Ruby, Sapphire for these too). Changing the names will decrease confusion from the Premium memberships (e.g., What’s the difference between Thousand Club and Thousand Club Life Trust - why do they have the same name?)

- **Can we upgrade life levels?** Yes, by paying the difference. The NAACP does this as a standard practice to gain more revenue and engage their life members financially. JACL had 5 cases of upgrades since last year which generated $2,000 each or $10,000 total.

- **What is the Couple Special for life members?** When one spouse upgrades to life, the other still must pay annual dues as a spouse member or buy a separate life membership. By offering a 10% discount, we feel it gives them an opportunity and incentive to both upgrade.

- **Do we need to pay the Couple Special in one lump sum or can we pay later?** The membership department keeps good records so upgrading one spouse now and one later is fine.
- **Can Life Trusts be paid off in monthly installments?** Yes, for example the $3,000 level could be paid in $250 x 12 months or $300 x 10 months. Please contact the membership department to set this up.

- **Why is this called “Life Trust” and not “Life Membership”?** The revenue from the dues does go into the Life Trust Endowment. Then, chapters with life members will continue to get disbursements from withdrawals. This practice has not happened in the pandemic and with the Business Manager role transition but we made a distribution this past year.