

Progressive Parliamentary Pointers

Virginia Henderson Harris, RP

Parliamentarian - Connectional Lay Organization

Lay on the Table

Lay on the Table allows the pending question to be laid aside temporarily when something else of immediate urgency has arisen. A majority vote allows the consideration of the motion to be stopped immediately **without debate**. There is no set time for taking the tabled matter up again. This action violates the rights of the minority and individual members if it is for any other purpose other than taking up a matter of urgency. For organizations holding regular business meetings quarterly, the motion to **Take from the Table** may be considered as long as it is done before the end of the next regular session or the motion dies. **Please see RONR 11th Edition page 301 lines 34-35 and page 302 lines 1-7.**

Misuses of the Motion and Correct Procedures

The motion to **Lay on the Table** is subject to several misuses which should be avoided. Lay on the Table is often used in an effort to kill the motion or delay taking action at that moment. If the desire is to kill the motion for the remainder of the session please use the motion to **Postpone Indefinitely**. **Please see RONR 11th Edition page 126 lines – 7.** If the goal is to delay taking action until a more convenient time please use the motion to **Postpone to a Certain Time**. **Please see RONR 11th Edition page 180 lines 3-6.**

If it is evident that there is no urgency, it is out of order to lay a pending question on the table. **Please see RONR 11th Edition page 215 lines 13–15.**

At a special meeting, it is dilatory* and out of order to move **to Lay on the Table** a matter for which the meeting was called. **Please see RONR 11th Edition page 215 lines 22-23 and page 216 lines 1-2.**

If it is felt that discussion of a particular **Main motion** might do harm, rather than using Lay on the Table, raising an **Objection to the Consideration of a Question** is the proper motion, which should be made before any consideration has begun. **Please see RONR 11th Edition page 216 lines 34 – 35 through page 217 lines 1–2.**

*A motion is considered to be dilatory if it seeks to obstruct or prevent the will of the assembly.

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