

Dear AIAA Greater Huntsville Section (GHS),

For several years now, the AIAA GHS council has been in communication with our regional and national partners regarding their desire to have our section adopt new bylaws. There are several statements in the new bylaws that have caused some debate.

Our section has, for many years, been held accountable to its AIAA GHS membership (i.e. all of you). For example, AIAA GHS members currently hold the authority to approve any and all changes to GHS bylaws and elect any and all voting council members of GHS. In the new bylaws, our regional partners have created standardized section bylaws that concentrate power at higher levels of the organization. For example, the national board of trustees are given the authority to remove a section chair and the Regional Engagement Activities Division (READ) can change the bylaws even if GHS council and/or membership disagree. In the new section bylaws, the AIAA Board of Trustees can remove a section chair by a majority vote, pursuant to the bylaws of the institute. In our current bylaws, the national AIAA Council has the authority to suspend any member to act as an officer or council member of an AIAA section. They have stated that these types of changes will allow them to be more agile.

In summary, AIAA GHS culture has, historically, deferred section power to its membership. Regional partners of AIAA GHS have created a set of bylaws that concentrate power higher up in the organization, at the regional and national levels. Our section has been asked that these be adopted.

Here is what I think is important to know:

Present-day council members of AIAA GHS disagree on the proper recommendation to the section on whether to adopt the new proposed bylaws. Some point out that our support to the organization means supporting our regional and national partners, that we should accept the new bylaws and provide them with the power they feel is needed to run an agile and healthy organization. Others believe that the new bylaws should not be adopted, maintaining that your input should help define a healthy organization and actively help create it.

There has been ongoing communication with GHS councils and our AIAA national and regional partners over the years on bylaws. This past December, our AIAA national partners

indicated that our section would be ineligible for awards and rebate funding until the section membership votes to approve the new bylaws. These amounts represent approximately \$2,000 (this is performance based and could be less some years) and \$7,000 respectively in annual income. For reference, our section's total annual income is about \$20,000-\$25,000 (these amounts have been fairly typical for the section in recent years).

At this point, we offer the matter of the new proposed bylaws to you, the AIAA GHS membership. Please know that the AIAA GHS council will continue to support you to the best of our abilities, no matter the outcome of your vote.

What happens if you vote in favor of the new bylaws?

The AIAA GHS council will continue to serve the section and provide our members with the resources they need to meet their professional goals while strengthening our local communities and professional networks. AIAA GHS will have fulfilled our regional and national partners' action to their satisfaction. Our section would not be in danger of having our rebate funding and any potential awards funding withheld this year.

You, AIAA GHS members, would no longer have the final say in section decisions regarding the bylaws.

What happens if you vote against the adoption of the new bylaws?

The AIAA GHS council will continue to serve the section and provide our members with the resources they need to meet their professional goals while strengthening our local communities and professional networks. AIAA GHS will take your input and re-engage with our regional and national partners. Recall that our national partners have said they would withhold AIAA GHS annual rebate funds and any potential awards funding if our membership does not adopt the READ proposed new bylaws. Our current bylaws would remain in effect; they state you have authority on section decisions regarding the bylaws.

What comes next and how do you vote?

There are many details that I do not mention in this email. Some members, on both sides of this issue, would argue that I've missed discussing crucial elements surrounding this topic. I have tried my best to cover the heart of this matter and to address the main consequences of your vote in favor or against the adoption of the proposed new bylaws.

I also offer the following documents for your review, here:

1. [Read Me First March 2022.pdf](#)

2. [New proposed bylaws.pdf](#)
3. [Bylaws comparison in single file.pdf](#)
4. [AIAA GHS List of Concerns.pdf](#)
5. [AIAA GHS Summary of Concerns October 2020.pdf](#)
6. [Final Dispositioning of GHS comments September 2021.pdf](#)
7. [Memo from Council of Directors on READ authority December 2021.pdf](#)

After reading this email and the attached documents, you might still have some questions or concerns; there will be a town hall meeting for AIAA GHS members to help address these. The AIAA GHS town hall meeting to discuss the new bylaws will be held virtually on March 21, 2022 from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM. Here is the [link to join](#).

Tomorrow an email will be sent to officially open the voting period and with further voting instructions. You may vote as soon as the email is sent and through the end of the day on April 6th, 2022.

I thank you for your attention. I ask that you attend the town hall meeting if you have any questions or concerns and I ask that you vote on this matter of the bylaws during the period of March 17 - April 6 (again, an email with instructions will be sent on March 17 to signal the opening of the voting period).

Sincerely,

Theresa Jehle
Chair
AIAA Greater Huntsville Section