Adding Sections Formations to Bylaws
Authors: Ryan M, Paola S

Rationale: The purpose of this amendment is to reconcile a consistent issue in the chapter over the past year. Our bylaws do not have a good format for members who want to organize around a shared identity/ affinity but who do not want to be a working group, which would require them to be organized around a specific issue or campaign. In such instances, members organize into caucuses. However, our bylaws (correctly) create a clear firewall between the chapter and the work of caucuses. The reason for this is because caucuses are intended to be protected internal organizing activity within the chapter that the chapter can't disrupt or influence. This guarantees members a right to advocate for a specific point of view.

The issue is that this independence also means that caucuses are not allowed to take advantage of chapter resources, funding or get dedicated support from the chapter in any form. This is appropriate because caucuses are by design unaccountable to the chapter in order to guarantee their right to organize internally. However this becomes an issue when comrades organize a caucus where the chapter *would* want to give them support. This has already been an issue that has come up with identity caucuses over the past year.

This amendment resolves this by creating a third option, only available to identity groups, to form a "section." A section would have the same rights and requirements as working groups except in two major respects. First, they would not be required to be organized around a specific issue or campaign like working groups are, and second they would have control over their membership, whereas working groups are required to be open to all members. Identity groups that would rather organize as caucuses than sections will not be required to do so. This is an "opt-in" process where members are able to form how they want, but for those that *do* want to have access to chapter resources and support have an option to be able to do that. =

Add: 6.6 Sections

Sections are formations in the chapter for the purpose of creating a shared space for members of a common identity, but unlike working groups are not dedicated to a specific campaign or policy issue. "Common identities" may include, but are not necessarily limited to, protected classes under federal law such as gender, race, ethnicity, or national identity.

Section may petition for recognition by submitting an application to the steering committee including no less than five MDCDSA members, a mission statement, and bylaws. Sections have the same rights and expectations as Working Groups as outlined in these bylaws, except where it may be inconsistent with this article, such as in the approval process. Sections are entitled to have criteria for which chapter members are eligible to join, which must be enumerated in their bylaws.Sections will communicate to Steering Campaigns Council liaison who are their contact points and what is the leadership structure of the section upon their formal recognition so that the section may be included in communications and have a direct line for requesting support.