**Motion to clarify the role of the parliamentarian in Senate meetings**

**Motion:**

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Add at the end of section 5.4 of the Bylaws:

A parliamentarian who is also a Senator retains all the rights and privileges of membership in the Senate, including voting, participating in debate, and making motions during Senate meetings.
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**Rationale:**

The role of the parliamentarian in Senate meetings is not clearly defined in the Senate’s governing documents. In Robert’s Rules of Order (RROO), there is a directive that parliamentarians should refrain from taking part in debate, making motions, and voting, except when voting is by ballot (RROO, 10th ed., Sect. 47). This convention is not the custom in Senate meetings. Parliamentarians who are Senators have historically retained full rights and privileges of a Senator. However, our documents indicate that RROO govern our Senate meetings on matters on which our rules are silent:

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Meeting Rules, Section 9: Other Rules of Procedure

If, in the opinion of the Chair and the Parliamentarian, a specific circumstance arises for which these Meeting Rules do not provide procedural guidance, Robert’s Rules of Order are to be used...
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This places the parliamentarian in a delicate position and has left the person occupying this position open for criticism in the past.

When the Parliamentarian is not a member of the Senate, this is not an issue. However, it is historically more common for a Senator to occupy this position. Asking a Senator-parliamentarian to give up rights disenfranchises the constituency represented by that Senator. In addition, the Senate is a relatively small body and the Parliamentarian must be someone who is motivated and educated on the workings of the Senate. Losing the voice of such person in debate would often be a significant loss. We recommend that the Senate adopt the proposed language in its Bylaws indicating that a parliamentarian who is also a Senator retain all rights and privileges, including voting, participating in debate, and making motions.