

Rule Changes with Five Submissions to Earn a Waiver to the 3 Year Rule

Current rule

(Labour Party Rulebook 2018, Chapter 3, Clause III, Rule 2, Section H)

'When Party conference has made a decision on a constitutional amendment, no resolution to amend the constitution or rules of the Party having the same or a similar primary objective shall appear on the agenda of the three following annual party conferences, except such resolutions to amend the constitution and rules that are in the opinion of the NEC of immediate importance.'

Amendment

Add 'or when 5 or more identical resolutions to amend the constitution have been submitted.'

Supporting Argument

The Three Year rule serves to ensure that Conference does not repeatedly debate issues which have already been addressed in recent years. However, it has also been employed to prevent important debates on party reforms, regardless of how much they are desired by the members or trade union affiliates, thus entrenching institutional rigidities in the party. As a result, Conference delegates are often discouraged from debating key proposals on the basis that if they lose the vote they will be off the agenda for a number of years, forcing them to act primarily on the basis of political calculation rather than open debate and discussion. This rule change would allow constitutional amendments which clearly resonate with the party membership to secure a waiver to the three year rule and to be debated at Conference. It should be noted that the NEC already has the right to waive the three year rule if it deems them an issue to be of immediate importance, so this proposal merely seeks to extend that waiver to rule changes which are of demonstrable importance to the membership.