



Learn. Pray. Act.

Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy | 1716 East Franklin Street | Richmond, VA 23223 | 804-643-2474 | virginiainterfaithcenter.org

Historic Year of Advocacy

Medicaid Expansion Victory

VICPP is proud to have served as a key player in the Health Care for All Virginians Coalition during the five-year fight to expand Medicaid. Our work in 2018 includes:

- ◆ Bringing more than 400 supporters to our annual DAY FOR ALL PEOPLE advocacy day
- ◆ Providing a steady presence in hearings with our WITNESS AT THE CAPITOL volunteers
- ◆ Organizing more than 1,000 faith leaders to write, call, and email their legislators
- ◆ Mobilizing congregations and hundreds of volunteers to meet with their legislators
- ◆ Running an aggressive social media campaign
- ◆ Arranging more than 200 letter-writing drives, prayer vigils, town halls, and forums

Wage Theft

Wage theft is an illegal practice where workers are not paid for all of their work. It can include violating minimum wage laws, not paying overtime, and forcing workers to work off the clock. In 2018, VICPP drafted legislation to strengthen enforcement against wage theft. Two bills were voted on in committees. Legislators have agreed to work with VICPP to introduce wage theft bills again in 2019.

Criminal Justice

Virginia raised the felony threshold from \$200 to \$500. Although VICPP believes the felony threshold should be even higher, this is a good first step in bringing Virginia more in line with national norms.

Welcoming All

VICPP worked on two bills for the immigrant community, In-state tuition for undocumented students, including DACA recipients, and Driver's Privilege cards so immigrants can legally drive in Virginia and the roads will be safer for everyone. Unfortunately, neither bill was given a hearing in 2018, but we will continue to fight for these issues in 2019. (more details on page 3)

Weapons in Worship

When a proposal to lift a statewide ban on weapons in worship was introduced and quickly passed in the Senate, VICPP sprung into action to actively oppose the bill. The bill was stopped.



VICPP presents at NAACP Health Care Symposium

HEALTH CARE HOPE Outreach Campaign

Health Care Hope galvanizes the faith community to ensure the widest successful implementation of Medicaid expansion by equipping and mobilizing a network of health care ambassadors representing VICPP Advocacy Partners and Affiliates to educate their congregations and communities. Outreach efforts in 2018 included denominational presentations, press conferences, and information tables, reaching:

- ◆ 200 congregations statewide and 3 regional ministerial associations
- ◆ 15 community forums in areas with the highest number of uninsured
- ◆ 24 member associations and 22 businesses

Advocacy efforts will be amplified in 2019 to grow the ambassador network, address obstacles to implementation, and document stories of the impact of Medicaid expansion on families and communities across Virginia.

MISSION

The Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy advocates economic and social justice in Virginia's policies and practices through education, prayer and action.

The Living Wage Certification Program



VICPP continues to lead a state-wide effort to implement Living Wage Certification (LWC) programs that recognize, honor, and promote employers that pay a living wage. A living wage is defined as the minimum wage a worker must earn to pay for basic necessities. The current Virginia minimum wage of \$7.25 is woefully inadequate. VICPP believes paying a living wage is a moral imperative that uplifts workers, businesses, and the whole economy. This voluntary certification process is designed to:

- ◆ Recognize employers who are already paying their workers a living wage
- ◆ Urge consumers to patronize area businesses that provide living wages
- ◆ Encourage employers who are not currently paying a living wage to do so

Because Virginia's communities are not allowed to raise local minimum wage laws, VICPP's LWC programs provide an opportunity to support workers and recognize businesses. VICPP has partnered with Richmond and Alexandria, launching successful programs with more than 26 LWC businesses to date. VICPP's Charlottesville-Albemarle Chapter is getting ready to launch a program this winter and Harrisonburg is in the works.

How YOU Can Get Involved

Meet with companies, store owners, non-profits, and faith-based organizations to encourage them to become Living Wage Certified. VICPP can provide materials and talking points and answer your questions.

Advocating for fair wages and supporting local businesses is an easy and powerful way to make a difference in your community. Visit the Wage Justice tab on our website for resources.

Meet the Staff

Yanet Limon-Amado, *Administrative Assistant and Organizer* | Yanet is a VCU senior and organizer who advocates legislation and issues on behalf of immigrants and undocumented students.

Kim Bobo, *Co-Director* | Kim is a nationally known promoter of social justice who leads VICPP's advocacy, outreach, and development work. She is the author of four books and founded Interfaith Worker Justice, which she directed for 18 years.

Liz Denison, *Administrative and Financial Manager* | Liz manages VICPP's finances and human resources. Prior to joining VICPP, she worked at SunTrust Bank, East End Fellowship, and The Martin Agency.

Benjamin Hoyne, *Policy and Campaigns Director* | Ben has over ten years of policy experience with a focus on health, international, and environmental policy. He speaks Spanish and Portuguese.



Left to right: Yanet Limon-Amado, Kim Bobo, Liz Denison, Benjamin Hoyne, Pastor Rodney Hunter, Dora Muhammad, Roberta Oster, Amanda Silcox

Pastor Rodney Hunter, *Co-Director* | Rodney has served as Pastor of Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church in Richmond's East End since 1986. He focuses on congregational outreach and economic and criminal justice issues.

Dora Muhammad, *Health Care Organizer* | Dora spearheads our Health Care Hope campaign. She is an author, documentary photographer, and founder of The AWARE Project advocating for women's and human rights.

Roberta Oster, *Communications Director* | Roberta oversees media and marketing. Prior to joining VICPP, she was Associate Dean for External Relations at the University of Richmond and an Emmy Award-winning producer at NBC, CBS, and ABC News.

Amanda Silcox, *Organizer* | Amanda is the inaugural Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Hunger Advocacy Fellow and is now focusing on wage justice.

2019 General Assembly Priorities



Constituents meet with Delegate Bourne during Day for All People 2018

Welcoming All

Right now, the United States is not a very welcoming place for immigrants and minority faith traditions. VICPP strongly opposes anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim rhetoric and policies while advocating for state-level policies that will make the Commonwealth more welcoming. In the 2019 General Assembly, VICPP will once again support two important policies sought by immigrant communities:

- ◆ Offer Driver's Privilege Cards. All Virginians are safer when all drivers know the rules of the road. In Virginia, people who are undocumented or fall into 12 categories of lawful presence are denied access to driver's licenses. Creating a Driver's Privilege Card would be good for immigrants and public safety. Many other states already have similar policies.
- ◆ In-state tuition for immigrants and DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) students. Currently, DACA holders have

access to in-state tuition, but if they were to lose their DACA status due to capricious federal policy shifts, these students would lose in-state tuition. VICPP wants to help all students continue their education and help Virginia prosper.

Wage Theft

Virginia needs to strengthen its laws against wage theft by reforming the Virginia Minimum Wage Act and the Payment of Wages Act. In 2019 VICPP will support reforms to:

- ◆ Remove some of the outdated, racist "Jim Crow" language in the law
- ◆ Remove the exemption on piece work
- ◆ Cover all workers; the Virginia Minimum Wage Act only covers businesses with four or more persons employed at any one time. Most states cover all workers.
- ◆ Provide paystub information to workers

- ◆ Offer protection against retaliation for filing a wage complaint
- ◆ Give the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) the ability to further investigate. Currently, DOLI can only investigate for an individual complainant, not for all workers who may be victims of wage theft in a business.

Earned Income Credit

Governor Northam has proposed making the Virginia Earned Income Credit refundable. VICPP will support this tax code change to put money back in the pockets of low-income families.

Criminal Justice Reform

Working with the Virginia Civic Engagement Table and RISE for Youth's campaign to create community-based alternatives to youth incarceration, VICPP will support reforms making the criminal justice system more humane and fair.



Environmental Justice

VICPP is in conversation with Virginia Interfaith Power and Light about merging. If a merger occurs, VICPP will work on at least one environmental justice issue. We will begin with a proposal that would support congregations developing solar projects.



Join our Social Media Team



Do you like to Tweet and post on Instagram and Facebook? Join our social media team and help us advocate and share news during the General Assembly. We will post news items while watching advocates and legislators in action. Contact: Roberta Oster at Roberta@viriniainterfaithcenter.org.

Be an Advocate in the General Assembly



Day for All People 2018

Tuesday, Jan. 22, 2019
8a.m. - 3p.m.

Registration is open for VICPP's DAY FOR ALL PEOPLE, our annual advocacy day. Get ready for an exciting day of lobbying and community spirit. In the morning, you will meet directly with lawmakers and their staff to advocate social and economic justice issues. You will get to know the decision-makers and learn about the issues and the politics

first-hand. In the afternoon we offer workshops and sessions with prominent speakers. Last year 400 people participated.

Registration is \$40 for the day (\$15 for students); early bird rate of \$30 if you register before Jan 11. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. The event will once again be hosted by Centenary United Methodist Church at 411 E. Grace St, Richmond, VA 23219.

Register at: tinyurl.com/dfap2019



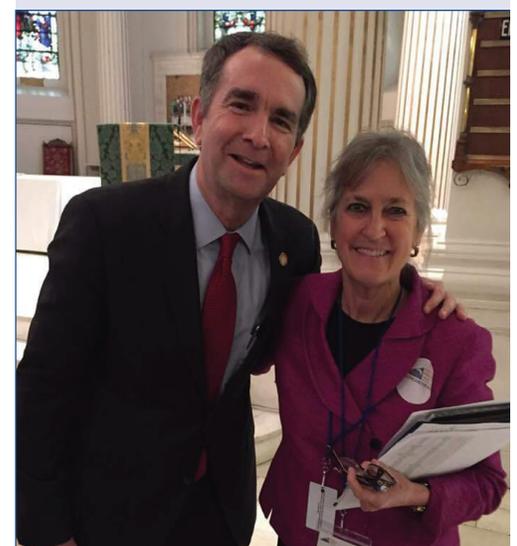
Witness at the Capitol at the General Assembly 2018

Sign up to be a Witness at the Capitol

You are invited to sign up for VICPP's WITNESS AT THE CAPITOL program, which begins January, 9, and runs through Feb. 23, the end of the General Assembly session. Witnesses serve as faithful advocates on VICPP issues. The workweek is Monday through Thursday, and some Fridays. VICPP seeks people who are comfortable discussing the faith dimensions of issues. We welcome retired clergy, student campus ministry leaders, and all those who want to learn how to impact change. For more information contact Kim Bobo at Kim@viriniainterfaithcenter.org.

Witnesses will:

- ◆ Meet with legislators and their staff
- ◆ Communicate legislators' position to the VICPP members in the districts
- ◆ Draft info sheets and alerts for engaging the membership in the issues
- ◆ Testify before committees and panels on issues VICPP is supporting
- ◆ Use Facebook and Twitter to promote issues



Gov. Northam with Kim Bobo, Day for All People