

Legislative Advocacy and Faithful Citizenship

Legislative Advocacy:

Catholics around the United States are engaged in bringing our values and faith to the "public square" speaking to our town councils, county supervisors, state and federal representatives, our president, and the many offices of the government.

Catholics in the US & State Capitol:

- **The US Conference of Catholic Bishops** works from Washington, DC. To research and lobby the government on a full range of issues related to human life and dignity. (<http://www.usccb.org>)
- **Catholics Confront Global Poverty** is a campaign of **Catholic Relief Services (CRS)** and the **USCCB** to combat global poverty through lobbying on foreign aid funding that affects emergency relief, development aid, and AIDs funding. www.confrontglobalpoverty.org/ Learn more at www.crs.org.
- The **California Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCC)** lobby on policies important to the Catholic. Be a voice for the voiceless in the state their **Catholic Legislative Network** today. <http://cacatholic.org/>
- **Catholic Charities USA** advocates on issues related to immigration, poverty and housing. www.catholiccharitiesusa.org.
- **Justice for Immigrants** is a campaign of the US Bishops advocating for just immigration laws. www.justiceforimmigrants.org
- **National Catholic Rural Life:** Issues: agriculture, trade, environmental justice, globalization, climate change. www.ncrlc.com
- **Pax Christi USA:** Sends occasional alerts on peace and justice www.paxchristiusa.org
- **Catholic Campaign to End the Death Penalty** www.ccedp.org
- **PICO Network:** parishes & faith based groups organizing for justice in our diocese (<http://www.picocalifornia.org/>):
 - **Oakland Community Organizing (OCO)** www.oaklandcommunity.org
 - **Contra Costa Interfaith Supporting Community Organizing (CCISCO)** www.ccisco.org
 - **Berkeley Organizing Congregations for Action (BOCA)** <http://berkeleybocaorg.ipage.com>
 - **Communities Organizing for Renewal (COR)** www.corcommunity.org
- **Catholic Climate Covenant** is a campaign of the US Bishops focused on care of the environment and care of the poor. www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/
- **Jubilee USA** advocating for debt relief in developing countries. www.jubilee.org
- **Bread for the World:** parishes can associate with BFW and organize annual "offering of letters" for hunger issues. www.bread.org. Local contact Steven Hitchcock, 510-526-1630 or email stevenhitchcock@bread.org.



Faithful
Citizenship

"For Catholics, public virtue is as important as private virtue in building up the common good."

In the Catholic tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue; participation in the political process is a moral obligation. Every believer is called to faithful citizenship, to become an informed, active, and responsible participant in the political process."
Faithful Citizenship, US Bishops

Advocacy:

The word advocacy is related to giving witness, testifying to the truth, speaking for another. It is giving a voice to the voiceless. In our faith tradition it is another name for the Holy Spirit. When we become advocates by engaging in the work of social justice, we are responding to the needs of the poor, asking for justice, promoting changes in policies and laws and budgets.

Federal Contacts:

Contact Your Senator at <http://www.senate.gov/>
Contact Your Representative at <http://www.house.gov/>
Contact The White House at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/>
Locate Federal Legislation: <http://thomas.loc.gov/>

State Contacts

State Assembly: <http://www.assembly.ca.gov>
State Senate: <http://www.sen.ca.gov/>
Governor: <http://www.govmail.ca.gov/>
Information on bills: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/>

County Contacts

Alameda County: <http://www.co.alameda.ca.us/>
Contra Costa County: <http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/>

Educational Resources:

- **US Conference of Catholic Bishops** has excellent educational resources for adults and children. It also has excellent news and alerts. Visit: www.usccb.org.
- **Education for Justice** has excellent educational materials, prayers and activities for adults and children. Visit www.educationforjustice.org.
- The **Diocese of Oakland's Office for Life and Justice** website has excellent educational resources, news and alerts. Visit www.oak4life.org.
- **JustFaith** has excellent educational materials and small group programs for promoting social justice. Visit www.justfaith.org.
- **CRS Education** has good educational resources, prayers and activities for youths and young adults. Visit <http://education.crs.org/>.
- **Justice for Immigrants** has excellent educational resources, prayers and activities related to migration and immigration. Visit www.justiceforimmigrants.org.
- **Poverty USA** provide excellent resources related to poverty and Catholic Social Teaching. Visit www.povertyusa.org.

Local Resources:

Social Justice/ Social Services:

- **Office for Life and Justice**, John Watkins 510-267-8379 or email jwatkins@oakdiocese.org
- **Catholic Charities of the East Bay** (CCEB) 510-768-3100 or visit www.cceb.org
- **Catholic Relief Services**, Marc McKimmey, East Bay Coordinator, 510-768-3116
- **St. Vincent de Paul Alameda County** 510-638-7600 www.svdp-alameda.org
- **St. Vincent de Paul Contra Costa County** 925-439-5060 www.svdp-cc.org
- **Catholic Campaign for Human Development**, Marc McKimmey, 510-768-3116 or email mmckimmey@cceb.org
- **Parishes in Action**, Supporting Parish Social Ministry. For more info, contact Dave McKeown 510-432-7583 or email davemck2006@gmail.com or visit www.parishesinaction.org.
- **JustFaith East Bay:** Meg Bowerman 510-531-7139 www.justfaith.org
- **Maryknoll Western Region:** Deacon Matt Dulka (510) 276-5021
- **St. Mary's Center**, Carol Johnson 510-923-9600
- **Catholic Worker Oakland**, 510-533-7375

Respect Life Programs:

- **After the Choice Ministry** (Post Abortion Healing Program): Contact Christine Watkins 415-260-4406 or email christine4faith@gmail.com or visit www.afterthechoice.org
- **The Gabriel Project:** David Zarri (925) 686-9277
- **Pregnancy Centers:**
 - **Birthright Centers:** 800-550-4900
 - Concord - 925-798-7227
 - Brentwood – 925-634-1275
 - Livermore – 925-449-5887
 - San Lorenzo – 510-481-9677

Faith-Based Community Organizing:

- **GENESIS:** faith-based community organizing for the Bay Area
- **East Bay PICO Network:** religious community organizing in our diocese:
 - **Oakland Community Organizing (OCO)** www.oaklandcommunity.org
 - **Contra Costa Interfaith Supporting Community Organizing (CCISCO)** www.ccisco.org
 - **Berkeley Organizing Congregations for Action (BOCA)** <http://berkeleybocaorg.ipage.com>
 - **Communities Organizing for Renewal (COR)** www.corcommunity.org

The **Office for Life and Justice** of the Diocese sends regular email updates and legislative alerts on a range of issues. The contact person is John Watkins who can be reached at 510-267-8379 or jwatkins@oakdiocese.org. Contact this office to be added to the Legislative Network/ Social Justice News. See more resources at <http://www.oak4life.org>.