

# Social Action Linking Together (SALT) Richmond Wrap-up

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# Social Action Linking Together



**SALT**



**s-a-l-t.org**

*eliminating injustice  
working together  
alternatives*

*speaking up  
engaged  
educating*

**Social Action Linking Together (SALT) is a network of persons in Virginia embracing the principle that: “The justice of a society can be measured by how the most vulnerable members of that society are faring and being treated.” This principle can be found in all the great religious traditions, and it inspires SALT members to propose and shape fair public social policies through our education of policy makers & our advocacy for the poor and powerless.**

## **SALT** influences public policy by:

- researching and selecting priority issues for action;
- developing fact sheets to document need for action;
- educating and raising awareness within faith communities;
- building relationships with legislators; and
- advocating for these issues by telephoning, e-mailing, writing, and testifying.

## **It's About:**

- . Writing letters & e-mail;**
- . Calling & visiting your legislators;**
- . Writing letters to the editor;**
- . Testifying;**
- . Making advocacy a priority by making it a component of traditional works of mercy that you are doing &**
- . Staying the course when the going gets tough!**

## **The work to be done:**

- **Ending Private Prison—Obama & Biden;**
- **Limiting Solitary Confinement—--HB 1301/  
Replaced by: 1) Reporting bill; 2) Formation of  
Standards Study Work Group & Ombudsman  
Bill;**
- **Re-entry programs, —(KAIROS Horizon—  
Learning from others); &**
- **Prisoner jobs pay increases & Pell Grants for  
prisoners.**



- **SB 1301: While the Virginia Coalition on Solitary Confinement is disappointed that the bill failed to pass both houses, there was some progress in reaching our goal of ending prolonged isolation in Virginia**

In the past, **SALT** has advocated successfully for many issues, including:

- anti-shackling regulation effective to restrict use of restraint on pregnant inmates;
- telephone justice for inmate families by lowering Virginia call rates;
- **Ban the Box—Executive order—limited for State/local (FXCO) employees;**
- **Prison Family Video Visitation---AFOI—(KAIROS Horizon); &**
- **Opt Out---Universal –Not all Wine & Roses.**

## **NEXT STEPS:**

**Consider: What can we do on behalf of those we serve?**

**What will we do when we leave here?**

**Commit to Persistence: Working for social justice inspired by Catholic Social Teaching is never easy, persistence is a sine qua non.**

**BUT It is Always Worthwhile, because your work for justice can lift many burdens that are too heavy to carry for so many of the of the poor and the unrepresented in our society.**

**Go to: [www.S-A-L-T.org](http://www.S-A-L-T.org) to be informed & to sign-up for Alerts!**



## **Opportunity to tell my story: The Art of Legislative Advocacy Social Action Linking Together (SALT)**

### **What is SALT?**

- 1) --Grassroots; Community Activism; Ministry**
- 2) --Advocacy as Ultimate Service;**

### **Transforming “Direct Service Energy” to “Advocacy”**

- 3) --Out of the Pew & into the lobby—Move from “Charity to Advocacy”**
- 4) --Service on Steroids**

### **History---**

- 1) --SALT Story---Catholic Charities Conference;**
- 2) --First Issue: Sales Tax on FS; Second: McDiarmid Story**
- 2) --Logo Story—Wheat stem—Betsy**

### **Philosophy ---**

- 1) --Margaret Mead; Matthew 25: James 2; Proverbs; (Common to all faiths)**
- 2) --We have a voice, Need to use it**
- 3) --Be the Change you wish to see; What is your call to Service?**

### **Why?**

- Call of our/all Faiths—Social Justice teaching—common to all faiths**
- 2) --Charity must give way to justice**
- 3) --No one is immune from Homelessness**
- 4) --What is our call to service? What are You doing for others? MLK**

## **Purpose---**

- 1) --Change Public Social policy**
- 2) --Propose, educate & advocate for fair Public Social Policy**

## **Process---**

- 1) --Keeping Social Justice issues front and center at the General Assembly**
- 2) --Being a voice for the voiceless/Speaking up/Educating vigorously;**
- 3) --Politics: Political, but never partisan; Operate in a Political Environment**
- 4) --Persistence/perseverance; stay engaged;**
- 5) --Develop Relationships/ownership; Accountability (Richmond Wrap-up)**

## **SALT Success Stories & Lessons learned---**

- 1 ) --Removal of sales TAX from Food Stamps; Advocacy at all levels—Perseverance vs Persistence**
- 2) --Homeless Intervention Program (HIP); prevents Homelessness before it begins**
- 3) --Virginia Earned Income Tax (refundable); half-a loaf**
- 4) --Anti-Shackling; DOC Policy Board---Coalition & Allies/advocacy at all levels**
- 5) --Telephone Gouging; Executive Order—LeMunyon story/Across the Aisle/Bi-Partisan**
- 6) --Solitary Confinement Data Reporting; Incremental—on-going**

**End—**

**It's Not All Wine and Roses**

- 1) --TANF & Food Stamp Opt Out**
- 2) --Housing Trust Fund**
- 3) --Solitary confinement—eliminate prolonged Solitary Confinement & end for Mentally ill and vulnerable**

**BUT**

**WE PERSIST!**

**Advocacy Is Never Easy, But it's Always Worthwhile!!**

**GO OUT & DO GOOD!!**