

## Legislative Advocacy

Every phone call or letter to our legislators on important issues is a prayer and an effective practice of our call to citizenship. Legislators keep logs of communications and opinions of their constituents. We have the experience of seeing justice brought to law through our collective efforts. This may seem like a small or insignificant act, but especially when combined with everyone's effort, your voice can make a huge difference.

Keep your legislators contact information handy. Local, State & Federal Legislators' contact information can be found through the government links shown on the diocesan Peace and Justice website ([www.dioceseofraleigh.org](http://www.dioceseofraleigh.org)), or visit [www.ncgov.com](http://www.ncgov.com).

Making calls: Logs are kept of every call received by your legislative office receptionist. Usually, you can just leave your name, city, and a short message.

Be brief and to the point.

Be courteous, and pass on a message of thanks if it seems appropriate.

Receptionists are informed and remember callers.

You can establish a good relationship with this person as well as staff assistants over time.

Writing Letters: It is very effective to follow up phone calls with a letter.

Make sure there is a clear subject heading, and state your points simply.

Be as brief as possible.

You may want to call for the names of legislative assistants and address letters to the person who handles your area of concern. Over time a relationship builds with assistants who are well informed and directly advise your legislator.

Again, include a word of thanks or encouragement.

Follow up with a letter of thank you if your legislators vote with your position.

E-mail Advocacy: This is an excellent collective tool to let legislators know constituent opinions on issues facing Congress.

Catholic Network is one example of a legislative advocacy group that sends "e-alerts" about once a month on various issues before Congress.

Another form of e-alert is through particular websites: Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform, Catholic Relief Services, Bread for the World, Catholic Charities and Catholic Campaign Against Global Poverty are just some sites that invite your active participation through legislative advocacy.

Finally, our Office of Peace and Justice sends out advocacy alerts on state and national issues from time to time. We invite you to add your name to this e-list by contacting us at

**919-821-9751 or [jurski@raldioc.org](mailto:jurski@raldioc.org).**