



St. Vincent de Paul
GEORGIA



Conference Update
ahead of the
**2027 Georgia General Assembly
Legislative Session**

The Rule: Vincentians and Civil Society Advocacy: All Vincentians are Called to Participate

- 7.1. Vincentians are to offer immediate help to those in need, but **also seek mid and long term solutions**
Discern root causes of need, how might we help effect change?
- 7.4. The distinctive approach of Vincentians to issues of social justice is to see them from the perspective of those we visit who suffer from injustice
Home visits give Vincentians a unique perspective.
- 7.5 The Society helps the poor and disadvantaged speak for themselves. When they cannot, the Society must speak on behalf of those who are ignored
Our neighbors' stories are crucial to help effect change.

Frederic
Ozanam and
other founders
based the
Society on a
model of
service and
advocacy -
**Charity and
Justice**

St. Vincent de Paul USA Advocacy is now called the “Vincentian Charity and Justice Team” *(formerly Voice for the Poor)*

With members representing every section and demographic of the nation, we identify issues critical to those living in poverty and need and help bring attention to them so communities and elected officials can develop strategies and tactics that will provide the most effective and efficient means to reduce or eliminate poverty.



- Follows federal and state anti-poverty issues
- Non-partisan
- Relies upon regional Vincentian representatives
- Uses the Voter Voice email platform

SVdP Georgia Advocacy Committee 2026-2027



Darlene Mathews, MPA
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Elizabeth Appley, Esq.
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SVdP National Director of
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Mike Mies
Executive Director



Lisa Regan
Associate Executive Director



Bobby Baker, Esq.
Volunteer

SVdP Georgia

Advocacy Committee

The SVdP Advocacy Committee serves as the body that coordinates Vincentian advocacy positions across Georgia — local, statewide, and national — drawing on the witness of Vincentians who encounter poverty firsthand through home visits and direct service.

The Committee trains and supports districts and conferences to discern trends and root causes of need, and to work with SVdP advocacy leaders in local, state, and national advocacy campaigns.



ALL VINCENTIANS ARE CALLED TO PARTICIPATE IN ADVOCACY

“Each Vincentian, in every Conference & Council, is called to be an advocate of justice. This does not necessarily mean engaging in formal policy discussions, though some are called to do that. It means being attentive to the conditions that create the needs we see. It means asking why. It means seeking solutions that go beyond assistance.

It can be as simple as building relationships with local officials, participating in your community conversations or sharing what you witness in your ministry.

It can involve educating others in your parish about the realities of poverty.”

-- John Berry, May 7, 2026, Letter to Vincentians

How Every Vincentian Can Help with Advocacy

- **Register for Voter Voice!**
- **Make Advocacy Part of Every Conference and District Meeting: Put it on the Agenda**
 - Discuss/Discern trends we see from home visits, and root causes of needs – are they common? Systemic? Fixable?
- **Share Stories of Impact From Home Visits: Human dignity of Neighbors, Systemic Issues they face.**
 - Share with Conference, Community, Legislators
- **Develop Relationships with local and state officials in your area—they want to hear from constituents!**

The first step to engage in Vincentian advocacy?

Register for **Voter Voice** to receive email alerts and respond using the platform!

Register here or use the QR code:

<https://votervoice.net/SVDPUSA/home>

Sign up now for
Voter Voice



Vincentian Advocacy Issues

- Affordable Housing
- Homelessness
- Hunger and Food Insecurity
- Human Trafficking
- Predatory Lending
- Access to Health Care
- Immigration reform

Georgia Specific Focus 2026-2027:

- Preserve State Low Income Housing Tax Credit
- Oppose Extended Stay Motel Lockout Bills—Protect Families from Sudden Homelessness
- Seek State Emergency Rental Assistance Fund
- Seek funding for SVDP Georgia Community Pharmacy

Voter Voice Conference Prizes!

\$1,000 award to the SVdP Conference with the highest percentage of Vincentians registered for Voter Voice by the time the Georgia General Assembly Legislative Session begins on January 11, 2027.

\$1,000 award to the SVdP Conference that has the most activity in VoterVoice (emails sent to lawmakers). Determined in May/June 2027 after the state legislative session is adjourned and the Governor has signed or vetoed legislation.



What is important for Vincentians to know this year?

Georgians must **register to vote by October 5, 2026. Early voting begins October 13, 2026.** Election Day is November 3, 2026.

At the federal level, Georgia will vote on a U.S. Senator and 14 Representatives from Georgia to the U.S. House of Representatives.

At the state level, voters will elect the Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Commissioner of Agriculture, Commissioner of Insurance, Commissioner of Labor, State School Superintendent, and two members of the Public Service Commission. All 56 seats in the Georgia State Senate and all 180 seats in the Georgia House of Representatives also will be on the ballot.

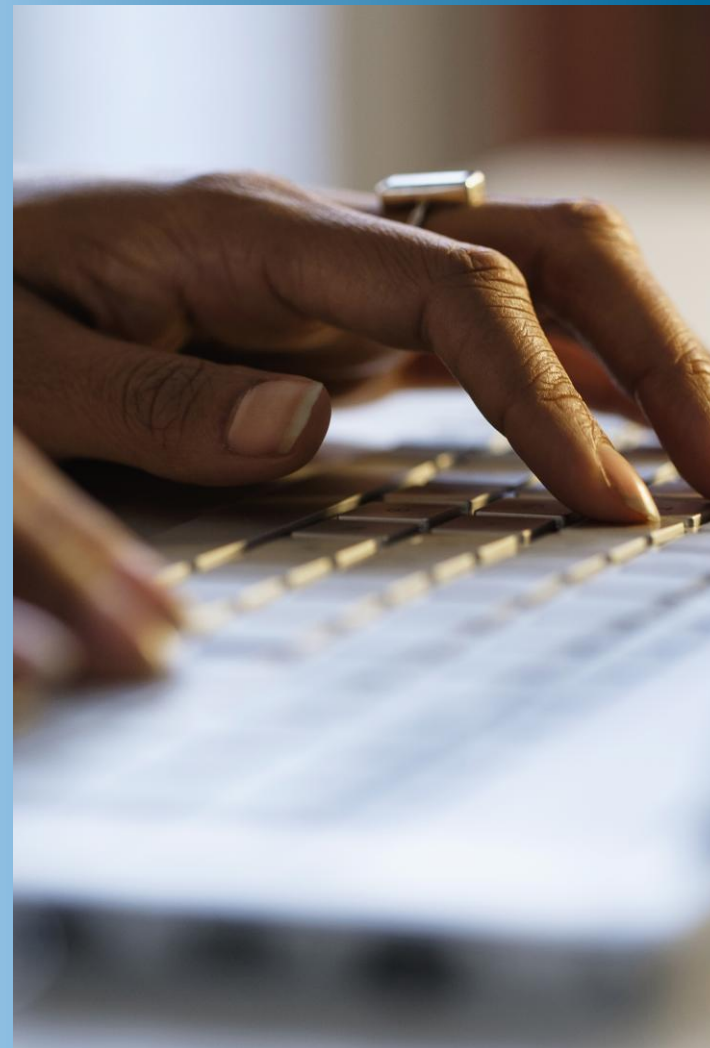
Learn about the candidates' positions on the issues you care about, meet with the candidates, watch the debates, read their positions on their websites, support those who agree with you, and cast an informed vote.

New Advocacy Blog!

Please watch for the new SVdP Georgia Advocacy Blog to keep you updated before, during and after, the legislative session.

The blog will be available on the SVdP website and in *The Vincentian Formation & News*. If you do not receive it, please sign up for the newsletter here:

<https://svdpgeorgia.org/get-help/>





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GEORGIA
FEED. CLOTHE. HOUSE. HEAL.

Questions?

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