

A LUTHERAN WITNESS FOR  
SUFFICIENCY AND WHOLENESS  
IN MARYLAND

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LOPP/MD is a partnership ministry of the ELCA for advocacy in the State of Maryland, supported by **Church in Society**, the **Delaware-Maryland** and **Metropolitan Washington, DC** synods, and two-hundred and ten ELCA Maryland congregations in three of its synods.

LOPP/MD has been an ELCA voice on Maryland public policy issues since 1985. LOPP/MD represents ELCA **social statements, resolutions, and messages** to elected and administrative officials of the State.

Subject matter includes economic justice, sufficient livelihood, stewardship of creation, health and wholeness, public safety, community development, adequate shelter, education, and human rights and justice concerns.

LOPP/MD shares the Ecumenical Advocacy Center with the Baltimore-Washington Methodist Conference, the Presbytery of Baltimore, and the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland in Annapolis. It is a member of the Maryland Interfaith Legislative Committee, the oldest, largest coalition of religious organizations and service providers in Maryland.

LOPP/MD publishes the *LOPP/Sided* newsletter, and sponsors *Lutheran Night in Annapolis* to talk about matters of interest during the annual General Assembly session, and sends legislative alerts via a listserv. To request LOPP/MD mailings and alerts use contact information provided in this brochure.

PRIORITIES FOR THE 2008 MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION

**CARE OF CREATION-** LOPP/MD has joined the effort to have Maryland adopt ambitious goals for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in this session. Maryland has 3,100 miles of tidal shoreline and needs to work for global warming solutions.

**ENERGY-** The Maryland Public Service Commission has concluded what advocates have been advising since 1999, namely that the Electric Universal Service Program is underfunded by about half. We are urging that low and moderate income households be kept connected to the public utility system they've financed, and that a new initiative for energy conservation be implemented to keep energy bills lower.

**SUFFICIENT LIVELIHOOD-** The 2007 special session chose regressive revenue measures to raise most of the new revenue Maryland needs to pay its bills, the sales tax and state-sponsored gambling. One corrective rejected in the special session is to provide a sales tax rebate to low-income earners through the State income tax. We support reviving this policy. We also support qualifying part-time earners for unemployment insurance since they pay into the system, and allowing workers the right to use accumulated leave to care for sick family members.

**DEATH PENALTY-** Repeal of Maryland's death sentence is overdue and gaining support. Maryland death sentences are racially disparate, error-prone, and the procedures for administering death must be rewritten to comply with Maryland law. Many have concluded it is time for executions to end and we are urging repeal in this session.

**AFFORDABLE SHELTER-** The effort to develop State and local programming for more affordable housing, including creation of an affordable housing trust, continues this session. We also support ending discrimination based on the source of income in rental housing. And Maryland will need to provide assistance to homeowners threatened with foreclosure because of predatory lending.

**ACCESS TO MEDICAL CARE-** Following an expansion of Maryland's Medicaid program during the 2007 special session one goal we support is an active effort to enroll all 225,000 newly eligible adults.

**EDUCATION-** The recently adopted ELCA social statement on education commits us to advocate adequate public funding for equitable and excellent education opportunities for all students. We continue to call for more adult education opportunities, stable equalization of the funding for the State's public schools, and more access to higher education.



The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America engages in moral deliberation on subjects established in national assembly, as did its predecessor bodies. Social statements, messages and resolutions of the church can be found at [www.elca.org/dcs/studies/](http://www.elca.org/dcs/studies/). Predecessor body statements can be found at [www.elca.org/dcs/jle/](http://www.elca.org/dcs/jle/).

The state offices of the ELCA represent this body of policy to state governments. The Lutheran Office of Governmental Affairs represents it to the federal government. To become an ELCA advocate at the federal and state level sign up at [www.elca.org/advocacy](http://www.elca.org/advocacy).

The Lutheran Office on Public Policy in Maryland is a ministry of the ELCA Church in Society program unit and the two hundred and ten ELCA congregations in the Delaware-Maryland, Metropolitan Washington, DC and West Virginia-Western Maryland synods.

The board of LOPP/MD is made up of members appointed by the supporting synods. The Office is located in the Ecumenical Advocacy Center at 41 State Circle, 4-R, Annapolis, MD.

The director is Lee Hudson.

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## Lutheran Office on Public Policy in Maryland

for Sufficiency and Wholeness

Summary of 2008 Priorities  
for the  
Maryland General Assembly



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