

**Report of the Virginia Voter Restoration Project
of the
American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia
Year One: March 2008-February 2009**

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Report of the Virginia Voter Restoration Project

Year One: March 2008-February 2009

I. Preface

On April 20, 2009, at a Richmond forum featuring the three Democratic Party gubernatorial hopefuls, the candidates were asked about their stance on Virginia's felon disfranchisement law. Each responded that voter restoration reform was an important part of his platform and that if elected Governor he would push for automatic restoration of voting rights for felons after they had completed their sentences.

This exchange was significant for two reasons: First, in the past it is unlikely that anyone would have asked a question about restoration of rights during a political campaign in Virginia, as it was not an area of concern. Second, the response indicates a seismic shift in public opinion on voter restoration reform. No candidate for public office in recent memory, including Virginia's last four governors, George Allen, Jim Gilmore, Mark Warner or Tim Kaine, or their campaign opponents, supported automatic restoration of voting rights. It is clear that these candidates are supporting restoration of rights because their advisors are telling them there is now support for it among voters.

We believe that an important factor in bringing about this change of attitude toward voter restoration reform was the Virginia Voter Restoration Project, launched in March 2008.

From March 2008 through the end of the 2009 legislative session in February, VVRP undertook a comprehensive program to educate the public about the history and effects of voter disfranchisement in Virginia, to provide services to individuals seeking to have their rights restored, and to press for reforms of the law in the Virginia General Assembly.

This report is divided into three parts: Public Education, Direct Service and Legislative Advocacy, beginning with an overview and followed by details about each program. The Appendix contains copies of the various reports, posters, advertisements, and memos that were created by the project and distributed to appropriate parties.

II. Overview of Year One

Public Education

VVRP was a driving force behind a dramatic elevation of public knowledge and interest in felon disfranchisement in Virginia, a topic that had previously received only occasional and sporadic attention in recent years.

- VVRP created a website devoted exclusively to voter restoration in Virginia, the only such website in the state.
- VVRP frequently contacted journalists (through emails, press releases and phone calls) to report on voter restoration, resulting in 15 television and radio appearances by staff and 24 news articles in which VVRP or ACLU of Virginia were mentioned directly or were directly the result of our efforts. There were many additional media appearances on voter restoration for which we provided background information and many of the appearances mentioned above ran multiple times.
- VVRP identified and worked with at least 15 other organizations to endorse voter restoration reform in Virginia.
- VVRP organized, co-sponsored or participated in a dozen public forums on voter restoration.
- VVRP produced a one-page briefing paper (and numerous other informational and advocacy materials described elsewhere in this document) that was distributed throughout Virginia at forums and through organizations.

Direct Service

VVRP provided individualized assistance to more than 500 persons seeking to have their rights restored, and helped hundreds more by sponsoring and/or participating in voter restoration forums to which disfranchised felons were invited. By the end of 2008, more than 2,535 individuals applied to have their rights restored, a record one-year total. While it is impossible to determine how many of these individuals received assistance from the VVRP, our impact was surely felt.

- VVRP provided individualized services to 508 individuals seeking to have their rights restored.
- VVRP supplied 39 local social service departments with the VVRP poster and literature to distribute to clients.
- VVRP was given a one-page ad in the Virginia Organizing Project's 2009 voter guide. More than 300,000 copies of the guide were delivered door-to-door in Virginia, mostly in low-income and minority neighborhoods.
- VVRP placed in Virginia's three largest minority newspapers large color advertisements offering to assist disfranchised felons with the restoration process.

- VVRP, in the aforementioned website, provides information on the process of applying for restoration of voting rights and on how to contact VVRP for individual assistance.

Legislative Advocacy

Although a restoration bill was not approved by the General Assembly in 2009, there were more bills being introduced than ever before, more discussion of voter restoration issues, and passage of a bill in the Senate. In the House, the bill failed to reach the floor only when it was blocked on 12-10 vote in committee.

- VVRP worked with a group of supportive legislators and advocacy groups to strategize and lobby on voter restoration bills before and during the legislative session.
- VVRP provided up-to-the-minute information on the status of bills in the Virginia General Assembly to other organizations, so they could share it with their members.
- VVRP motivated ACLU of Virginia members to become involved in voter restoration work by: 1) Sending a mid-session mailing to Virginia's 11,000 members exclusively devoted to voter restoration; 2) Giving front page coverage of the voter restoration in two newsletters sent to all ACLU members; 3) Tagging voter restoration as a priority in our year-end letter to members; and 4) Utilizing electronic communications with grassroots lobbyists (about 2,000 people).

III. Public Education- Details

Restore Our Vote Website

The project created the first and only website in Virginia devoted exclusively to educating the public about felon disfranchisement, providing information about the process for restoring voting rights, and information for advocates for reform. (For replica of website homepage, found at www.restoreourvote.org, see A-1.)

Media

VVRP placed emphasis on generating interest from the media because it is an effective means of communicating ideas and instantly imbues an issue with legitimacy. VVRP used the ACLU of Virginia's press list to invite media representatives to events, keep them up to date on developments related to voter restoration, and to urge coverage of the topic in general. Fortunately, the 2008 presidential election provided a context and drew attention to the issue in ways that would have otherwise not been present.

Below are media appearances that either mention the work of VVRP or were produced, at least in part, as a result of our efforts.

1. Article: Push for restoration of voting rights, Richmond Free Press, 04/24-26/08
2. Article: State laws keep former thief from being most productive, The Daily Press, Hampton, Newport News, 05/18/08

3. Interview: WRVA Radio, Richmond, 06/18/08 (Willis on voter restoration)
4. Interviews: Virginia News Network, 6/18/08 (Willis on voter restoration)
5. Article: Restoring rights a political push for Obama?, The Winchester Star, 06/23/08
6. Interview: WHOV-88.1 Radio Richmond, 06/24/08 (Muse on voter restoration)
7. Interview: WTOP Radio, DC, 6/24/08 (Willis on voter restoration)
8. Article: Coalition pushes for Va. felons' suffrage, Washington Post, 07/17/08
9. Article: Groups push to restore Va. felons' voting rights, Washington Post, 07/17/08
10. Article: Va. gov. expedites ex-felon voting rights, upi.com, 07/17/08
11. Article: Getting ex-offenders to vote, WSLS 10, 07/22/08 (Willis)
12. Article: Convicted felons' fight for the right to vote, WDBJ7, 07/22/08 (Willis)
13. Interview: WCLM-1450 a.m., Richmond, 07/28/08 (Muse on voter restoration)
14. Article: Ex-con, 60, to vote for the first time, The Daily Press, Hampton Newport News, 09/30/08
15. Article: What to know about your voting rights, People's Weekly World, 10/02/08
16. Article: Reports find widespread disenfranchisement among ex-convicts, JURIST, 10/02/08
17. Article: Kaine restores voting rights to felons, The Washington Times, 10/03/08
18. Article: Push to register felons to vote could aid Obama, Associated Press, 10/03/08
19. Article: Nonviolent former felons should not be disenfranchised the rest of their lives, Roanoke Times, 10/07/08
20. Article: Virginia Voter Restoration Project, ACLU, Style Weekly, 10/08/08
21. Article: Activists helping to restore felons' voting rights for election, The Virginian Pilot, 10/08/08
22. Interview: WLNI Radio, Lynchburg, 10/09/08 (Willis on voter restoration)
23. Article: Could felons actually impact the Presidential race?, Campaigns and Elections, 10/2008
24. Interview: WTOP Radio, NOVA/D.C., 11/03/08 (Willis on voting issues, including restoration of rights)
25. Interview: WLNI Radio, Lynchburg, 11/04/08 (Willis on voting issues, including restoration)
26. Interview: Virginia News Network Radio, 11/04/08 (Willis on voting issues, including restoration)
27. Interview: WRIR Radio, Richmond, (Elizabeth Wong, guest on Richmond Indymedia Live, 30 minutes) 11/04/08
28. Interview: WTVR-TV 6, Richmond, 11/04/08
29. Article: Then & Now, Lynchburg, News and Advance, 12/18/08
30. Interview: Clovia Lawrence, Radio One, Richmond, 01/04/09 (Muse on restoration)
31. Article: The right to vote, taken: If you have a felony record, it's not a right anymore, The New Dominion, 01/09/09
32. Article: VOP fights for ex-con voting rights, c-ville.com, 01/10/09
33. Interview: Capital News Network Radio, 01/16/09 (Willis on voter restoration)
34. Article: Legislators push to lift voting ban for felons, Henrico Citizen, 01/23/09
35. Interview: Comcast Cable Access, Hasan Zariff Show, 01/29/09 (Muse)
36. Article: Restoring the right to vote, Petersburg, Progress-Index.com, 02/03/09
37. Interview: WRIR Radio, Richmond, (Muse on Richmond Indymedia Live, 30 minute program on voter restoration) 2/3/09

38. Article: Voting rights resolution dies in House committee, Roanoke.com, 02/07/09
39. Article: Va. Senate approves voting rights restoration amendment, hamptonroads.com, (Virginian Pilot online), 02/10/09

Other Organizations

VVRP reached out to groups across the state to work with us to support voter restoration in Virginia. Although some coalition partners assisted with direct service and legislative advocacy, their principal effect was in making their members and members of the public in general more aware of felon disfranchisement in Virginia. The groups with which we worked are listed immediately below. Those with whom we developed special relationships are discussed in more detail following the list.

1. 10,000 Voters
2. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
3. Goodwill of Central Virginia/Chaplin Services
4. Old Dominion Bar Association
5. Resource Information Help for the Disadvantaged
6. The Richmond Crusade for Voters
7. The Rutherford Institute
8. Third Street Bethel AME Church
9. UNITE-HERE Civic Engagement Project
10. Virginia Catholic Conference
11. Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy
12. Virginia Organizing Project
13. Virginia Poverty Law Center
14. Virginia State Conference of the NAACP
15. Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church

Virginia Organizing Project – The Virginia Organizing Project (VOP) is a statewide grassroots organization that seeks to organize low-income and disfranchised people in local communities to address quality of life issues. During May 2008, VOP began circulating a voter’s guide featuring one-page ads from various non-profit organizations, with a goal of reaching 300,000 households. The VVRP ad (Appendix A-4) focused entirely on restoration of rights (see discussion in next section) but also began the process of VVRP and VOP collaborating on a broader scale to educate the public about felon disfranchisement.

10,000 Voters – In April, a flyer was created for distribution by the “10,000 Voters” Program, which was a voter registration program coordinated through the Virginia Beach Chapter of the NAACP. They distributed over 500 flyers during the 2008 election cycle in neighborhoods in Virginia Beach and Chesapeake that experience low voter turnout. Distribution began April 30, 2008 and continued through early fall.

UNITE-HERE Civic Engagement Project – During the 2008 election cycle, UNITE-HERE invested resources and a staff of 24 organizers over a two-month period (September/October) in a comprehensive grassroots civic engagement project that sought to engage low income and

minority groups to register and vote. They soon discovered that many of the individuals in their universe were unable to vote due to felony convictions. We provided them with fliers and applications for restoration of voting rights, as they went door-to-door in Martinsville, Danville, Emporia, Petersburg, and Chesapeake.

League of Women Voters – The Virginia League of Women Voters (LWV) is not on the list above because it is still engaged in its internal consensus process to determine if it will take an official stand in favor of voter restoration reform. However, VVRP met with LWV representatives to encourage involvement. Despite not taking an official stand, LWV distributed our materials to its membership and many of its individual members were involved in lobbying during the 2009 legislative session.

Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy- The Interfaith Center has also made voter restoration a high priority. In addition to informing their members about the issue, VICPP was part of the legislative working group that met frequently during the legislative session to work out strategy.

Public Forums

VVRP participated in a series of public education forums and workshops over the last year. The first was a symposium hosted by 3rd Street Bethel AME Church in Richmond on April 23, 2008 (Attendance: 147). This was followed by two forums and a second symposium sponsored by 3rd Street Bethel AME. Additional forums and appearances included a voter outreach and awareness workshop at Virginia State University on September 18, 2008 (Attendance: 62); a rights restoration forum and workshop at Norfolk State University on September 24, 2008, hosted by 10,000 Voters (Attendance: 43); a forum at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Human Rights in Lynchburg hosted by LWV on November 17, 2008 (Attendance: 41); Post Election Forum sponsored by the Office of Rep. Bobby Scott on December 16, 2008 (Attendance: 32); League of Women Voters Legislative Day in December (Attendance: 104); and a forum hosted by Tabernacle Baptist Church in Petersburg, which was co-sponsored by the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy on December 16 (Attendance: 28).

Felon Disfranchisement Briefing Paper

VVRP produced a one-page briefing paper on felon disfranchisement and voter restoration reform that was widely distributed by VVRP and coalition partners at events, by mail, and to public officials, including legislators. An estimated 2,000 briefing papers were distributed over the first year of the project. See Appendix A-6.

IV. Direct Service-Details

VVRP provided individualized assistance to persons seeking to have their rights restored, and helped hundreds more by sponsoring and/or participating in voter restoration forums to which disfranchised felons were invited. By the end of 2008, more than 2,535 individuals applied to have their rights restored, a record one-year total. The project assisted 508 individuals

directly and many more than that through public forums, the website, the efforts of coalition partners, and distribution of our literature. Below are some of the ways we encouraged individuals to submit applications for restoration of rights.

Literature Displayed at Local Department of Social Services' Offices

In the spring of 2008, VVRP staff, the NAACP and the Virginia Organizing Project met with the leadership of the Virginia Department of Social Services. The original purpose of the meeting was to inquire about the decline of voter registrations at DSS offices throughout the state and to encourage DSS involvement in assisting with voter restoration. DSS leadership agreed to allow individual local agencies to post fliers and posters and to brief employees about felon disfranchisement.

As a result of that meeting and our follow-up efforts, 39 local services' offices agreed to display the VVRP poster (Appendix- A-5) and distribute our flyer (Appendix A-4) to clients.

1. Albemarle County Department of Social Services
2. Bath County Department of Social Services
3. Botetourt County Department of Social Services
4. Brunswick County Department of Social Services
5. Carroll County Department of Social Services
6. Chesterfield County/Colonial Heights Department of Social Services
7. Dinwiddie County Department of Social Services
8. Fairfax County Department of Social Services
9. Fauquier County Department of Social Services
10. Franklin County Department of Social Services
11. City of Franklin Department of Social Services
12. Greene County Department of Social Services
13. Halifax County Department of Social Services
14. Hopewell Department of Social Services
15. Gloucester Department of Social Services
16. Goochland Department of Social Services
17. Green County Department of Social Services
18. Lancaster County Department of Social Services
19. Lunenburg County Department of Social Services
20. Paige County Department of Social Services
21. Montgomery County Department of Social Services
22. Newport News Department of Social Services
23. New Kent County Department of Social Services
24. Montgomery County Department of Social Services
25. Northumberland County Department of Social
26. Norfolk Department of Human Services
27. Paige County Department of Social Services
28. Prince William County Department of Social Services
29. Pulaski County Department of Social Services
30. City of Richmond Department of Social Services

31. Rockbridge County Department of Social Services
32. Roanoke County Department of Social Services
33. Suffolk Department of Social Services
34. Shenandoah Valley Department of Social Services
35. Spotsylvania County Department of Social Services
36. Virginia Beach Department of Human Services
37. Westmoreland County Department of Social Services
38. Winchester Department of Social Services
39. York County Department of Social Services

VOP 300,000 Voter Guides Distributed

Partnering with the Virginia Organizing Project brought us an opportunity to take our message to 300,000 doorsteps. VOP's voter guide, distributed in the summer and fall of 2008 in largely low-income and minority neighborhoods, contained much valuable information for voters from a wide variety of organizations, but only one full page, sponsored by VVRP, devoted exclusively to restoration of voting rights. See Appendix A-4.

Ads in Minority Newspapers

VVRP ran large three-color ads in the three most read African-American newspapers in Virginia: the Richmond Free Press (35,000 distribution, estimated readership of 100,000), the Richmond Voice (44,000 distribution) and the Hampton Roads Voice (50,000). While containing an educational message on felon disfranchisement, the ads primary purpose was to encourage felons to seek restoration of their rights by contacting VVRP. See Appendix A-2 and A-3 for copies of the ads.

40,000 Voter Empowerment Cards Distributed

In the weeks leading up to Election Day 2008, the ACLU of Virginia, in conjunction with the Virginia NAACP, distributed 40,000 Voter Empowerment Cards to families around the state. For the first time, the palm-sized card contained a full page devoted to restoration of voting rights. See Appendix A-15.

V. Legislative Advocacy-Details

“Restore Our Vote” Website Tracks Bills during Session

During the legislative session, the “Restore Our Vote Website” provided daily updates on the status of restoration bills and alerted readers to actions they could take to influence the legislative process, from contacting particular legislators at opportune times to writing letters to newspaper editors.

ACLU Members Activated to Support Voter Restoration Reform

Prior to and during the legislative session, VVRP took a series of steps to educate and mobilize Virginia's 10,000 ACLU members, including:

Articles in *Virginia Liberties*

Articles on our voter restoration work were strategically placed in two issues of *Virginia Liberties*, the ACLU of Virginia newsletter. See Appendix A-12 and A-13.

Brochure Mailed to Members

VVRP mailed a four-page, three-color brochure to all 10,000 ACLU of Virginia members during the legislative session. The brochure briefly addressed the history and character of felon disfranchisement in Virginia and asked recipients to take action to influence legislation. Each brochure was designed to contain the names, telephone number and email addresses of the recipient's representative in the House and Senate. See Appendix A-8

Six Legislative Action Alerts Sent Out during Session

Five timely action alerts were sent to 1,000 ACLU of Virginia grassroots lobbyists during the session to encourage contact with legislators as bills moved through the General Assembly. In addition, one email was sent to the 1,800 ACLU of Virginia E-News recipients, also to encourage action during the legislative session. See Appendix A-9.

Year-End Grassroots Recruitment Letter

Nearly 11,000 ACLU of Virginia members and supporters received a letter at the end of 2008 asking them to sign up to become grassroots lobbyists. The letter described voter restoration reform as a priority legislative issue for the ACLU of Virginia. See Appendix A-13.

Educational and Advocacy Materials Distributed to Legislators

In addition to strategizing with key legislators, we also distributed information packets on felon disfranchisement to any legislator who would be in a position to vote on a restoration bill. Memos addressing the bills on which they were about to vote, our felon disfranchisement briefing paper, and copies of five editorials endorsing restoration of voting rights that had appeared in Virginia newspapers were distributed in a timely manner to 1) members of the House and Senate Privileges and Elections Subcommittees, 2) members of the House and Senate P&E Committee, and 3) to the full Senate.

We were able to secure letters from Carl Wicklund, Executive Director of the American Probation and Parole Association, asking key leaders in the Virginia General Assembly to support voter restoration reform.

See Appendix A-7, a, b, c, d, e and f for copies of information sent to legislators during the General Assembly.

Bills in the General Assembly

The 2009 Session witnessed a dramatic increase in legislation addressing felony disfranchisement. The pre-Session work of the Coalition played a critical factor in this success. Eight bills sought constitutional referendums. Six were introduced in the House of Delegates and two in the Senate. A summation of the bills and discussion of legislative strategy (taken from the VVRP Directors' notes) follows.

HJ 677 (Mamye BaCote; D-Newport News) – Would provide that the Governor shall restore the civil rights of any person convicted of a felony who has completed his sentence, including probation, parole, and suspension of sentence, and has paid in full any restitution, fines, costs, and fees assessed against the person as a result of a felony conviction.

HJ 623 (Rosalyn Dance; D-Petersburg) – Authorizes the General Assembly to provide by law for the restoration of civil rights for persons convicted of felonies who have completed service of their sentences subject to the conditions, requirements, and classifications set forth in that law. (Presently, the constitution provides for restoration of rights by the Governor. The amendment retains the right of the Governor to restore civil rights and adds the alternative for the restoration of rights pursuant to law.)

HJ 664 (Joseph Morrissey; D-Henrico) – *same as HJ 623* Authorizes the General Assembly to provide by law for the restoration of civil rights for persons convicted of felonies who have completed service of their sentences subject to the conditions, requirements, and classifications set forth in that law.

HJ 656 (Roslyn Tyler; D-Jarret) – Authorizes the General Assembly to provide for the restoration of civil rights for persons convicted of nonviolent felonies who have completed service of their sentences subject to the conditions, requirements, and definitions set forth in that law.

HJ 628 (Onzlee Ware; D-Roanoke City) – *same as HJ 656* Authorizes the General Assembly to provide by law for the restoration of civil rights for persons convicted of nonviolent felonies who have completed service of their sentences subject to the conditions, requirements, and definitions set forth in that law.

HJ 726 (Franklin Hall; D-Richmond City) – *same as HJ 656 and 628* Authorizes the General Assembly to provide by law for the restoration of civil rights for person convicted of nonviolent felonies who have completed service of their sentences subject to the conditions, requirements, and definitions set forth in that law.

SJ 354 (A. Donald McEachin; D-Henrico County) – Provides for the automatic restoration of civil rights to persons convicted of nonviolent felonies (excepting election fraud) upon completion of sentence including any term of probation or parole. Provides further that persons convicted of violent felonies, felony drug crimes, or election fraud may have their civil rights restored by the Governor upon completion of sentence,

including any term of probation or parole, and authorizes the General Assembly to provide by law for the restoration of civil rights to such persons.

SJ 273 (Yvonne B. Miller; D-Norfolk) – Authorizes the General Assembly to provide by law for the restoration of civil rights for persons convicted of nonviolent felonies who have completed service of their sentences subject to the conditions, requirements, and definitions set forth in that law.

Voter Restoration in the House of Delegates

The first action on voter restoration bills took place in the House of Delegates at a meeting of the Privileges & Elections Subcommittee on the Constitution on January 18, 2009 (Martin Luther King Day).

At that meeting, HJ 656 and HJ 628 were rolled into one bill and HJ 623 and HJ 664 were also rolled into a single bill due to similar language and intent. They were heard separately. HJ 677 was tabled unanimously by the committee. The combined HJ 623/664 was considered at length and debated by the committee. Ten members of the audience testified on behalf of the measure. It failed by a vote of 5-2 (Yea: Alexander and Morrissey; Nay: Janis, Puntney, Cosgrove, Hargrove, and Phillips; Absent: Frederick).

The combined HJ 656/628 passed 4-3 (Yea: Hargrove, Phillips, Alexander, and Morrissey; Nay: Janis, Puntney, and Cosgrove; Absent: Frederick).

This sent HJ656/628 to the full House P&E Committee. A motion to table passed 12-10.

Voter Restoration in the Senate

In the Senate Committee on Privileges & Elections, rights restoration legislation went directly to full committee and received very little discussion. SJ 354 passed after very little discussion by a vote of 9-3 (2 abstained), and SJ 273 passed 12-2 with no abstentions. The bills fared differently on the floor of the Senate. Debate of SJ 354 focused on whether the bill also included restoration of gun rights as well as voting rights. Decoupling the two rights under the broad language of the bill proved difficult, and the measure failed 19-19, with Lt. Governor Bolling breaking the tie vote by voting against the bill. SJ 273 passed with a two-thirds bipartisan majority of 27-13.

Senate Bill in the House

SJ 273 was referred to the House P&E Committee after crossover and assigned to the P&E Subcommittee on the Constitution, the same committee that had approved a similar House bill. During the meeting SJ 273 received a vote of 2-3, thus failing to report to the full P&E Committee.

Report of the Virginia Voter Restoration Project

Year One: March 2008-February 2009

Appendix

A-1 Restore Our Vote Website Homepage (www.restoreourvote.org)

The Restore Our Vote Website was launched in January 2009. It functions as a source of information for those who need their voting rights restored, who are interested in the issue of felon disfranchisement for research purposes, and who would like to help in the effort to reform Virginia's antiquated laws.

A-2 Restore Our Vote Ad in the *Richmond Free Press*

This ad, which was reduced in size to fit on one page for this report, ran in the *Richmond Free Press* in its May 29, 2008 issue. The *Free Press*, a free weekly newspaper that "penetrates Richmond's African-American community" estimates its circulation at more than 35,000 and its readership at more than 135,000 people.

A-3 Restore Our Vote Ad in *The Voice*

This ad ran in the June 16-21, 2008 issue of the *Richmond Voice and the Hampton Roads Voice*. *The Voice*, a free weekly newspaper, reports a circulation of 44,000 in the Richmond area and 50,000 in Hampton Roads.

A-4 Restore Your Right to Vote! Flyer

This flyer was originally designed for the Virginia Organizing Project's Catalog, which was distributed to 300,000 Virginia residents in the spring and summer of 2008. A similar flyer will be placed in the 2009 catalog as well. Since its original use, the flyer has also been used as a general handout at events, speaking engagements, and to Departments of Social Services around the state.

A-5 Restore Your Right to Vote Poster

This poster, which was reduced in size to fit on one page for this report, is distributed to Departments of Social Services around the state upon request. Thus far, posters have been sent to 39 localities.

A-6 Briefing Paper: Felony Disfranchisement in Virginia

This informative, one-page briefing paper has been distributed as hand-outs to those interested in felon disfranchisement during events and speaking engagements. It is also available on the Restore Our Vote website.

A-7 Information Packets for Members of the General Assembly

- a) Memo to members on the House Privileges & Elections Subcommittee on the Constitution sent January 16, 2009 in regards to five bills before the subcommittee.
- b) Memo to members of the House Committee on Privileges & Elections sent February 4, 2009 regarding HJ 628, the only bill passed out of the January 16 House P&E subcommittee meeting.
- c) Memo to members of the Virginia Senate sent February 4, 2009 in regards to SJ 273 and SJ 354, which easily passed the full Senate Committee on Privileges & Elections.
- d) Memo sent on February 16, 2009 to Del. Mark Cole, Chair of the House Privileges & Elections Committee and copied to the full committee regarding SJ 273, which successfully passed the full Senate but failed to report from the House P&E Subcommittee on the Constitution.
- e) Newspaper Editorials and Op-eds provided as attachments to abovementioned memos.
 - i. Editorial. "A Matter of Simple Justice," The Roanoke Times, June 18, 2008.
 - ii. Hailes, Jr., Edward. "Broadening the Chance to Vote," The Richmond Times-Dispatch, July 15, 2008.
 - iii. Editorial. "Restoring the Vote," The Washington Post, June 24, 2008.
 - iv. Editorial. "Felon Voting Ban Isolates Virginia," The Virginian-Pilot, January 13, 2006.
 - v. Kemp, Jack. "An Opportunity to Expand Civil Rights," The Washington Times, April 12, 2007.
- f) Letter from Carl Wicklund, Executive Director of the American Probation and Parole Association to Del. Mark Cole, Chair of the House Privileges & Elections Committee, regarding SJ 273. This letter was distributed to members of the House P&E Committee along with the abovementioned articles and Felon Disfranchisement Briefing Paper.

A-8 Voter Restoration Mailing to ACLU Members and Supporters

This individualized mailing went to 10,183 ACLU members and supporters across the state on February 4, 2009. The mailing urged recipients to contact their legislators immediately regarding bills before the General Assembly. It provided recipients with their Delegates and Senators' names, email addresses, and telephone numbers.

A-9 Legislative Action Alerts

These five timely legislative action alerts were sent to 1,065 subscribers to the ACLU Grassroots Lobbyist list, and one email was sent to 1,845 subscribers to the ACLU of Virginia E-News program about bills before the General Assembly. These action alerts provided basic information to readers and urged recipients to contact legislators regarding the various bills throughout the session.

A-10 General Assembly Top 10

Included among the ACLU's "Top 10" issues in the 2009 General Assembly is restoration of voting rights. This report was distributed at events and is available on the ACLU's website (www.acluva.org).

A-11 ACLU of Virginia Press Release

This press release titled, "Voter Restoration Bill Easily Passes Senate, 27-13," was sent to our media list of 200 contacts in the print, television and radio media.

A-12 ACLU of Virginia Newsletter, *Virginia Liberties*, Spring 2008

The Voting Rights Restoration Project was featured in our spring 2008 issue, which was mailed to 11,201 ACLU members and supporters in April 2008. The newsletter is also distributed at various ACLU events.

A-13 ACLU of Virginia Newsletter, *Virginia Liberties*, Fall 2008

Felon disfranchisement was also the lead story in the ACLU of Virginia's fall 2008 newsletter, which was sent to 11,037 ACLU members and supporters in December 2008 and has been distributed at various ACLU events.

A-14 ACLU of Virginia Year-End Letter to Membership

This letter was mailed on December 22, 2008 to 10,781 ACLU of Virginia members and supporters. Please see the highlighted portion for the section relevant to felon disfranchisement.

A-15 2008 Voter Empowerment Cards

This is a copy of a section of the 2008 Voter Empowerment Cards handed out prior to and on Election Day 2008. These cards were produced in conjunction with the Virginia State Conference of the NAACP. 30,000 cards in English and 10,000 cards in Spanish were distributed to several organizations that disseminated them throughout the state. Because of these cards, we received a record number of telephone calls on our "hotline" and some of those were related to restoring voting rights.