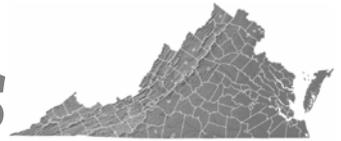


# Virginia Liberties



Newsletter of the American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia

Spring 2007

## State Anti-Immigrant Bills Blocked, but Localities Undeterred

By the end of the 2007 Virginia General Assembly, every one of the dozen or more blatantly anti-immigrant bills introduced by legislators had died. Given the strong anti-immigrant sentiment so pervasive in this year's session, this was a remarkable feat, accomplished by a broad coalition of rights groups working throughout the state.

Anti-immigrant bills came in many forms in the 2007 session, from creating local enforcement mechanisms for federal immigration law, to denying in-state tuition for many immigrants, to punishing organizations that assist immigrants who may be undocumented, and even to requiring non-English defendants in criminal cases to pay for their own court interpreters.

Although introduced and argued as measures to fight illegal immigration, there seems little doubt that the real genesis of these bills is bias against Virginia's fast growing minority populations. At the very least, the effect of many of these bills would be to place Latinos, a group already profiled by police, squarely in the cross-hairs of law enforcement.

Unfortunately, the wisdom of state lawmakers, especially the Senators who killed eight anti-immigrant bills passed by the House of Delegates, did not spill over to local governments. Chesterfield, Culpeper and several Northern Virginia jurisdictions are aggressively pursuing their own anti-immigrant initiatives. Last year, for example, Manassas passed an ordinance creating unusual restrictions on how family members live together. The ordinance was clearly aimed at Hispanics, and Manassas repealed it after community groups complained and the ACLU of Virginia threatened to file a lawsuit.

"The key for rights groups is getting policy makers, as well as the people who live in our communities, to understand that this is not really about illegal immigration at all, but fear of Virginia's changing demographics," said ACLU of Virginia executive director Kent Willis. "Virginia is rapidly becoming more Hispanic, and that makes a lot of people nervous, just as racial integration did fifty years ago."

Learn more about this subject at [www.aclu.org/immigrants](http://www.aclu.org/immigrants)



Kim Hines, ACLU Plaintiff

## Lawsuit Challenges Racially Biased Hair Policy

The ACLU of Virginia has filed a federal lawsuit against Kokoamos Island Bar, Grill, and Yacht Club in Virginia Beach for discriminating against African-American clients. Kim Hines and Myron Evans, both African-American, were on separate occasions denied entry to Kokoamos because they wore their hair in dreadlocks, a violation of the nightclub's prohibition against braids, twists, cornrows, and dreadlocks. Kokoamos also has a dress code banning baggy pants and "gangster" wear.

The ACLU maintains that the effect of the hair policy is to discriminate against African-Americans, who are more likely than Caucasians to don the banned hairstyles. But there is also strong evidence the policy is applied in a racially discriminatory manner. When, for example, Evans complained to the bar's owner, he was told, "There are other places that cater to your kind of crowd." In addition, local television station WAVY TV conducted an on-camera test in which two similarly dressed young men, one African-American and the other Caucasian, attempted to enter the bar. The Caucasian was allowed in, but not the African-American.

Hines and Evans are being represented by ACLU Legal Director Rebecca K. Glenberg.

## Virginia, Vermont Courts Agree, but Lesbian Custody Saga Not Over

It's an old story with new a wrinkle, complicated only by Virginia's regressive laws. In 2000, Janet and Lisa Miller-Jenkins entered into a civil union under Vermont law. They had a child, separated, dissolved the union, and went through a custody dispute.

A Vermont court awarded custody to Lisa, the birth mother, and visitation rights to Janet. Lisa then moved with the child to Virginia where she relied on the state's Marriage Affirmation Act, which bans

marriage-like contracts between people of the same sex, to argue for sole custody of the child.

The ACLU, Equality Virginia, and Lambda assisted Janet, but in 2004, the Frederick County Circuit Court granted Lisa the authority to deny Janet her visitation rights. In August 2006, however, the Vermont Supreme Court ruled that Vermont held jurisdiction over the case, and that Lisa was in contempt of court for refusing to allow Janet visitation.

This set up a show-down between the states that was not resolved until November 2006, when the Virginia Court of Appeals overturned the Frederick County Court and agreed that Vermont held jurisdiction.

Unfortunately, the story does not end there. Lisa's lawyers are now attempting to take the Vermont case to the US Supreme Court and the Virginia case to the Virginia Supreme Court. The ACLU continues to represent Janet.

## From the Director: The Time for Felon Enfranchisement Reform is Now

Just about the time you receive this newsletter, a large group of civil rights advocates, including two representing the ACLU of Virginia, will be gathering in Miami to develop strategies for restoring the voting rights of former felons. The disenfranchisement of voters who have committed felonies is largely a Jim Crow invention, one of many means -- along with the likes of poll taxes and literacy tests -- that states used to make it more difficult for African-Americans to vote.

In Virginia alone, there are an estimated 200,000 former felons who are African-American and cannot vote, even though they have fully repaid their debt to society.

Unless we act quickly, Virginia may be the last state to bring its felon enfranchisement law into the 21st Century. While the rules vary from state to state, and some still make it difficult to reestablish voting rights, only Florida, Kentucky and Virginia still permanently disenfranchise felons. In these states, only the Governor has the authority to restore the right to vote.

Mostly a southern phenomenon, felon disenfranchisement is finally being seen for what it is. And it is disappearing. Great strides have been made in Florida and Kentucky, which are poised to join the 47 other states without permanent disenfranchisement.

Each year a bill is introduced to repeal the Virginia Constitutional provision giving the Governor sole authority to restore voting rights. And every year it fails. This year the Senate passed the bill, as it has done before. But the House blocked it, as it has done before.

Voting is a fundamental right, an integral part of our participatory democracy. If we want those who have completed their sentences to again be productive members of our society, they should have the ability to cast their votes at the polls on election day.

It is time for all of us to see this as a civil rights issue and to take action. Expect to hear a lot more from the ACLU of Virginia on restoration of voting rights in the near future. And expect to be asked to help do something about it — to make a donation, to write a letter, or maybe just to ask a friend if he or she likes the prospect of living in the last state in the nation without a law giving former felons the right to vote.

Thanks for listening. I'll be in touch.

— Kent Willis



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### Virginia Liberties

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## Save These Dates...

### Religious Rights Expert Jeremy Gunn in

### Richmond for Annual Meeting, May 19, 2:00pm

Join us at the ACLU of Virginia annual membership meeting and reception in Richmond on Saturday, May 19. Hear and talk to Jeremy Gunn, the director of the ACLU's Program on Freedom of Religion and Belief. See back page for details.

### ACLU Director Anthony Romero in

### Alexandria for Book Reading, June 4, 7:00pm

National ACLU Executive Director Anthony Romero will be traveling to Old Town Alexandria as part of a tour promoting his book, *In Defense of Our America*, which goes on sale in late May. Citing various personal stories from ACLU cases, Romero narrates some landmark cases in defending civil liberties at a time when the country struggles to advance national security. Please join us for an evening with Anthony Romero on June 4 at the Lyceum (201 S. Washington St. Alexandria, VA 22314). For information, contact Elizabeth Wong at 804-644-8022 or [acluva@acluva.org](mailto:acluva@acluva.org).

### NOVA ACLU Chapter Annual Meeting and Crabfest in Alexandria, June 24, 1:00pm

Don't miss this annual Virginia ACLU tradition! Join us on Sunday, June 24, from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. at Fort Hunt Park, Area D for crabs, hamburgers, hot dogs, veggie burgers, and more. Our guest speaker will be Executive Director Kent Willis. More details will follow in a flyer to be mailed to area members in May. For information, contact the NOVA ACLU Chapter at 703-360-1096 or [novachapter@acluva.org](mailto:novachapter@acluva.org).

# ACLU of Virginia in Action

## Court Says No to Sectarian Prayers at Fredericksburg Council Meetings

Under pressure from the ACLU, Fredericksburg City Council adopted a policy requiring that its meeting-opening prayers be non-sectarian. This policy brought Fredericksburg into compliance with U.S. Supreme Court and Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals rulings on legislative prayers. But Councilman Hashmel Turner insisted that he had the right to open meetings with Christian prayers, and with help from the Rutherford Institute in Charlottesville, sued Fredericksburg for violating his free speech and free exercise rights. A federal court judge dismissed Turner's case, ruling that Fredericksburg's prayer policy was constitutional. Turner then appealed the case to the Fourth Circuit. The ACLU of Virginia filed a friend-of-the-court brief on behalf of City Council in the District Court and again in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, which should hear oral arguments in the case this summer.

## Suit Filed to Protect Indigent Defendants' Right to Adequate Legal Representation

Under the Criminal Justice Act, federal courts of appeals appoint lawyers to indigent defendants who are appealing a denial of their claims to unlawful imprisonment. Each circuit has a "plan" that outlines how attorneys are appointed and compensated. In the Fourth Circuit, attorneys' fees are subject to the sole discretion of the Chief Judge, who has the final say as to the amount of reimbursement. The ACLU is representing two attorneys whose fees were arbitrarily cut 70%. We are seeking a fair compensation process with an avenue for appeals of the Judge's decisions.

## Newspapers, ACLU Fight for Free Press

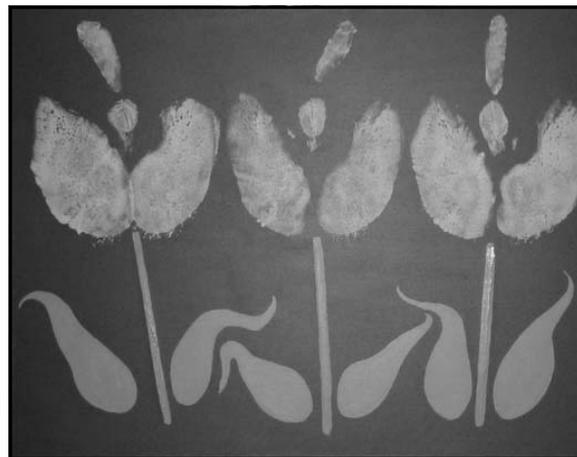
The ACLU is representing the *Collegiate Times* and *The Cavalier Daily*, student-run newspapers from Virginia Tech and the University of Virginia, respectively, in a lawsuit against the State Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control Board for regulations that violate their First Amendment rights to freedom of speech and of the press.

The ABC Board prohibits the advertisement of beer, wine, and mixed drinks in "college student publications," as well as the use of certain words in advertising, such as "cocktails" and "liquor." The regulations unjustifiably impose a burden on college media but not on other media. The newspapers are impacted because they depend largely on advertising for their revenues.

## ACLU Defends Teacher Fired for Paintings

Stephen Murmer, an art teacher in Chesterfield County Public Schools, was fired for the art he produces entirely outside of school, on his own time, and at his own expense. Murmer, who goes by Stan Murmur when he paints, uses his body, including his buttocks, to apply paint to canvas. Although Chesterfield officials have apparently been aware for some time of Murmer's paintings, and the technique he uses to create them, he was not fired until a three-year-old video was found on the Internet by students.

Murmer is by all accounts an excellent teacher who takes his job seriously. He is also serious about the art he produces outside the classroom. The ACLU is defending his free speech right to engage in expressive activities on his own time and believes there is no indication these activities interfere with his professional responsibilities.



Painting by Stan Murmur

## ACLU Calls for Governor to Reconvene Real ID Task Force

The release in March of the Department of Homeland Security's long-awaited regulations for the Real ID Act prompted the ACLU of Virginia to ask the Governor to reconvene the state Real ID Task Force. The regulations, which made it clear that Real ID really means national ID, sent privacy rights groups into high gear attacking the law.

Passed in early 2005, the Real ID Act requires states to issue uniform IDs to be used to board airplanes and access federal

facilities. Information in the ID is to be contained in a nationally-linked database.

In December 2005, then-Governor Mark Warner established the Virginia Real ID Task Force to determine the impact of the Real ID Act on Virginia. The Task Force — the first of its kind in the nation and on which the ACLU of Virginia served — issued a highly critical report. But the group was handicapped by the fact that DHS had not yet released its regulations interpreting the law. Still, the report cited

fears about the loss of privacy, discrimination against immigrants, the high cost to taxpayers (\$60 million in Virginia alone), and the burdensome procedures that would be required to obtain a license.

With the release of the regulations, those fears have become reality, and the ACLU believes that a new task force should be established to evaluate the real impact of the Real ID law on Virginia.

Learn more about Real ID at [www.acluva.org](http://www.acluva.org).

# "Outlawed" Attracts Crowds in Charlottesville and Richmond

Produced by the ACLU in association with thirteen other human rights organizations, *Outlawed: Extraordinary Rendition, Torture, and Disappearances in the "War on Terror"* is a 30 minute documentary that tells the gut-wrenching stories of Khaled El-Masri and Binyam Mohamed's experience with extraordinary rendition. These two men have survived being kidnapped and tortured by the U.S. and other governments.

The newly-formed ACLU Chapter at the University of Virginia showed the film to an audience of 60 in Charlottesville in late February. The panel discussion, which followed the film, featured UVA professors Frederick Hitz and David Waldner. Hitz is a former Inspector General of the CIA. Waldner is the Director of Middle East Studies at the university.

More than 130 people attended a similarly eye-opening event in Richmond. Co-sponsored by the ACLU, the Richmond Peace Education Center, and three student organizations at Virginia Commonwealth University, the post-film panel included ACLU of Virginia Legal Director Rebecca Glenberg, VCU professor of religious studies Mark Wood, and Bill Streit, a participant in the Witness Against Torture movement.

**Interested in sponsoring a showing of *Outlawed* – or other ACLU films?**

Contact Elizabeth Wong at 804-644-8022 or [acluva@acluva.org](mailto:acluva@acluva.org) for details.

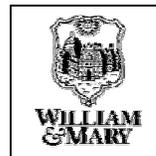
## Student ACLU Chapters on the Move



The ACLU of Virginia's newest student chapter at the University of Virginia has hit the ground running since it was officially recognized in January. In addition to sponsoring a showing of *Outlawed* (see above), the chapter organized a letter-writing campaign to elected officials to repeal the Military Commissions Act and has plans for events on censorship and gay and lesbian rights this semester. The chapter already has a list of over 110 students interested in participating in chapter activities.

Across campus, the UVA Law School Chapter commemorated the fifth anniversary of 9/11 by hosting a panel to discuss civil liberties. The chapter also organized a debate on the proposed anti-gay marriage amendment in October.

The William and Mary Chapter campaigned in the fall against the anti-gay marriage amendment. Students also produced Know Your Rights cards for campus-related rights issues that were distributed to all 7,000 William and Mary students.



The George Mason University Law School Chapter worked with the Northern Virginia ACLU Chapter to host a Virginia Journey of Hope event to promote a moratorium on the death penalty by having family members and activists speak out. Some chapter members spent their spring break in New Orleans providing legal assistance to those still affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Upon their return to campus, they will be hosting a panel on the effects of the Hurricanes.



### **ACLU/League Sponsor Presidential Powers Discussion at Virginia Wesleyan**

The ACLU of Virginia, the League of Women Voters of South Hampton Roads, and Virginia Wesleyan's Center for the Study of Religious Freedom sponsored an event on presidential powers in times of crises in Norfolk last November. William and Mary legal scholars William Van Alstyne and Julian Ku discussed Bush's use of signing statements and the government's domestic surveillance programs. Congressman Bobby Scott made an unexpected guest appearance and added his unadorned thoughts on the Bush administration. About 75 people attended the event.

### **Northern Virginia Chapter Hosts Panel on Guantanamo and Habeas Corpus**

The Northern Virginia ACLU Chapter hosted a lively and enlightening program, "Guantanamo and Habeas Corpus: What's at Stake?" at the Rosslyn Spectrum in early March. National Public Radio Correspondent Jackie Northam served as moderator for a panel of four experts on human rights issues, who discussed whether or not Guantanamo detainees should be able to challenge their detentions in U.S. courts and other matters of balancing civil liberties with national security.

The panelists were Tom Wilner, managing partner of the international litigation, trade, and government relations practice of Shearman & Sterling, LLP and attorney representing various Guantanamo detainees; Jumana Musa, Advocacy Director for Domestic Human Rights and International Justice at Amnesty International; Steven Groves from the Heritage Foundation; and David Lachmann, Chief of Staff of the subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties of the House Judiciary Committee.

### **Eight Delegates to Attend Biennial Conference**

Every two years, a group of more than 500 ACLU representatives meet to discuss and propose ACLU policies at the ACLU biennial conference. This year, the conference will be in Seattle, Washington from June 13-16. Virginia's delegates are Patrick Anderson, Gena Chieco, David Drachsler, Stew Dunn, Paul Fleisher, George Smith, Barbara Ziony, and alternate Frank Feibelman.

# Federal Courts in Virginia Reject "Rendition" Challenge

*In 2004, while on holiday in Macedonia, Khaled El-Masri, a German citizen, was forcibly abducted under the CIA's "extraordinary rendition" program. He was detained incommunicado, beaten, drugged, and transported to a secret CIA prison in Afghanistan, where he was subjected to inhumane conditions and coercive interrogation. After several months of confinement in squalid conditions, he was abandoned on a hill in Albania with no explanation and having never been charged with a crime.*

*In May 2006, a federal district court in Alexandria dismissed El-Masri's case, citing the government's invocation of the state secrets privilege. The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the lower court's ruling in early March 2007.*



## *I am Not a State Secret*

*By Khaled El-Masri*

My story is well known. It has been described in literally hundreds of newspaper articles and television news programs — many of them relying on sources within the U.S. government. It has been the subject of numerous investigations and reports by intergovernmental bodies, including the European Parliament. Most recently,

prosecutors in my own country of Germany are pursuing indictments against 13 CIA agents and contractors for their role in my kidnapping, abuse and detention. Although I never could have imagined it, and certainly never wished it, I have become the public face of the CIA's "extraordinary rendition" program.

Why, then, does the American government insist that my ordeal is a state secret? This is something beyond my comprehension. In December 2005, with the help of the American Civil Liberties Union, I sued former CIA Director George Tenet along with other CIA agents and contractors for their roles in my kidnapping, mistreatment and arbitrary detention. Above all, what I want from the lawsuit is a public acknowledgment from the U.S. government that I was innocent, a mistaken victim of its rendition program, and an apology for what I was forced to endure. Without this vindication, it has been impossible for me to return to a normal life.

The U.S. government does not deny that I was wrongfully kidnapped. Instead, it has argued in court that my case must be dismissed because any litigation of my claims will expose state secrets and jeopardize American security, even though President Bush has told the world about the CIA's detention program, and even though my allegations have been corroborated by eyewitnesses and other evidence.

I did not bring this lawsuit to harm America. I brought the lawsuit because I want to know why America harmed me. I

don't understand why the strongest nation on Earth believes that acknowledging a mistake will threaten its security. Isn't it more likely that showing the world that America cannot give justice to an innocent victim of its anti-terror policies will cause harm to America's image and security around the world?

In November, I traveled to America for the first time to hear my lawyers argue my case before the appeals court in Richmond, Va. and to meet with members of Congress and their staff on Capitol Hill. (It's obvious that the U.S. government does not consider me a security threat, or I would not have been allowed to enter the country, much less be in the same room with federal judges and members of Congress.)

Although I did not understand all of the arguments made by the lawyers, I was impressed by the dignity of the proceedings and by the respect for the rule of law that I have always associated with America. I'm deeply disappointed to find that this same legal system denies me the chance to fully present my case.

During my visit in November, many Americans offered me their personal apologies for the brutality that had been perpetrated against me in their name. I saw in their faces the true America, an America that is not held captive by fear of unknown enemies and that understands the strength and power of justice. That is the America that, I hope, one day will see me as a human being — not a state secret.

*Excerpt from op-ed in L.A. Times, March 3, 2007.*

## Jules and Jean Honored at National ACLU Conference

With a century of ACLU membership between them, two of the Virginia ACLU's strongest supporters, Jules Cohen and Jean McCrosky, were among five veteran ACLUers honored at the National Membership Conference in Washington, D.C. last fall. Before a crowd of more than 1,500 members, President Nadine Strossen presented our special friends with awards recognizing their longtime commitment to the ACLU.

Both Jules and Jean have served on the ACLU of Virginia Board of Directors. Jules retired from the board early this year, while Jean, who turned 90 on April 6, remains on the board.

Although a member since the beginning of the civil rights movement, Jules' support for the ACLU was solidified by the controversial Skokie case, in which the ACLU took the

unpopular but principled stance of defending the rights of Nazi marchers in Skokie, Illinois.

Jean sees her current contributions to the ACLU as continuing the legacy of her late husband, Bob McCrosky, who was instrumental in establishing the ACLU of South Carolina.



# From the State Capitol – 2007 Legislative Session

*Below are a few of the significant issues addressed in this year's legislative session. The ACLU of Virginia typically tracks more than 100 bills and actively lobbies on more than 50.*

## Religious Rights Law Passes

After trying off and on for more than ten years, state lawmakers finally passed a state religious freedom restoration law. The new law will make it more difficult for the government to interfere with individual religious practices (which the ACLU supports), but it does not provide protections for incarcerated persons and lacks a non-discrimination clause that would prevent individuals from using religion as a justification for violating federal and state civil rights laws. We came close to getting the bill amended, but our efforts fell short by a few votes in the Senate, and the Governor made only technical adjustments to the law.

## Reproductive Rights Intact

Lawmakers introduced 13 anti-choice bills, but were not able to pass any. All these bills were introduced in the House of Delegates, which passed six. Fortunately, those six bills were blocked in Senate committees, many on very close votes. This is the third year in a row that large numbers of anti-choice bills were introduced, but all failed to pass.

## Slavery Apology on the Record

On the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, lawmakers passed a resolution expressing profound regret and reconciliation for the institution of slavery. The resolution also expressed regret for the exploitation of Native Americans. The ACLU joined a broad coalition of organizations to support the passage of this resolution.

## Attack on Immigrants Falls Short

While there is disagreement on just how to count the number of bills that negatively affected immigrants — somewhere between one and two dozen — there is no doubt that the number is a record. By the end all the blatantly anti-immigrant bills were killed, although both the Senate and the House passed a bill to deny in-state tuition to some immigrants. The bill failed only after the two chambers could not agree on key provisions.

## Libraries Must Censor Internet

Virginia has a new law requiring public libraries that receive state funds to install filters that block pornographic materials from reaching computers with access to the internet. The law allows for the blocking software to be disabled for adults with “bona fide research purposes,” but the ACLU still opposes such devices because they tend to filter out many legitimate, educational, scientific and artistic websites that have nothing to do with pornography. Bills similar to this have been introduced in Virginia for more than ten years.

***Available Soon!***  
***2007 Virginia General Assembly Review***  
*For full details on these and scores of other bills that impact civil liberties in Virginia contact us at 804-644-8022 or lobby@acluva.org*

## Indigent Defense Gets Boost

By passing a bill removing the hard cap on public funds available to attorneys defending indigent criminal defendants, the General Assembly may have finally moved Virginia out of the indigent defense basement (we rank dead last in the nation in the spending category). The new law does not lift the standard limits on compensation, which are still extremely low, but creates a process by which the cap, when justified, can be removed.

## Voting Rights Restoration Fails

Legislators again rejected a bill to create a process by which former felons can qualify to have their voting rights restored. Under the Virginia Constitution, only the Governor may restore voting rights lost as a result of a felony conviction. The Senate passed a bill repealing that provision of the Constitution, but it was never seriously considered by the House of Delegates. (For more information on felon voting rights in Virginia, see “*From the Director*” on top of second page.)

## Death Penalty May Be Expanded

This was a disappointing session for death penalty opponents. It began with the promise of some measurable movement toward a moratorium on executions and ended with the passage of several bills expanding the state death penalty law for the first time in many years. As of this writing the Governor has vetoed all the death penalty expansion bills, but the veto override session has not yet taken place. The death penalty expansion bills all passed by veto-proof margins, but the ACLU and other death penalty opponents have mounted a lobbying effort to block the veto override. If these bills become law, Virginia will have eliminated the rule that largely restricts the death penalty to the actual perpetrator of the crime and will have added the premeditated killing of a judge or jury member to the list of death eligible crimes.

## Public Speakers Protected

Twelve years after it was first introduced, Virginia finally has a law that protects the right of public speakers against lawsuits filed solely for the purpose of preventing them from voicing their opinions. The new law will help protect free speech, but may not serve as much of a deterrent to SLAPP suits (Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation), which are generally filed by the party receiving criticism from speakers at a public hearing solely for the purpose of intimidating the speaker. The ACLU supported a bill that would have provided a stronger deterrent to such lawsuits, but legislators ultimately supported the watered down version that finally passed.

## Gay Partners Hospital Visits Protected

Lawmakers easily passed a law that permits hospital patients to receive all visitors of their choice, which includes gays and lesbians. While not argued as a gay rights bill, the new law makes it clear that Virginia's new constitutional amendment banning marriage-like agreements between persons of the same sex will not be used to block hospital visits by gay partners. Lawmakers also voted down a bill intended to undermine Gay-Straight Alliance student organizations by requiring parents to approve all clubs in which their children participate.

# ACLU of Virginia Board of Directors Elections

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*Each year, the ACLU of Virginia elects approximately one-third of its Board of Directors to three-year terms. If you are a member of the ACLU, you are invited to seek nomination to the board by submitting to the Nominating Committee 60 days in advance of the annual membership meeting your name and a statement of interest, or a petition for candidacy signed by five ACLU members. The 2008 membership meeting is scheduled for May 17, 2008. Board members are elected by a vote of the membership through mail-in ballots and ballots cast at the annual meeting. Below are the candidates for election at the 2007 annual meeting on May 19, 2007.*

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**Jessica Arons** I am honored to be nominated to serve on the board of the Virginia ACLU. I have strong ties to Virginia, as well as a lifelong commitment to the defense and promotion of civil liberties and constitutional rights. I spent two years representing employees and unions, followed by a year as a staff attorney fellow with the national ACLU's Reproductive Freedom Project. I currently direct the Women's Health & Rights Program at the Center for American Progress, a progressive think tank in Washington, D.C.

**Kelley Bartges** My association with the ACLU of Virginia began in 1986, when I served as Associate Director. Since then, I have served as director of a non-profit organization serving the families of prison inmates; handled civil rights, criminal and family law matters in private practice; and served as a public defender in Richmond Juvenile Court. Since 1994, I have taught at the University of Richmond School of Law, directing the Delinquency Clinic, which is part of our Children's Law Center. I enthusiastically support the work of the Virginia ACLU and would like to continue serving on the board.

**Howard Gholson** I was born in Lawrenceville. After graduating from St. Paul's College, Virginia State University, and Nova Southeastern University, I held an array of education positions in the Prince William County School System, the U.S. Department of Education, and the International Labor Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. I recently retired as the Dean of Academic Affairs of the College of Continuing Education, Marine Corps University. During my entire career as a professional educator, I have always supported the goals of the ACLU.

**Jerry Peters** I have been an ACLU member since the 1970's and a Virginia member since 1991. I was trained as a lawyer but work as an executive and entrepreneur. My legal training gives me an appreciation for the power and the limitations of the legal system to effect societal change and to protect liberty, while my business experience equips me with a set of skills to contribute to the more pragmatic issues that come to the Board. My personal commitment to civil liberties instills a passion to use these skills to help the ACLU.

**Steve Levinson** I have been involved in civil rights-civil liberties for most of my career. I am currently the Chief Legal Counsel for Kensington Associates, LLC, a human and civil rights consulting firm. I have been an ACLU member for many years and I currently serve on the Board of Directors of the Northern Virginia Chapter of the ACLU. I also served on the Board of the Worcester Chapter of the Massachusetts ACLU in the 1970s and 1980s. I regretfully had to leave the Virginia Affiliate Board several years ago for family reasons, and I am very excited about the possibility of returning to the Board. I ask for your support.

**Cristina Rebeil** I was raised in the midst of financial difficulty in Sonora, Mexico, moved to Los Angeles in 1988 with \$200 and a suitcase, and worked my way through college before receiving a scholarship to attend University of Southern California Law School. I am seeking election to the ACLU because I am a "can do" person and excellent "trouble maker" -- qualities essential to the proper functioning of the ACLU. I am a huge ACLU fan and will work very hard doing whatever tasks I am requested to do. I am currently employed by the Virginia Poverty Law Center as an immigrants rights advocate.

**David Baugh** I would like to continue to serve on the ACLU of Virginia Board because our nation, this glorious experiment predicated on the best attributes of all men and women, is in crisis. All true patriots must arise and scream with their voices, votes, efforts and money, in defiance of government by trick, lie and baseless fear.

**Ron Hall** Over 16,100 telephone calls ago (I know, because I retain the records), I began coordinating the responses to calls which come to the Northern Virginia Chapter. I bring that perspective into my service to the state affiliate, where I've been a board member since 1979. That perspective also convinces me that we need to concentrate more efforts into ensuring that Virginians have a better understanding of what constitutes a civil liberties violation - and what doesn't.

**William Coleman** My involvement with the ACLU began 15 years ago with a successful effort to eliminate at-large voting in the Town of Halifax. Community activism and economic development have been my lifetime's work. I have seen first hand how legal advocacy can change the quality of life for low-income and low-status citizens. I would like to remain an active partner in this organization that has a strong track record in defending and preserving our liberties.

**Frank Feibelman** I was born in Danville, the son of Holocaust survivor parents, in one of the few homes in the city that was not politically to the right of Ghengis Khan. After graduation from Howard University Law School in 1973, I practiced law in Danville and Richmond, where I am presently a sole practitioner. I have litigated ACLU cases, and am most proud of my first, having represented a kindergarten student with AIDS who was not allowed to attend Fairfax County Public Schools.

**Sarah Richardson** Having graduated in 2001 from William & Mary School of Law after a couple of decades in other careers, I have a fresh appreciation for the legal structure that supports our civil liberties. More than ever, the ACLU's work is crucial in maintaining the bulwarks of freedom. I will use the experience I have gained from working with Virginians for Justice and the Chickahominy Watershed Alliance to contribute all I can to the ACLU's board.

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**Ballot 2007: ACLU of Virginia Board of Directors**

**(The 2007 Ballot was Distributed to Members in the Mail Edition)**

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## ***You're Invited!***

### **ACLU of Virginia Annual Membership Meeting and Reception**

Saturday, May 19, 2:00- 4:00 pm  
530 East Main Street, Richmond

#### **Keynote Address**

#### **Jeremy Gunn**

Director of the ACLU's  
Program on Freedom of Religion and Belief

We'd like to know if you'll be attending.

Call us at 804-644-8022 or  
e-mail us at [acluva@acluva.org](mailto:acluva@acluva.org).

*Newsletter of the ACLU of Virginia*

# **Virginia Liberties**

**American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia**  
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