

## 2022 Annual Report of Quaker Voice of Maryland

Current status of Quaker Voice (as of 8/2/22):

- **Active Working Group under the care of BYM PSC Committee / CQM**
  - We currently have a core working group of Molly Finch, Dona Sorce, Phil Caroom, Molly Mitchell, and Barbara Bezdek and periphery working group members that contribute.
  - Seeking a few more core working group members to help us cover all the [group tasks](#).
- **Currently has Meeting Liaisons representing 9 MD/DC Meetings**
  - Adelphi, Annapolis, Bethesda, Deer Creek, Frederick, Little Falls, Sandy Spring, Stony Run, Friends Meeting of Washington all had active liaisons for the 2022 general assembly session. These Friends received email updates weekly on Tuesday during the General Assembly to put into Meeting announcements for upcoming First Day.
  - Seeking liaisons in 2023 for: Chester River, Gunpowder, Homewood, Little Falls, Patapsco, Patuxent, Pipe Creek, Stony Run, Wicomico River (Salisbury), Third Haven.
  - We are open to input about other Quaker groups we should connect with and develop a liaison relationship.
- **Growing our email list of Friend-ly advocates**
  - We currently have 135 people on our email list; during the General Assembly session we send out weekly updates to our list regarding bill updates, action alerts, and events/activities.
- **Developed priority legislation list based on input from MD Friends**
  - In 2022 we chose 2 pieces of legislation for each of the 3 topics chosen by Friends
    - Racial Equity:
      - Correctional Ombudsman (SB0512/HB0604) - Returning in 2023
      - Child Interrogation Protection Act (SB0053/HB0269) - PASSED
    - Climate Justice:
      - Climate Solutions Now 2022 (SB0528) - PASSED
      - Energy Performance Targets & Low-Income Housing (HB0108, SB0524) - PASSED
    - Voting Rights: Mail-in Voting, Expand the Vote to Incarcerated MD'ers (these bill ended up not being submitted during the 2022 general assembly)
  - More information on our priority bills can be found on our [tracking sheet](#).
- **Scheduled presentations to share updates on our work**
  - Feb. 6, 2022 - Presentation at Third Haven Meeting - Members of Quaker Voice presented about Quaker Voice, our legislative priorities in 2022, background on the state legislative process, and how F/friends can be involved.
  - Feb. 27, 2022 - Presentation at Chesapeake Quarterly Meeting - Members of Quaker Voice gave an update on priority legislatio2n for the 2022 general assembly, strategies for advocacy work, and actions that can be taken during the current session.

- March 13, 2022 - Presentation at Frederick Friends Meeting - Members of Quaker Voice presented about Quaker Voice, our legislative priorities in 2022, background on the state legislative process, and how F/friends can be involved.
- **Promoting advocacy during the 2022 General Assembly**
  - Quaker Voice sent out weekly emails to our email list and liaisons.
  - Did not move forward in purchasing advocacy software.
    - We were considering Action Network (\$10/mo.) to send requests to our members that live in specific districts where their representatives sit on important committees to move our priority bills forward.
  - We use our website (\$15/yr.) as a resource Friends can use to learn more about the MD General Assembly process, how they can be advocates, and how they can advocate for our priority bills if they are interested in doing so.
- **No budget or fundraising yet, but spending a little money** (funded out of pocket by working group members)
  - Website: \$15/annually

Looking forward to Fall 2022:

- **Preparing survey for community input on legislation**
  - Will be shared with liaisons / email contacts in early September 2022; input will guide our priority legislation choices for 2023.
- **Considering calls to action:** [Quaker Call to Action](#), [Resolution to End Poverty in MD](#)
  - Currently under discernment by the working group.
- **Gathering for planning and fellowship - October 1, 2022**
  - Working group members are inviting liaisons to join us for a planning meeting where we discern legislative topics and plan advocacy for the 2023 general assembly; our goal is to have every MD Meeting represented at this gathering.

Current challenges:

- **Maintaining working group & liaison members**
  - Our ability to act is limited by the number of active working group members; we are seeking at least 5 active working group members, in addition to our current core group, that represent a variety of geographies across MD.
  - We do not want to overburden our liaisons with additional responsibilities, which could make recruiting harder.
- **Working with no budget**
  - Having a budget for printing could increase our presence in MD Meetings that work outside of electronic communications and could enable us to consider software (advocacy, email database, etc.) to save time for working group members.