

The other political responsibility project was the Voter's Guide. Through discussions in both the Political Concerns and the Steering Committee, the Commission undertook to produce a 1984 Voter's Guide for insertion in the Catholic Review--with additional guides to distribute in the Baltimore area, especially among local community organizations. The Guide dealt with a variety of issues of concern to the Catholic voter--issues of justice, human dignity and human life. The importance of the Guide was not only to list the statements of the candidates on these issues, but also to note the position of the United States Catholic Conference. All candidates on the ballot for Congress in Congressional districts within the Archdiocese, and all candidates for President, which included third-party candidates, were included.

The Voter's Guide was a comprehensive project, including a wide variety of domestic and national issues. Rev. Thomas Schindler, SS and Coordinator Chuck Michaels were responsible for arranging the guide, obtaining information from candidates, and researching the Church position on issues. The concept for the guide was developed by Jeanne Noble and refined by the Political Concerns Committee with additional input by Co-Chairperson Richard Ullrich. Issues mentioned in the Guide ranged from Central America, arms race, space weapons and abortion to aid to the disadvantaged and unemployment. Assistance with Church positions on local issue items was provided by the Social Concerns Unit of Associated Catholic Charities and by the Maryland Catholic Conference.

As the Voter's Guide was being developed, it was the subject of some debate both outside of and within the Commission. Although copies of a first version had been printed and insertion into the Review had been scheduled, a meeting was requested by representatives of Archdiocesan anti-abortion ("pro-life") groups. Concerns were expressed as to the level of attention to be given in the Guide to the abortion question and the way in which all candidate and Church positions should be stated and explained. Commission Members expressed concern as to the way in which the Equal Rights Amendment and death penalty issues would be treated. As a result of these discussions, a second version of the Guide was prepared and it was this version that was inserted in the Review and distributed.