



Issue: Death Penalty

Position Statement:

The Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance is a diverse group of individuals and organizations that believe that ALL people have the right to a life free of violence. To that end, the Action Alliance opposes the use of the death penalty for any crime.

Rationale:

It is the Action Alliance's mission to create a Virginia free from sexual and domestic violence which harm individuals, families, and a society as a whole. The existence of the death penalty for any crime perpetuates the use of violence to control individuals or groups of individuals and creates a society that tolerates violence and abuse.

Sexual and domestic violence is linked to other forms of oppression, which disproportionately affect women, children, and other marginalized people. Recognizing that the death penalty is disproportionately and unjustly applied to people of color, people from lower socio-economical backgrounds, and people with serious mental health issues, it is not consistent with the Action Alliance's mission to support death penalty.

When legislation was introduced in the 1998 General Assembly Session to make the murder of a spouse or former spouse while a spousal protective order was in place a crime punishable by death, the Action Alliance (formerly Virginians Against Domestic Violence) recognized the need to take a position on the use of death penalty. Given that legislation continues to be introduced to expand the use of capital punishment/death penalty in Virginia, the Action Alliance maintains its opposition to death penalty for any crime.