

**ACLU**



# FREEDOM FIGHTS BACK

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**ANNUAL REPORT 2024**

We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

## Article I

Section 1. All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

Section 2. The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, in each State shall have <sup>the</sup> Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch in that State.

No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, and seven Years, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Year, and the free male Persons of the Age of sixteen and upwards, three fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall direct.

# ACLU ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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## Message from the Executive Director



In our 2024 annual report, we reflect on the ACLU's key efforts over the past year. But even as we look back, I promise you that we are clear-eyed about the challenges

that lie ahead. The ACLU has been preparing for a potential second Trump administration for years, and we are ready to tackle every threat to our fundamental freedoms. We have a 105-year track record of fighting for civil rights and liberties in some of the most challenging moments in our country's history.

We also see new pathways for progress in the states because of the 2024 elections. The ACLU was committed to protecting abortion rights up and down the ballot, and voters in seven states passed ballot measures safeguarding or restoring abortion access.

In the face of relentless attacks on our fundamental freedoms this year, we achieved hard-fought victories across the country – for voting rights, reproductive freedom, free speech, LGBTQ rights, immigrants' rights, criminal law reform, and more.

I believe in the strength of our commitment because I have seen what our organization is capable of accomplishing when our freedom is on the line. Your dedication to the ACLU continues to make our work possible, and we are grateful beyond words.

With resolution,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony D. Romero". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Anthony D. Romero  
Executive Director

## Message from the President



In the 2024 elections, we worked tirelessly together, in the courts and on the ground, to ensure that every voice was heard and every vote was counted. We

will continue to harness our collective power in the fight for our democracy – no matter the challenges. As I look ahead to 2025, it's my belief in this ACLU community that assures me we will hold the line on liberty.

With the 2024–2025 Supreme Court term underway, I'm also looking ahead to a pair of landmark cases in which the ACLU is defending free expression and bodily autonomy. In *Free Speech Coalition v. Paxton*, we're challenging Texas's vaguely worded "harmful to minors" law that threatens the right of adults to freely access sexual content online. In *L.W. v. Skrmetti*, we're representing a Tennessee couple and their transgender teen in a challenge to the state's ban on hormone therapy for people under 18.

As we prepare for these legal battles, we've continued to strengthen our legislative and advocacy efforts in every state, D.C., and Puerto Rico. We're so grateful to have our supporters at our side, keeping the fight for justice and equality marching forward.

Thank you for being with us, every step of the way.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah N. Archer". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Deborah N. Archer  
President



STOP  
FORCED  
PREGNANT  
ABORTION ACCESS

# FIGHTING FOR OUR DEMOCRACY

**In the face of threats to our fundamental rights,  
the ACLU defended liberty, justice, and equality in 2024.**



Protesters rally in defense of medication abortion outside the Supreme Court. (Photo by Bryan Dozier)

In the wake of a critical election, we now face a dark and difficult moment. Our democracy is on the line. But we have been here before, and we will fight back with every resource at our disposal, just as we did during President Trump's previous term, when we filed 434 legal actions to defend the civil rights and liberties of all people. The ACLU is ready.

This year, with your dedicated support, we made important progress in our fights for reproductive freedom, LGBTQ equality, immigrants' rights, criminal law reform, and free speech. Despite obstacles, we also had a powerful impact on protecting and advancing the right to vote, an effort that's essential to safeguard all our civil liberties.

### **Defending Democracy**

Anti-democratic forces would have us believe that we're stumbling through a minefield of dangers – in the form of inclusive school libraries, transgender kids trying to be themselves, families seeking shelter in the U.S., and other largely illusory threats. A unifying thread has been the threat to democracy itself: partisan and racial gerrymandering, voter suppression, and election denial. Book banning, classroom censorship, and attacks on race-conscious admissions and diversity and inclusion. The criminalization of not only abortion and gender-affirming care but also referrals to neighboring states where these services remain legal.

In 2024, we used every tool we have – litigation, legislation, advocacy, and grassroots mobilization – to fight back against these attacks on equality, autonomy, and liberty. We fought to secure fair and representative maps in states such as Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi. We worked to restore the vote to the millions of Americans deprived of their voting rights by state felony disenfranchisement laws. We challenged voter suppression laws in Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas, and we made good use of state supreme courts to advance voting rights in Montana, Kentucky, and Utah.

*With discipline, fortitude, and a collective vision of a more perfect union, we will carry forward our shared ideals – no matter what challenges we face.*



As we work toward a truly free and equal voting system, we advocated for passage of the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act to restore the critical protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. We helped draft and introduce the Youth Voting Rights Act to expand youth voting access. And we actively engaged in state ballot campaigns in Missouri, Arizona, and Montana to enshrine reproductive rights in state constitutions.

In the two years since the U.S. Supreme Court eliminated the federal right to abortion, we have gone to court in 11 states to block abortion bans. We continued to build our **Abortion Criminal Defense Initiative** to defend reproductive care providers and supporters in states that criminalize abortion. We had significant victories

against state laws attempting to ban gender-affirming health care for youth, and we asked the U.S. Supreme Court to hear our challenges to bans in Tennessee and Kentucky.

We made strides in reforming the criminal legal system, including securing improvements in mental health care in Los Angeles County jails and conditions in Arizona state prisons. We achieved a landmark ruling that made Illinois the first state to abolish cash bail, and we reached a groundbreaking settlement with the Detroit Police Department that achieves the nation's strongest police department policies and practices constraining law enforcement's use of facial recognition technology.

*In 2024, the ACLU participated in more than **30** state court cases spanning **24** states.*



LEFT: ACLU volunteers canvass in Missouri for Amendment 3, which ends the state's total abortion ban. (Photo by Kohar Minassian)

RIGHT: Adriel I. Cepeda Derieux, Deputy Director of ACLU Voting Rights Project, speaks at a rally outside the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, DC. (Photo by Shannon Finney/Getty Images for Rooted Logistics)

## Protecting the Vote

All eyes were on Election Day, and the ACLU spent years preparing for it. In the run-up to the 2024 elections, we laid important groundwork to defend and fortify the vote. Through our **Election Safeguarding Action Plan**, we prepared legal, advocacy, and communications strategies to respond to voter suppression and election subversion on Election Day. We developed rapid-response tools to protect voters from illegal intimidation at polling sites, recruited and mobilized poll monitors, expanded our support for voters at understaffed and overwhelmed voting sites, and engaged in legal intervention to extend voting hours where needed – all critical efforts to ensure that voters could vote safely and fairly.

Through our **Battleground States Initiative**, we invested in 11 key states such as Arizona, Georgia, and Michigan to bolster election infrastructure, fight voter suppression, advance voting policies that expand access for disenfranchised voters, and combat misinformation. In Wisconsin, we boosted voter education and secured additional early voting locations in Milwaukee. In Pennsylvania, we built a network of volunteer activists and watchdogs to advocate for fair election policies in strategic counties. And in Nevada, we helped grow the state's election protection program. In addition, voter education resulted in the election of local candidates who support abortion rights, voting rights, and other critical freedoms.



LEFT: ACLU SoCal mascot at the LA Pride Parade in Hollywood, California. (Photo by Rodin Eckenroth/ Getty Images)

RIGHT: Protesters rally for immigrants' rights at the Texas State Capitol. (Photo by Christopher Lee)

The right to vote remains under siege, especially for people of color and marginalized communities. Together, we continue to play a crucial role in ensuring that every eligible American possible has the right to vote and that all votes are counted.

### **Advocating at the Supreme Court**

At the U.S. Supreme Court this year, we played an important role in several key free speech victories and mitigated the damage of two abortion rights-related rulings. The court unanimously ruled in our favor in *NRA v. Vullo*, in an opinion authored by Justice Sonya Sotomayor, establishing that government attempts to blacklist an advocacy group because of its viewpoint violates the First Amendment. And in a pair of digital free speech cases, the court recognized that government efforts to control the editorial decisions of social media companies are unconstitutional.

In *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v. FDA*, the court rejected anti-abortion groups' request to restrict mifepristone, a safe medication used in most abortions. In its *Idaho and Moyle, et al. v. United States* decision, the court temporarily restored the ability of doctors to provide emergency abortions, but it refused to clearly affirm the right of pregnant people to receive the emergency care they need. The ACLU was friend-of-the-court in both cases, and we will continue to litigate these ongoing efforts to restrict abortion care in the lower courts.

In a deeply disappointing decision that defied decades of precedent, the court allowed South Carolina's racially gerrymandered congressional map to stand, once again denying Black voters fair access to the political process. Pursuing another route to justice, we have since filed suit at the South Carolina Supreme Court, arguing that the skewed map is a partisan gerrymander in violation of the state's constitution.





We filed a friend-of-the-court brief in *Trump v. United States* urging the court to reject the former president’s immunity claims. Unfortunately, the justices disastrously chose to grant presidents the freedom to use their official powers to commit criminal acts without accountability, essentially placing them above the law. As in the past, the ACLU remains primed to challenge presidential overreach in the courts in real time.

### **Pursuing Progress in State Supreme Courts**

Despite the Supreme Court’s enormous influence, state supreme courts often have the power to protect and expand civil liberties beyond what federal law allows. This is why strategic long-term investment in our **State Supreme Court Initiative** is so promising, as we identify cases in state courts where we can advance our core issues.

In the past year, we’ve participated in more than 30 court cases spanning 24 states. We’ve challenged a law in Kansas that blocks transgender people from accessing gender-affirming state IDs. In Pennsylvania, we urged the state supreme court to hold that internet search history data is constitutionally protected.

Together, we faced attacks on the hard-won progress our communities have achieved in recent years. With discipline, fortitude, and a collective vision of a more perfect union, the ACLU will carry forward our shared ideals – no matter what challenges we face. Your unwavering support is crucial to our ability to build on these achievements as we strive for true equality and justice for everyone.

Thank you. |

# Safeguarding the Vote

*The ACLU is defending and expanding voting rights in every state, D.C., and Puerto Rico.*

# VOTING RIGHTS



**BARBARA WELSH**  
Election poll worker, ACLU client

Photo by Michelle Gustafson

Efforts to manipulate who can vote and how they can vote have become increasingly sophisticated and widespread. This past year, the ACLU fought back against anti-voter efforts by blocking racially discriminatory congressional maps, bolstering election infrastructure, and combating voter suppression. We also worked to expand access to the ballot, prepare for illegal voter intimidation at polling sites, and get out the vote, particularly in the South, where the political power of Black voters has historically been minimized.

Buoyed in our voting rights work by the U.S. Supreme Court's redistricting decision in our case *Allen v. Milligan*, which declared Alabama's maps unconstitutional, we continued to litigate

a raft of time-sensitive cases before the election. We struck down racially gerrymandered maps in Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi. Unfortunately, the Supreme Court ruled against our challenge to South Carolina's congressional map, but we are continuing the legal fight to establish a fair map in the state by the 2026 elections. It's imperative that voters get to choose their representatives and not the other way around.

Through our state affiliates, we strengthened the infrastructure of the election process in battleground states. We ensured that key election officials were committed to maintaining fair ballot access and counting all votes, and we encouraged politicians to reject extreme

# ACLU Impact

## FLORIDA

A federal court permanently blocked a provision of Florida's Senate Bill 7050 that undermines community-based organizations performing voter registration and civic engagement.

## LOUISIANA

The U.S. Supreme Court granted an emergency stay in *Robinson v. Callais*, pausing enforcement of a district court's decision to strike down Louisiana's congressional map as a racial gerrymander.

With the stay in place, Louisiana voters were able to cast their ballots in November under the map with two majority-Black districts passed by the state legislature in January.

## MICHIGAN

We filed a lawsuit against a member of the Kalamazoo Board of County Canvassers who publicly indicated his willingness to violate Michigan's Constitution and election law if he disagreed with the results of the presidential election. The lawsuit immediately resulted in a settlement where the defendant signed an affidavit stating that he would certify the November presidential election results.

## MONTANA

The Montana Supreme Court ruled in favor of a collection of Native American organizations and tribes we represent, holding that two state laws that hinder Native American participation in the state's electoral process violate the fundamental right to vote under the Montana Constitution.

## OHIO

A federal court struck down restrictions in Ohio's House Bill 458 that made it a crime for all but a handful of family members to assist voters with disabilities in casting absentee ballots.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

We and the League of Women Voters filed a lawsuit against partisan gerrymandering of South Carolina's congressional districts. We asked the South Carolina Supreme Court to recognize a protection against partisan gerrymandering in the state constitution and to invalidate the existing congressional map.

practices that subvert democracy. We also recruited volunteers in Nevada, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Georgia, and Wisconsin to monitor early voting, Election Day polling locations, and post-election counting and certification.

In the courts, we protected the rights of voters with disabilities in Mississippi and Ohio. We secured a resounding victory for Native American voters in Montana when the state's supreme court struck down two laws – one would have ended Election Day registration and the other would have prohibited paid third-party ballot assistance. And in a major win for community-based organizations that perform civic engagement, we successfully blocked part of a Florida law that barred noncitizens from working or volunteering for third-party voter registration organizations.

**This voting rights work has a powerful impact on individual voters like Barbara Welsh.** An ACLU client and poll worker, Barbara discovered that her provisional ballot was discarded during the 2023 primary elections in the battleground state of Pennsylvania.

Since the spread of the Big Lie about voter fraud in the 2020 election, Pennsylvania has seen a

surge in election lawsuits, unwarranted recount petitions, and efforts to curtail mail-in voting by removing drop boxes and throwing out ballots with simple errors.

Because Barbara was attending a funeral out of state when she was notified that she needed to correct her mail-in ballot, she couldn't make it to her county courthouse to correct it before the deadline. So, she filled out a provisional ballot instead, but soon received notification that it wouldn't be counted. "That was very upsetting, and I didn't know what I could do about it," she said.

Barbara joined the ACLU of Pennsylvania's ongoing lawsuit challenging the county's decision not to count the provisional ballots of voters whose mail-in ballots were canceled because of defects on the outer envelope.

Our commitment to making sure all votes are counted ensures that Barbara's voice, as well as the voices of millions of others, will be heard. "The ACLU is there to protect voting rights," she said, "and I'm extremely grateful." |

*Through our state affiliates, we strengthened the infrastructure of the election process in battleground states.*

# REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM

## Protecting Reproductive Rights

*The ACLU is blocking the criminalization of abortion care.*

The anti-abortion movement continues to capitalize on the U.S. Supreme Court's elimination of the federal right to abortion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. More than 20 states have either banned or curtailed abortion, with disastrous impacts for the 20 million people of reproductive age who live there, and extreme anti-abortion forces are cracking down on access even further. The ACLU is defending pregnant people, providers, and doctors exposed to criminal liability by extreme abortion restrictions, and we're channeling the overwhelming support for abortion rights into political strategies to win them back.

In two high-profile abortion cases before the U.S. Supreme Court last term, the ACLU fought to preserve access to mifepristone and help patients and doctors in Idaho gain a temporary reprieve to resume emergency abortion care.

We also continued to grow our Abortion Criminal Defense Initiative (ACDI) to defend those who face criminal investigation and prosecution related to abortion care. We've built a network of more than 100 experienced criminal defense lawyers across all states that have restricted or banned abortion. And we've provided legal training to abortion providers and advocates around the country to help them mitigate legal risk while maximizing the reproductive health care they provide.



Photo by Bethany Mollenkof

**YASHICA ROBINSON, MD**  
OB-GYN, ACLU client

# ACLU Impact

## ALABAMA

We filed suit in Alabama to prevent the prosecution of reproductive health care providers for helping patients seek out-of-state abortion care.

## IDAHO

We secured an injunction preventing the prosecutions of Idaho physicians who refer patients for abortions in other states where abortion is legal.

## NEVADA

Following our lawsuit, a Nevada state court announced it would order the state to include abortion coverage in its Medicaid program, which will make a tremendous difference in Nevadans' ability to get abortion care.

## OHIO

Our litigation has blocked a series of abortion laws in Ohio, including a six-week ban and a law that delays abortions a minimum of 24 hours after receiving state-mandated information in person.

## TEXAS

We won an important victory on behalf of Lizelle Gonzalez, a Texas woman who was arrested, jailed, and charged with murder after a medication abortion she had in 2022 — even though the district attorney and other officials pursued and obtained what they knew to be an unlawful indictment against her.

This past year, we continued our efforts to block abortion bans around the country, and our litigation currently protects access to care in Ohio, Utah, and Guam. Using new abortion-protective laws passed via recent state ballot victories, we filed lawsuits to expand access to abortion in Michigan, Nevada, and Ohio. The ACLU was actively engaged in ballot initiative efforts to enshrine reproductive rights in the state constitutions of Missouri, Arizona, and Montana. And we secured positive rulings in our litigation in Idaho and Alabama challenging attempts to prevent people who live in states with bans from traveling outside their home state to seek legal abortion care.

Through our first-of-its-kind lawsuit, we blocked a de facto ban on freestanding birth centers in Alabama. Among those impacted by this important victory is the Huntsville-based Alabama Birth Center founded by **ACLU client Yashica Robinson, MD, a longtime ob-gyn and one of the few remaining abortion providers in the state before *Dobbs*.**

Robinson described her frustration with Alabama's near-total abortion ban and the numerous maternity ward closures around the state:

"It infuriates me that politicians are the ones making these decisions. There are many areas in

Alabama that are maternity-care deserts, which means there's no one to provide pregnancy care. With birth centers, you can have more providers available to patients, especially in places where there's already a lack of providers. There are legislative hurdles we've had to overcome, and that has slowed our progress down. It puts financial stressors on the birth center and our ability to open our doors and start serving our community."

States with abortion restrictions often have failing health care systems.

Alabama has the third-worst maternal and infant mortality rates in the country, and the state has banned abortion, forcing more women into unwanted pregnancies. Black women and Black infants make up a disproportionate number of deaths in the state, many of them preventable — Black infants die at twice the rate of white infants in Alabama. Patient-centered birth centers like Robinson's offer a crucial lifeline for pregnant people, especially those from marginalized populations. |

To learn more about the ACIDI and how to seek legal representation for prosecution related to abortion care, visit [aclu.org/acidi](https://aclu.org/acidi).

*We've built a network of more than 100 experienced criminal defense lawyers across all states that have restricted or banned abortion.*

# Defending Free Speech

*The ACLU is preserving the fundamental rights of all to speak, learn, protest, and assemble freely.*

Our democracy depends on the robust protection of free speech. But freedom of speech has been under increasing attack around the country. Teenage activists like Hayden Kirby, who joined our lawsuit challenging a censorship law in Arkansas, are committed to protecting the First Amendment because it impacts all other rights.

This past year, the ACLU defended freedom of expression in courts, in statehouses, and on campuses. Amid intense scrutiny and targeting of protesters by colleges and government officials, we defended the University of Florida chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) against an effort by the Chancellor of the State University System to deactivate the student group on campuses. Florida officials backed down on their intention to deactivate the Florida chapters of SJP after we filed suit.

We also ensured that Americans can access information in the digital space, the press can do its job, and platforms can operate without censorship. At the U.S. Supreme Court, we successfully defended the right of organizations to advocate for causes without being blacklisted by the government for their political views. We also weighed in on important cases in which the court clarified that states cannot regulate the content of private social media platforms because politicians believe the platforms' editorial choices are biased, and that local officials who block constituents on social media are subject to the First Amendment.

Through our Right to Learn campaign, we continue to challenge classroom censorship by fighting efforts to punish – and even criminalize – librarians and exclude students of marginalized groups. Backed by our dedicated supporters, we fiercely defended the freedom of everyone, including students like Hayden, to learn, speak, and assemble however they wish.

**For student-activist Hayden Kirby, fighting censorship meant joining our lawsuit to defend libraries and librarians in her home state:**

“My love of books started early in life. Every Christmas, my grandmother, a librarian, would give me a book – almost always an award-winning one that challenged me. I’m an independent thinker in part because of my early exposure to books. As I have grown over the years, books and libraries have served as safe havens. I came to appreciate that libraries are not only repositories of books but also spaces where people can gather in community.

Arkansas’s Act 372 would dramatically change the way children think, learn, and grow. Kids would not be allowed to access books in the library that were considered too adult or mature. The librarians who take care of them would be prosecuted for allowing them to check out these books, and what’s considered too mature would be determined by adults the kids don’t even know.

*“Without books, without libraries, our system of government is threatened.”*

# FREEDOM OF SPEECH

## HAYDEN KIRBY

ACLU client

I learned that there were two things I could do to help. The first was to give the ACLU my deposition: ‘I am 17 years old, I love my library, and I don’t believe that a government official, librarian, other parents, or other person has the right to dictate what I can read.’ The second was to be willing to defend my stance against those who would try to take away my rights.

I have known for a long time that our freedoms and our democracy are fragile. Without books, without libraries, our system of government is threatened. I’m honored to be part of the ACLU’s lawsuit to defend the Central Arkansas Library System and librarians in our state. Advocating for our freedoms and being proactive in defense of democracy should be every American’s highest calling. I know that it is mine.” |

You can join the ACLU’s fight for students’ right to learn at [aclu.org/righttolearn](https://aclu.org/righttolearn).



Photo by Andrea Morales

## ACLU Impact

### LOUISIANA

We saw a crucial win for the First Amendment right to protest when a federal district court ruled in favor of DeRay Mckesson, a prominent civil rights activist and Black Lives Matter organizer. The court determined that a protest leader cannot be held legally responsible for injuries inflicted by another person’s violent act at the protest when it is undisputed that the leader didn’t intend for that violence to occur.

### IDAHO

A federal court ruled that Idaho officials may not enforce the state’s No Public Funds for Abortion Act — a law that makes it a crime to use public funds to promote or counsel in favor of abortion — against public university professors.

### NEW HAMPSHIRE

We won a federal court ruling finding the state’s classroom censorship law — which actively discouraged public school teachers from teaching and talking about race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and gender identity — unconstitutional.

### TEXAS

We filed a friend-of-the-court brief urging a federal appeals court to block government officials from removing books from public libraries to suppress certain viewpoints.

# LGBTQ RIGHTS

## Fighting for the LGBTQ Community

*The ACLU is defending LGBTQ rights against attacks on gender-affirming health care, freedom of expression, and personal autonomy.*

Like many recent high school graduates, Hobbes Chukumba headed off to college this year. A sharp, curious teenager, he is excited for this next phase of his life. But as a transgender person, his right to exist in the world as his authentic self is still being challenged.

Political attacks against LGBTQ people are growing. In the past year, state legislatures around the country have introduced more than 500 anti-LGBTQ bills, many of them targeting gender-affirming health care for transgender people, which is now banned in 24 states. This year, with the help of our supporters and allies, we fought back against discriminatory assaults on health care and free expression, censorship in schools, and barriers to accurate identification and sex-segregated spaces.

We blocked bans on gender-affirming health care for youth in nine states. Some have since been allowed to take effect on appeal, and we will continue to fight them in court. In *L. W. v. Skrametti*, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear our challenge to a ban on gender-affirming care for trans youth in Tennessee, with a ruling expected in 2025.

This past year, we successfully blocked drag bans and defended pride events. We fought anti-

LGBTQ discrimination in the criminal legal system to ensure that queer and transgender people who are incarcerated have access to essential medical care. Through our nationwide tracking system for anti-LGBTQ bills, we highlight the scope of these attacks and provide actions that supporters can take to defend the freedom, safety, and dignity of LGBTQ people and families.

Alongside our litigation, we launched the Freedom to Be campaign to emphasize the joy, strength, and community of trans people like Hobbes and their families.

**Hobbes Chukumba, who helped organize the successful Trans Prom in Washington, D.C., last year, shared the importance of his family's support and his excitement about the future:**

"I feel quite lucky. I've been able to fully embrace myself because I'm surrounded by people who show me unconditional positive regard. I'm able to feel comfortable in my identity and confident in the way I express myself.

My relationship with my family is like a tight-knit, fuzzy sweater. It's warm, it's cozy, it's

*"When I think about the freedom to be Hobbes, I feel excited for what I have in my future."*



## ACLU Impact

### MISSISSIPPI

We filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights against Harrison County School District for implementing a dress code policy that perpetuates harmful stereotypes and discriminates against girls, especially students who are transgender or gender nonconforming.

### NORTH CAROLINA

In March, we reached a settlement in a case brought by parents and students who challenged a North Carolina public charter school's "skirts only" rule for girls, which the school says it adopted based on the belief that every girl is a "fragile vessel" and to promote "chivalry."

### SOUTH CAROLINA

We're suing South Carolina to block enforcement of its ban on gender-affirming care, which threatens to deny transgender people of all ages access to necessary medical care.

### WEST VIRGINIA

We won an appeals court ruling for our client Becky Pepper-Jackson, a 13-year-old trans girl and middle school athlete who asked the court to order West Virginia to let her participate on the girls' track and cross-country teams.

well put together. You can tell that a lot of effort has been put into making it exactly what it is today. Having a supportive family helps me focus on my goals. I feel more productive and successful because I don't need to constantly worry about whether I can be accepted.

I want to use my story to inspire other people, to show them that there are people out there who will absolutely support, encourage, and love them no matter what their situation is. Everyone should be able to feel confident, like they can turn their attention to other things in life as opposed to just worrying about how they look, who they are, and how people feel around them. I want them to know that there are people out there who are constantly, constantly fighting for them.

When I think about where my life is going to take me, I'm excited to see what else I can accomplish, what else I can strive to become. I want to travel a lot. I want to meet new people. I want to learn as much as I can, because I can use that to help other people. When I think about the freedom to be Hobbes, I feel excited for what I have in my future. The freedom to be me is the freedom to be joyful." |

Learn more about the Freedom to Be campaign at [aclu.org/freedomtobe](https://aclu.org/freedomtobe).

### HOBBS CHUKUMBA

Freedom to Be storyteller



Photo by Aundre Larrow

# Championing the Rights of Immigrants

*The ACLU is fighting to reunite families and stop the abuses of immigration enforcement and detention.*

This year, we continued to play a critical, lifesaving role for thousands of migrants seeking safety in the United States — people like Jessica Barahona-Martinez, an asylum seeker who was unlawfully detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for more than six years until the ACLU helped achieve her release.

Extreme anti-immigrant rhetoric has driven a wave of laws intended to frighten and destabilize immigrant communities. In response, we've used strategic litigation and advocacy to protect due process for immigrants and block severe anti-immigrant laws and policies.

In December 2023, the court approved a historic settlement in our years-long class-action lawsuit *Ms. L v. ICE* on behalf of thousands of traumatized families illegally separated at the border by the Trump administration. Since then, we've focused on enforcing the agreement to ensure that the families affected

receive the benefits promised to them, including work authorization, housing and legal assistance, and medical services. Further, we're pushing the government to continue to identify and reunite families, fund their reunification in the United States, and provide a pathway for them to seek asylum here.

This year, we temporarily blocked laws in Texas, Iowa, and Oklahoma that would have permitted local and state law enforcement to arrest, detain, and remove people even if they are pursuing asylum or have lawful immigration status.

We released two key reports: One exposes the ways in which the Department of Homeland Security has failed to investigate or improve conditions that can cause immigrants to die in ICE detention, and the other documents how inhumane policies allow

*We've used strategic litigation and advocacy to protect due process for immigrants and block severe anti-immigrant laws and policies.*

**JESSICA BARAHONA-MARTINEZ**  
ACLU client



Photo by Carlos Bernate

widespread confiscation of migrants' personal belongings by Customs and Border Protection (CBP). Thanks to our advocacy, CBP published a groundbreaking new directive to curb the longstanding inconsistencies and abuses when handling migrants' belongings.

We also continued our work on behalf of more than 35,000 people housed in often-remote ICE detention facilities, aiming to reduce the number of people held there, to improve the conditions of their confinement, and to close as many facilities as possible.

**ACLU client Jessica Barahona-Martinez, a single mother and queer asylum seeker from El Salvador, shared the devastating toll that prolonged ICE detention had on her and her family:**

"In 2016, I came to the U.S. with my three children in search of safety after experiencing violence and persecution by the police in my home country. I applied for asylum, and I remember feeling a sigh of relief when I arrived in the U.S. But what I thought was the land of

opportunity and protection soon became a prison.

Even though my asylum case was still pending, I was arrested by ICE and ripped away from my children and family. I spent over six years total in ICE detention. Six years of being denied my humanity and treated like an animal. Six years of missed birthdays, graduations, and other life events. When my sister was dying of cancer, I wasn't even given the chance to say goodbye. It isn't right. People in ICE detention suffer so much – emotionally, psychologically, physically. It wasn't until I was contacted by a lawyer at the ACLU that I was able to get the help I needed.

During my detention, I felt like I didn't have a voice. But today, now that I am back with my family in Virginia, I am speaking for people who can't be here, for those still in detention or who have been deported. Immigrants are mothers, sisters, friends, and so much more. We deserve to be met with a welcome, not detention." |

*Learn more about Jessica's story at [aclu.org/jessica-barahona-martinez](https://aclu.org/jessica-barahona-martinez).*

# IMMIGRANTS' RIGHTS

## ACLU Impact

### FLORIDA

A federal court blocked a provision of Florida's brutal anti-immigrant law that threatened people in the state with jail time for doing regular things like going to work and visiting family.

### LOUISIANA

We and our partners released a new report documenting widespread abuse and inhumane treatment at nine immigration detention facilities across Louisiana.

### OKLAHOMA

A federal court temporarily blocked an Oklahoma law that would bypass federal law to regulate immigration at the state level, causing devastating consequences for immigrant communities.

### TEXAS

We're continuing to challenge Texas Senate Bill 4, the most extreme anti-immigration law passed by any state legislature in the country, which would permit local and state law enforcement and magistrates to

arrest, detain, and remove people they suspect have entered Texas from another country without federal authorization.

### NATIONWIDE

We're suing the Biden administration over executive actions that severely restrict asylum and put thousands of lives at risk. These actions follow the approach of the Trump administration's previous asylum entry ban, which we successfully challenged in court.

# CRIMINAL LAW REFORM

## Reforming the Criminal Legal System

*The ACLU is working to end the use of facial recognition technology by law enforcement and is pursuing crucial criminal law reforms.*

The ACLU remains at the forefront of the national movement to reform our broken criminal legal system and end mass incarceration. In 2024, we worked to block regressive legislation rooted in racial injustice, combat the criminalization of poverty, enact supervision reform, and reduce the role of police – while catalyzing more effective, equitable, and community-driven approaches to public safety. We also published a report on the widespread mistreatment of the LGBTQ community by law enforcement.

Our settlement in *Williams v. City of Detroit* resulted in some of the nation’s strongest policies constraining the use of facial recognition technology (FRT) by local police. The groundbreaking agreement will lower the likelihood of wrongful arrests, especially for people of color and women. Among other things, it prohibits the police from arresting people based solely on FRT results and requires training on the technology’s risks and dangers. The agreement could serve as a model for police departments around the country as we continue our wide-ranging efforts to expose FRT’s flaws.

**ACLU client Robert Williams is just one of several Black people ensnared by this dangerous technology. He described the**

**terrible impact on his family when he was wrongfully arrested based on FRT results:**

“I never thought I would be a cautionary tale. I never thought I’d have to explain to my daughters why their daddy got arrested in front of them on our front lawn. How does one explain that a computer got it wrong but the police listened to it anyway – even if that meant arresting me for a crime I didn’t commit? The Detroit Police Department’s abuse of facial recognition technology upended my life.

I was handcuffed and taken to the Detroit Detention Center. I spent the night sleeping on the cold concrete floor of a filthy, overcrowded cell next to an overflowing trash can. No one came to talk to me or explain what I was accused of – or why. As any other person would be, I was confused, scared – and yes, angry. And as any other Black man would, I had to consider what could happen if I asked too many questions or displayed my anger openly.

I eventually got more information after the ACLU of Michigan connected me with a defense attorney. Someone had stolen watches, and

*Our settlement in Williams v. City of Detroit resulted in some of the nation’s strongest policies constraining the use of facial recognition technology by local police.*

# ACLU Impact

## GEORGIA

We reached a settlement in a lawsuit against the Fulton County district attorney’s office to reduce pretrial detention at the county jail.

## NEW JERSEY

We filed an amicus brief in support of Nijeer Parks, a Black man who was wrongfully arrested in 2019 following police reliance on a false match made by face recognition technology.

## TENNESSEE

We’re challenging Tennessee’s unprecedented law that prohibits judges from considering one’s ability to pay when setting bail. This law will leave those who cannot afford to pay their bail detained indefinitely and make our communities less safe.

## TEXAS

We filed a class-action lawsuit on behalf of people jailed without lawyers in Travis County to affirm the constitutional right to counsel at first appearance.

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

We filed a federal class-action lawsuit against the two federal agencies that administer parole and supervised release in D.C. for systematically failing to provide accommodations to people with disabilities on supervision, as required by federal law.

the store owner provided surveillance footage to the Detroit Police Department. They sent a blurry, shadowy image from that footage to the Michigan State Police, who then ran it through their facial recognition system. That system incorrectly matched a photograph of me pulled from an old driver’s license picture with the surveillance image. I’ve since learned that federal studies have shown that facial recognition systems misidentify Asian and Black people up to 100 times more often than white men.

Lawyers at the ACLU and the University of Michigan filed a lawsuit against the police department on my behalf. Winning that case can’t undo the damage to me and my family, but my daughters can see me use this experience to bring some good into the world. That means helping make sure they don’t grow up in a world where their driver’s licenses or Facebook photos could be used to target, track, or harm them.

What happened to me could have happened to anyone. At least with this settlement, it will be far less likely to happen again to another person in Detroit. That’s why I brought the case with the ACLU, and it’s why Congress should stop law enforcement from using facial recognition technology.” |

**ROBERT WILLIAMS**  
ACLU client



Photo by Drew English

# ACLU COMMUNITY

## Introducing Our New National Legal Director

*A renowned litigator who has argued before the U.S. Supreme Court, ACLU veteran attorney Cecillia Wang will be the first woman and woman of color in this role.*



**CECILLIA WANG**  
ACLU National Legal Director

The ACLU is thrilled to share that after a nationwide search, we have appointed our very own Cecillia Wang as our new National Legal Director. Cecillia succeeds David Cole, who left the ACLU after seven years to return to a teaching position at Georgetown Law.

Through a rigorous selection process, it was clear that Cecillia is the best candidate to provide the strategic leadership needed to navigate a litigation program in the context of an increasingly hostile federal court system.

Cecillia has been with the ACLU for more than 20 years, most recently serving as a deputy legal director. She started her career at the ACLU as a fellow in the Immigrants' Rights Project. Years later, she returned to the national office in the Immigrants' Rights Project – moving up from staff attorney to senior staff attorney to managing attorney to director of the project – before assuming the role of deputy legal director in 2016.

“In my two decades as an ACLU lawyer, I have worked with colleagues and allies to defend and advance freedom, equality, fairness, and the principle that the government is accountable to the people,” says Cecillia. “As the daughter of immigrants, I am keenly aware that we build on the sacrifices and investments of generations of people who precede us in this work. I have both the great responsibility to carry the work forward and the great joy of doing so in community with an extraordinary nationwide organization.”

Cecillia played a key role in our legal battles with the Trump administration, including challenging Trump's 2017 Muslim ban and use of military funds to construct a wall between the U.S. and Mexico. In 2018, she argued before the Supreme Court to end a draconian interpretation of immigration detention statute. Under her leadership, we also fought to end Trump's family separation policy and block the Trump administration from placing a citizenship question on the 2020 census.

We are so proud that Cecillia is the first woman and the first woman of color to become the ACLU's National Legal Director. There's no one better to serve as our next legal director at this time of great uncertainty for our country and our rights. |

*“As the daughter of immigrants, I am keenly aware that we build on the sacrifices and investments of generations of people who precede us in this work.”*



**BETSY CLARKE**

ACLU donor

## Donor Betsy Clarke Is Fueling the Fight

*Concerned about the country's growing division, the former therapist turns to volunteering, family, and the ACLU.*

In her 20-year career as a psychotherapist, Betsy Clarke managed to maintain a positive outlook. “I helped people out of terrible situations,” she recalls. “I could always see a way out.” But the current polarized political environment, she confesses, is deeply troubling. “We’ve never been so divided.”

The therapy she prescribes for herself includes golfing, regular trips to New York for theater and opera, enjoying her two young grandchildren, and as much volunteer political activity as she can fit in her day – whether it’s phone banking, writing postcards, or distributing lawn signs in her suburban New Jersey neighborhood.

“When I hear what the ACLU is doing, my blood pressure goes down a little bit,” says Betsy. “I love that they have attorneys at the ready to take on the bullies.”

She’s particularly incensed at the movement to defund public education and shift those dollars to religious institutions. “I want to see clear church–state separation, especially now.

It seems like we could go backward on rights for women, LGBTQ rights.”

Giving to the ACLU assures her that the fight will continue. “I used to give intermittently, but the idea of a donor-advised fund was attractive,” says Betsy, who has also put the ACLU in her will. A donor-advised fund can accept cash and appreciated securities, as well as other assets that the ACLU may not be able to accept as a direct gift, and donors can distribute the funds at their own pace.

“The tax advantage makes my financial adviser happy, and I get a pot of money to do with as I see fit. It’s just easier than dashing to write checks in December.”

When choosing where to give, Betsy says, “It’s important to see impact. I think the ACLU does a good job of that. You don’t always have to agree with them, but you can see why they’re doing it.” |

Learn more about giving via a donor-advised fund at [aclu.org/daf](https://aclu.org/daf).

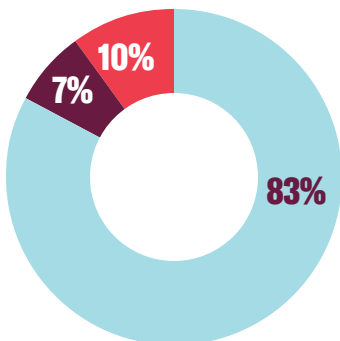
*“When I hear what the ACLU is doing, my blood pressure goes down a little bit.”*

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The ACLU is composed of two organizations: the American Civil Liberties Union (the 501(c)(4) arm), whose focus is legislative work at the federal and state levels, and the ACLU Foundation (the 501(c)(3) arm), whose focus is litigation and public education. Following is the financial summary for the American Civil Liberties Union, the ACLU Foundation, and consolidated entities (page 22), as well as the ACLU Foundation and subsidiary (page 23), for the years ending March 31, 2024, and March 31, 2023. The accounts and activities of ACLU affiliates are not included in these financial statements.

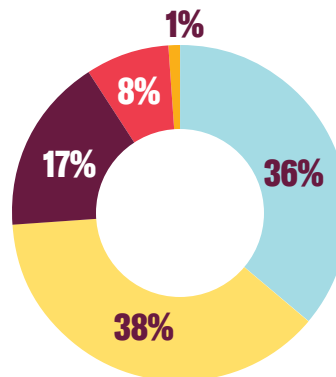
## American Civil Liberties Union, ACLU Foundation & Consolidated Entities

	FY2024	FY2023
<b>Support &amp; Revenue</b>		
Grants & Contributions	\$268,466,663	\$288,051,797
Donated Legal Services	39,504,757	39,375,260
Bequests	47,040,000	41,595,000
Other Revenue	2,078,227	4,648,786
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>	<b>\$357,089,647</b>	<b>\$373,670,843</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Program Services:		
Legislative	26,973,666	27,428,497
Legal	120,598,711	120,492,584
Public Education	54,409,676	60,593,666
Civil Liberties Policy Formulation	3,096,907	2,602,655
Affiliate Support	114,516,961	134,314,916
Total Program Services	319,595,921	345,432,318
Supporting Services:		
Management & General	27,964,608	23,161,133
Fundraising	35,971,555	32,577,825
Total Supporting Services	63,936,163	55,738,958
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>383,532,084</b>	<b>401,171,276</b>
Change in Net Assets Before Other Changes	(26,442,437)	(27,500,433)
<b>Other Changes in Net Assets</b>		
Net Legal Expenses Awarded	7,009,067	5,073,338
Net Investment Income, Gains & Losses	76,447,648	(33,501,114)
Changes in Value of Split-Interest Agreements	(2,267,843)	285,936
Recognition of Affiliates' Share of Pension Liability	1,938,722	2,375,382
Other Components of Post-Retirement Benefit Cost	(227,242)	8,207,647
<b>TOTAL OTHER CHANGES IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>82,900,352</b>	<b>(17,558,811)</b>
Change in Net Assets	56,457,915	(45,059,244)
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Beginning	779,755,920	824,815,164
Ending	\$836,213,835	\$779,755,920



### Our efficiency

- Total Program Services
- Management and General
- Fundraising



### Program services

- Affiliate Support
- Legal
- Public Education
- Legislative
- Civil Liberties Policy Formulation

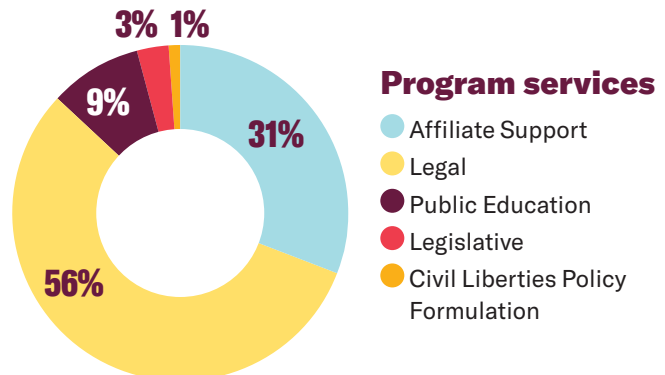
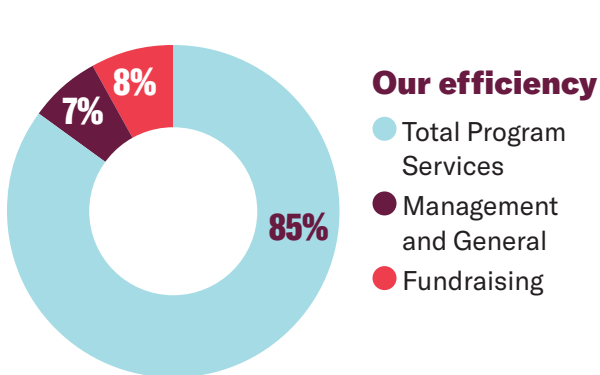


# ACLU Foundation & Subsidiary

	FY2024	FY2023
<b>Support &amp; Revenue</b>		
Grants & Contributions	\$134,949,991	\$157,459,541
Donated Legal Services	39,504,757	39,375,260
Bequests	34,152,506	26,737,914
Other Revenue	1,808,596	3,694,322
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>	<b>\$210,415,850</b>	<b>\$227,267,037</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Program Services:		
Legislative	5,236,621	3,111,576
Legal	115,362,727	113,835,681
Public Education	19,065,039	19,899,907
Civil Liberties Policy Formulation	1,804,609	1,358,241
Affiliate Support	62,715,827	55,363,802
Total Program Services	204,184,823	193,569,207
Supporting Services:		
Management & General	16,845,866	12,746,050
Fundraising	18,868,836	19,684,099
Total Supporting Services	35,714,702	32,430,149
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>239,899,525</b>	<b>225,999,356</b>
Change in Net Assets Before Other Changes	(29,483,675)	1,267,681
<b>Other Changes in Net Assets</b>		
Net Legal Expenses Awarded	7,009,067	5,073,338
Net Investment Income, Gains & Losses	64,828,186	(27,822,650)
Changes in Value of Split-Interest Agreements	(2,267,843)	285,936
Other Components of Post-Retirement Benefit Cost	(76,645)	2,534,764
<b>TOTAL OTHER CHANGES IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>69,492,765</b>	<b>(19,928,612)</b>
Change in Net Assets	\$40,009,090	\$18,660,931
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Beginning	640,103,105	658,764,036
Ending	\$680,112,195	\$640,103,105

ACLU Foundation has a four-star Charity Navigator rating, meets the highest standards of the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance, and has been awarded the Platinum Seal of Transparency on Candid.



# How You Can Help

The ACLU works in courts, legislatures, and communities to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties guaranteed to all people in this country by the Constitution and the laws of the United States. Join us as we continue the fight for the principles of equality, justice, liberty, and democracy.

## How to Make a Gift

You can defend and advance civil liberties by donating to either the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) or the ACLU Foundation. Gifts to the ACLU support our legislative work at the federal and local level and are not tax deductible. Gifts to the Foundation are tax deductible and support our litigation, communications, and public education efforts.

Learn more at [aclu.org/donate](https://aclu.org/donate).

### To give by mail:

Please make a check payable to the American Civil Liberties Union or the ACLU Foundation and send to:

ACLU Office of Leadership Gifts  
125 Broad Street, 18th Floor  
New York, NY 10004

### To make a gift of stock:

Please visit [aclu.org/gifts-stock](https://aclu.org/gifts-stock)

For more information about supporting the ACLU through your will, trust, or retirement plan, please contact our Gift Planning Office at (877) 867-1025 or [legacy@aclu.org](mailto:legacy@aclu.org), or visit [aclu.org/legacy](https://aclu.org/legacy).

## Get Involved

People Power is the ACLU's platform for grassroots action. By mobilizing in defense of our civil liberties, volunteers build and strengthen local communities that affirm our American values of respect, equality, and solidarity.

Get involved with People Power in your area by visiting [peoplepower.org](https://peoplepower.org).

## Join the Conversation

   [aclu](https://aclu.org)

 [aclu\\_nationwide](https://www.instagram.com/aclu_nationwide)

 [aclu.org/shop](https://aclu.org/shop)



(866)  
**OUR  
VOTE**

**AGLU  
TX**

**WE  
CHOOSE  
OUR FUTURE**

**17004  
ESCAPE**

**ESSENCE  
MUSIC FESTIVAL  
NEW ORLEANS, LA 7/15-17**

Photo by Right Time Solutions  
Cover photo by Sahab Zaribaf/Middle East Images/AFP via Getty Images

# We the People

insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common Defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

## Article. 1.

Section. 1. All legislative Powers herein granted, shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

Section. 2. The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, in each State shall have <sup>at least one</sup> Representative, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, and seven Years, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, who in each State shall be allowed one third Part of their Number, not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons.

The actual Enumeration shall be made within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall direct by Law, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall direct by Law, but each State shall have at least one Representative; and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

When vacancies happen in the Representation from any State, the Executive thereof shall issue writs of Election to fill such Vacancies.

The House of Representatives shall choose their Speaker and other Officers, and shall have the sole Power of Impeachment.

Section. 3. The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof, for a Term of six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote.

Immediately after they shall be assembled in Consequence of the first Meeting of the Senate, they shall choose one of their Number to be President of the Senate, (who shall not be chosen if he shall be an Elector in any of the States) and when he shall have expired his Office they shall choose another in the Manner aforesaid.

The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, and shall hold Office for a Term of four Years; and when he shall have expired his Office they shall choose another in the Manner aforesaid.

The Senate shall choose their other Officers, and also a President pro tempore, in the Absence of the Vice President, whenever he shall temporarily be unable to discharge the Duties of that Office.

**ACLU**

125 Broad Street, 18th Floor  
New York, NY 10004  
[aclu.org](http://aclu.org)