

ACLU
SoCal



2025

IMPACT *Report*

Your Philanthropy in Action



I am deeply honored to take the helm of the ACLU SoCal at this critical time. Thanks to your generous partnership, we are at the forefront of the fight against authoritarianism in our country. From our ongoing lawsuit challenging ICE raids in our region, to our recent victory affirming the First Amendment rights of journalists and protestors, to our win against book banning in Huntington Beach, your support enables our defense of fundamental rights protected by our Constitution.

This brief report describes just a few of our local wins. Your philanthropy has also enabled our ACLU colleagues across the nation to halt Trump's attacks on birthright citizenship and voting rights, block the cancellation of billions of dollars in health research grants, challenge the dismantling of Head Start, and so much more.

We know we won't win every single lawsuit, but we're already having a significant impact. Every legal victory, large or small, helps people—often many thousands of people—while creating positive momentum for the protection of civil rights and civil liberties. Our legislative advocacy and organizing—such as securing state and local sanctuary laws—also remain vital tools in the effort to safeguard our communities.

I hope this report makes you proud of what your partnership has accomplished and inspires you to deepen your investment. Together, I'm confident we can preserve our democracy and advance our collective vision of freedom and justice.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CSB'.

Chandra S. Bhatnagar

Executive Director, ACLU of Southern California

Challenging Unlawful Immigration Raids

In July, ACLU SoCal and partners sued ICE to challenge the immigration raids terrorizing our region. Armed agents had disappeared 1,500+ people since June—often violently, without warrants, and based on illegal racial profiling. ICE was then holding people in a dungeon-like basement and denying them access to counsel. We quickly secured court orders blocking racial profiling and requiring attorney access. The Supreme Court has paused our win on racial profiling, but our lawsuit is ongoing and we will continue fighting to protect our communities.



Fighting for Affordable Housing for All Californians

ACLU SoCal has long been dedicated to ending the criminalization of homelessness, increasing affordable housing investments, and winning a fundamental right to housing. Our bill, the California Housing Justice Act (AB 1165, Gipson), would create a permanent state funding source adequate to ensure that every Californian has a safe, stable, and affordable home.

Defending the First Amendment Rights of Journalists and Protestors

In June, we sued the federal government for violently targeting protestors, journalists, and legal observers during protests against immigration raids. Our clients include a reporter shot in the head with a tear-gas canister while filming a protest, then injured again the next day when immigration agents targeted journalists with pepper balls. In September, we won a court order prohibiting federal agents from brutalizing press and legal observers during protests—an important affirmation of free speech. We hope for further victories in this ongoing lawsuit.



Defending the Rights of Trans Californians

ACLU SoCal is on the front lines of defending our trans community from ongoing attacks at the federal, state, and local levels. In 2025, we helped defeat state bills that would further marginalize trans incarcerated people and trans students, created “Know Your Rights” materials and led trainings in the wake of Trump’s anti-trans executive orders, and advised policymakers and coalition partners on how to respond to new Supreme Court rulings on gender-affirming care and school curricula.

Safeguarding Voting Rights

In March, California Republican Congressman Darrell Issa sued the state in a blatant attempt to make it harder to vote by mail. Issa’s lawsuit is an attempt to stop California’s practice of counting ballots received up to a week after Election Day as long as they were mailed on time. ACLU SoCal is representing the League of Women Voters, which has thousands of members across the state who rely on mail-in ballots.

Protecting California's Immigrant Students

Amid the Trump administration’s assaults on immigrants, we’re defending the rights and safety of California’s immigrant students—empowering students, parents, educators, and policymakers with rights trainings, model sanctuary policies, and tools for advocating in their school districts. For example, we’ve partnered with a Riverside County school district to provide “Know Your Rights” trainings to hundreds of immigrant families, and in Long Beach, the school district voted to adopt key elements of our model policy.

Holding Orange County Jails Accountable for Abuses

After seven years of litigation, we settled *P.E.O.P.L.E. v. Rauckaukas*, our case against the Orange County D.A. and Sheriff challenging their unconstitutional jailhouse informant practices. For 30 years, Orange County secretly placed informants in jail cells with defendants, paying and rewarding them for extracting information without lawyers present. Some informants used threats of violence—including murder—to coerce confessions. As a result of our litigation and a federal DOJ case, the county overhauled its practices.

Blocking a Huntington Beach Library Book Ban

In early September, we won a lawsuit against a Huntington Beach library policy that restricted young people from accessing books on gender, sexual orientation, reproduction, and even basic biology. The banned books included the picture book *Everyone Poops* and the science text *The Way We Work: Getting to Know the Amazing Human Body*. The judge agreed with us that Huntington Beach’s book ban violated the California Constitution and the California Freedom to Read Act, an anti-censorship law we helped pass.

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ACLU SoCal's partnerships with lawyers and law firms that co-counsel our cases on a pro bono basis expand our capacity and deepen our impact. They collaborate with ACLU SoCal staff to conduct legal research and develop strategies, file critical impact litigation, and provide other generous support.

The following lawyers and law firms donated their time and expertise in FY24-25. We deeply appreciate your partnership and your commitment to our shared principles.

Alexander Morrison + Fehr LLP	Hoq Law	O'Melveny & Myers LLP
Allen Matkins	Hueston Hennigan LLP	Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP
Altshuler Berzon LLP	Irell & Manella LLP	Outten & Golden LLP
Arnold & Porter	Jenner & Block LLP	Paul Hastings LLP
Ballard Spahr LLP	Kaye McLane Bednarski & Litt LLP	Perkins Coie LLP
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Feigen Law Group	Milbank LLP	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP
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Greenberg Glusker LLP	Morrison Foerster	Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP
Gregory Schetina	Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP	
Hadsell Stormer Renick & Dai LLP	Nixon Peabody LLP	

Your 2024-2025 Investment

Thank you to our philanthropic partners whose investments impact millions of people in Southern California and across the country. The summaries below show financial figures reported on an accrual basis. Aligned with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, our revenue includes in-kind contributions and legal services provided by our pro bono law firm partners. In FY24-25, the \$13,857,743 we reported in combined in-kind revenue was reflected in both revenue and expenses for a total net change of zero.

Find full audited financial statements, when issued, at aclusocal.org/financials.

ACLU FOUNDATION OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

\$28,339,314 SUPPORT & REVENUE (100%) TOTAL REVENUE		
49%	In-Kind Contributions and Legal Services	\$13,857,125
28%	Individual Contributions	\$7,869,613
6%	Investment Income and Other	\$1,636,658
9%	Grant Revenue ¹	\$2,422,405
3%	Court Awarded Fees	\$797,983
5%	Bequests	\$1,555,361
1%	Events	\$329,558
0%	Rental Income	-\$129,389

¹ Grants awarded to the ACLU Foundation are restricted and earmarked for specific purposes and time periods.

\$26,388,138 EXPENSES (100%) TOTAL EXPENSES		
24%	Criminal Justice	\$6,420,230
17%	Immigrants' Rights	\$4,437,664
13%	Police Practices	\$3,477,069
14%	Economic Justice	\$3,666,486
5%	First Amendment and Democracy	\$1,348,362
4%	Gender, Sexuality and Reproductive Justice	\$1,170,061
3%	Education Equity	\$786,450
<1%	Activist Engagement and Development	\$99,696
12%	Administrative	\$3,314,342
6%	Philanthropy	\$1,667,778

ACLU OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

\$5,651,407 SUPPORT & REVENUE (100%) TOTAL REVENUE		
61%	Membership Contributions	\$3,474,875
6%	Investment Income and Other	\$342,009
17%	Bequests	\$973,921
5%	Events	\$284,469
5%	Individual Contributions	\$291,821
<1%	In-Kind Contributions and Legal Services	\$618
5%	Grant Revenue	\$283,694

\$4,653,058 EXPENSES (100%) TOTAL EXPENSES		
23%	Activist Engagement and Development	\$1,080,748
13%	Economic Justice	\$589,910
11%	Criminal Justice	\$514,354
4%	Education Equity	\$189,896
5%	Gender, Sexuality and Reproductive Justice	\$225,463
3%	Police Practices	\$184,557
3%	Immigrants' Rights	\$145,792
3%	First Amendment and Democracy	\$119,432
23%	Administrative	\$1,080,871
11%	Philanthropy	\$522,035