



ACLU
SoCal

2026
IMPACT
REPORT

YOUR PHILANTHROPY *in Action*



Dear Friend,

Thank you for showing up generously through a momentous year for the ACLU SoCal. From championing immigrants' rights to protecting the right to vote, your partnership allowed us to defend and protect our communities in the face of rising authoritarianism. This report covers a fraction of the civil rights and civil liberties victories we achieved together in the last year.

Since January 2025, the ACLU has filed 428 lawsuits and other legal actions against the Trump administration nationwide, two-thirds of which have defeated, diluted, or delayed attacks on civil rights and civil liberties. Together, we secured important wins at the Supreme Court—including a historic ruling preserving the Constitution's guarantee of birthright citizenship.

In addition to our Supreme Court lawsuits, we helped California and dozens of other states defeat the federal government's attempts to obtain private voter roll data, and struck down abortion restrictions in Missouri and Arizona, among other states. We helped pass 152 policy wins across 29 states protecting civil liberties, including 37 bills in California. ACLU Know Your Rights trainings prepared more than 200,000 activists ahead of historic turnout at the "No Kings" and "ICE Out for Good" protests.

As America celebrates its 250th year, I hope you are proud of our collective defense of democracy. The challenges we face will persist—but, thanks to your partnership, so will the ACLU SoCal. As we have done for 103 years, we will keep confronting government violence and repression and fighting for freedom, equality, and justice for all.

In solidarity,

Chandra S. Bhatnagar,
Executive Director, ACLU of Southern California



Photo credit: Martin Romero

CHALLENGING MASS IMMIGRATION RAIDS

Last summer, as ICE and Border Patrol surged into Southern California, the ACLU SoCal sued to stop their abuses. We continue to fight for clients like Pedro Vasquez Perdomo, who was waiting at a Pasadena bus stop with two other men when he was suddenly surrounded by masked, armed agents—just for looking Latino, speaking Spanish, and being dressed for manual labor. After a year of gathering and reviewing witness interviews, depositions of immigration agents, and body cam and security camera footage—we brought the court evidence of the government's blatant racial profiling and violent arrest tactics. This included a body cam video showing agents using racist slurs as they targeted Latino immigrants for arrests.

We are now asking the court to block the government's racial profiling stops and warrantless arrests. In the meantime, the court has ruled in our favor in multiple preliminary fights, including holding the government in contempt for withholding cell phone data they were ordered to turn over to the ACLU SoCal, with a daily fine until they comply. This fall, our attorneys will question Border Patrol leadership as our case continues.

SAFEGUARDING CALIFORNIANS' VOTING RIGHTS

In January, we helped block a lawsuit attempting to force California to hand over its full, unredacted voter registration list to the Trump administration. The administration filed similar lawsuits in more than 20 states—a coordinated plan to interfere with elections. We represented California voters whose privacy was at stake, protecting highly sensitive data like driver's license and Social Security numbers. We are also a leading sponsor of the California Voting Rights Act of 2026 (SB 1164 and SB 1360), to strengthen our state laws to prevent voter suppression, protect against racial gerrymandering, and increase language access for non-English speakers.

PROTECTING TRANS AND NONBINARY STUDENTS

In December, a court struck down vital California policies protecting trans and nonbinary students from “forced outing”—when a teacher or school official outs a student’s gender identity to their parents without the student’s permission. Forced outing can be dangerous, depending on a student’s home life, which is why we led the fight in recent years to establish these protections. In the wake of this harmful ruling, we filed an *amicus* brief supporting California’s appeal, and advised policymakers, school districts, LGBTQ+ advocates, and families on how to respond. Amid ongoing attacks, we will use every tool we have to defend the rights and dignity of trans and nonbinary students.

ADVANCING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The only real solution to ending houselessness is permanent affordable housing. In January, the City of Riverside abruptly rejected a \$20 million grant meant to fund the conversion of a local motel into 114 affordable homes for seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities. We joined community partners to fight back and pushed the state to investigate whether Riverside’s decision violated state anti-discrimination laws. In August, we participated in a state-led mediation session that brought housing advocates and Riverside officials together with the goal of getting the project back on track. We will keep advocating until permanent housing solutions are a reality for all.



DEFENDING LAUSD'S DESEGREGATION POLICIES

When an “anti-DEI” group based in Montana sued to dismantle LAUSD’s racial equity policies, we stepped in. The lawsuit, now backed by the Trump administration, falsely claims that the district’s court-ordered desegregation plan—established after a landmark 1960s ACLU SoCal lawsuit—discriminates against white students. We represent Black families defending these fundamental protections in a case that affects hundreds of thousands of LAUSD students and could impact the future of racial equity efforts in school districts nationwide.

PREVENTING POLICE COLLABORATION WITH FEDERAL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Across the country, the Trump administration is pressuring local police to help the federal government violate people’s rights—from racially profiling immigrants, to investigating protesters and nonprofits, to intimidating people documenting ICE activity. In response, we are sponsoring the Protect California Rights Act (SB 1105), which aims to prevent California police from assisting federal agents with any operations that involve racial profiling, suppressing free speech, or using military equipment against our communities. We are calling on our state legislature to pass this necessary bill today.

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