

# ACLU SoCal

## 2024 IMPACT REPORT



## DEAR FRIEND,

Thank you for your generous partnership!

You played a vital role this past year, helping the ACLU to:

- Sue to block abortion bans, challenge voter suppression laws, ensure fair maps, and protect gender-affirming care across the country;
- Participate in two major abortion rights cases before the U.S. Supreme Court;
- Safeguard the election to combat intimidation or violence at the polls, mass disqualification of ballots, and state refusal to certify results; and
- Secure watershed reproductive rights wins in elections in Ohio, Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

Here in California, our groundbreaking wins impact millions of people and help model progress for other states. And, thanks to you, we are prepared for whatever challenges and opportunities lie ahead—no matter who occupies the White House or sits on the Supreme Court.

The highlights in this report illustrate the collective power of our ACLU community to shape the future of our region, state, and nation. I hope they inspire you to deepen your philanthropic impact at this critical time.

In solidarity and with gratitude,

**Julie Weinstein**  
Chief Development Officer

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# 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

## OPPOSING DANGEROUS & DEADLY POLICE DOG ATTACKS

Over the past few years, police attack dogs have seriously injured hundreds of Californians, including unarmed suspects and bystanders, some of whom died from their injuries. In recent months, we published a report on the harms caused by attack dogs, sued the Fresno Police Department seeking information about its use of attack dogs, and helped defeat two bills that would have undermined efforts to hold police departments accountable for violence inflicted by attack dogs.

## UNCOVERING AN UNCONSTITUTIONAL “PLEA MILL” IN KERN COUNTY

We sued Kern County for running a “plea mill” operation that illegally pressured more than 50,000 people over the past eight years to plead guilty to criminal charges. Our lawsuit describes a system in which probation officers offered plea deals to defendants behind closed doors—typically without a defense attorney present. We were able to disqualify Kern County judges from overseeing the case due to their participation in the “plea mill” and are now litigating in Solano County, where a judge rejected Kern County’s attempt to have the case dismissed.

## EXPANDING IMMIGRANT REPRESENTATION IN CITY ELECTIONS

Local governments should represent all their residents. The ACLU SoCal and our partners have placed a groundbreaking measure on the City of Santa Ana’s November ballot that aims to expand voting in city elections to noncitizen residents—who pay taxes, own homes and property, run businesses, work, and raise families in Santa Ana. Ahead of November, we are mobilizing ACLU members to help get out the vote and build support for the initiative, creating a model for cities across the country.

## DEPORTED VETERANS ADVOCACY ON THE NATIONAL STAGE

One in three veterans has been arrested or jailed, often due to trauma from their service—but for noncitizen veterans, even a minor conviction can lead to deportation. This spring and summer, building on the steady progress of our longstanding campaign to bring deported veterans home, we held a series of meetings with Biden administration officials to push for an increase in federal pardons for immigrant veterans. To date, advocacy by the ACLU and our partners has helped repatriate more than 100 deported veterans.





## DEFENDING THE RIGHTS OF OUR UNHOUSED NEIGHBORS

Last fall, we filed suit against the City of San Bernardino for its cruel, illegal treatment of unhoused people with disabilities—including our client Lenka John, pictured at left. Our lawsuit brought to light how the city forced people with walkers and wheelchairs into ravines and flood channels, and how city workers destroyed people’s lifesaving medicines, government IDs, family photos—even the ashes of loved ones. This September, we negotiated a first-of-its-kind settlement that enshrines new protections for unhoused people with disabilities and increases funding for houselessness programs.

## AN END TO “WILLFUL DEFIANCE”

After a decade of advocacy by the ACLU SoCal and our partners, California became the first state to ban “willful defiance” suspensions in K-12 public schools. This harmful policy allowed suspensions for minor misbehavior like violating the dress code or not paying attention in class. The new law, which went into effect July 1<sup>st</sup>, addresses the disproportionately high suspension rates of students of color and students with disabilities in California public schools.

## PROTECTING LGBTQ STUDENTS’ PRIVACY

After extensive advocacy by the ACLU SoCal and our partners, California became the first state to ban “forced outing” policies. Signed by Governor Newsom in July, the SAFETY Act protects LGBTQ students from having school staff reveal their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression without their consent, including to their parents. Its passage will help ensure that young people are able to have important conversations with their families safely and on their own terms.

## BLOCKING BOOK BANS

We pushed back against an unconstitutional Huntington Beach resolution that would restrict access to library books under the guise of protecting children from “sexual content.” The controversial resolution has already resulted in a number of books being removed from the children’s section, including picture books and books on puberty and development. We wrote a demand letter to the Huntington Beach City Council, alerted the media, and connected reporters to local librarians who were able to share the importance of access to libraries and their resources. We will continue to fight against this egregious book ban.

***YOUR PHILANTHROPY IN ACTION***

# STAFF

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# PRO BONO PARTNERS

In recent decades, the ACLU SoCal significantly deepened our impact thanks to co-counsel law firms supporting pro bono cases. Attorneys and staff at law firms have, at no cost to the ACLU SoCal, helped us in conducting legal research, developing strategies, filing critical impact litigation, and providing generous means of support.

Many of our pro bono supporters gain valuable litigation and transaction skills while working on our projects. Each year, we are heartened to hear that ACLU SoCal projects have been some of the most meaningful legal work for pro bono attorneys. We remain deeply grateful for these ongoing partnerships.

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# YOUR 2023-2024 INVESTMENT

**Thank you to our philanthropic partners whose investments impact millions of lives in Southern California and across the country.** These summaries show audited 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, the \$15.7 million 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 at [aclusocal.org/financials](https://aclusocal.org/financials).

## ACLU FOUNDATION OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

<b>\$26,039,338</b> SUPPORT & REVENUE (100%) TOTAL REVENUE <sup>1</sup>		
<b>60%</b>	In-Kind Contributions & Legal Services	\$15,688,521
<b>17%</b>	Individual Contributions	\$4,388,200
<b>11%</b>	Investment Income & Other	\$2,893,702
<b>5%</b>	Grant Revenue <sup>2</sup>	\$1,422,887
<b>4%</b>	Court Awarded Fees	\$1,042,104
<b>2%</b>	Bequests	\$518,830
<b>1%</b>	Events	\$182,738

<sup>1</sup> Not represented is a <1% decrease in rental income (-\$97,644).

<sup>2</sup> Grants awarded to the ACLU Foundation are restricted & earmarked for specific purposes & time periods.

<b>\$28,344,024</b> EXPENSES (100%) TOTAL EXPENSES		
<b>22%</b>	Criminal Justice	\$6,105,466
<b>21%</b>	Immigrants' Rights	\$6,059,018
<b>16%</b>	Police Practices	\$4,597,653
<b>12%</b>	Economic Justice	\$3,433,502
<b>4%</b>	First Amendment & Democracy	\$1,009,629
<b>4%</b>	LGBTQ, Gender & Reproductive Justice	\$1,006,011
<b>4%</b>	Education Equity	\$998,383
<b>&lt;1%</b>	Activist Engagement	\$80,591
<b>9%</b>	Administrative	\$2,640,219
<b>6%</b>	Philanthropy	\$1,711,642
<b>2%</b>	Other Expenses	\$701,910

## ACLU OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

<b>\$3,574,582</b> SUPPORT & REVENUE (100%) TOTAL REVENUE		
<b>67%</b>	Membership Contributions	\$2,397,610
<b>13%</b>	Investment Income & Other	\$454,146
<b>9%</b>	Bequests	\$317,829
<b>8%</b>	Events	\$272,743
<b>3%</b>	Individual Contributions	\$110,161
<b>&lt;1%</b>	In-Kind Contributions & Legal Services	\$12,085
<b>&lt;1%</b>	Grant Revenue	\$10,008

<b>\$5,088,822</b> EXPENSES (100%) TOTAL EXPENSES		
<b>19%</b>	Activist Engagement	\$944,298
<b>11%</b>	Economic Justice	\$572,037
<b>11%</b>	Criminal Justice	\$541,914
<b>5%</b>	Education Equity	\$232,161
<b>5%</b>	LGBTQ, Gender & Reproductive Justice	\$251,150
<b>4%</b>	Police Practices	\$216,789
<b>3%</b>	Immigrants' Rights	\$171,994
<b>2%</b>	First Amendment & Democracy	\$124,804
<b>24%</b>	Administrative	\$1,222,074
<b>9%</b>	Philanthropy	\$463,444
<b>7%</b>	Other Expenses	\$348,157