



2016 ANNUAL REPORT  
ACLU OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA





## WELCOME

### ***Dissent is patriotic.***

We here at the American Civil Liberties Union take that statement as an axiom. Indeed, the ACLU adopted it as a slogan years ago, and you'll be seeing and hearing it more often as we navigate the currents of fear and hate roiling our nation.

*Dissent is patriotic.* Three simple words that go to the very heart of American values. It is a concept so crucial to our democracy that it is enshrined in the First Amendment. *Dissent is patriotic* is a bulwark against the totalitarian conceit that dissent is treason.

This bedrock principle — “the right to protest for right,” as Martin Luther King Jr. described it in his final speech 49 years ago – is the basis for the ACLU's mission to protect and defend the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. It underlies everything you'll read about in this annual report, and so much more. Throughout our nation's history, the way forward has always begun with the powerful words “I disagree” — uttered defiantly in the face of injustice to our neighbors, our media, our lawmakers, and, yes, even our president.

Today, those words inform our work to reform police practices, and to stand up for the dignity of the LGBTQ community. They give voice to the immigrants struggling to stand up to a growing wave of resentment. They stand firm against those who prefer privilege for a few over the rights of all.

With your continued support, the ACLU of Southern California will build on the efforts of the past year and prepare for the dangerous and uncharted waters ahead. As Edward Snowden said at our 2016 Bill of Rights Dinner, “Don't be afraid of what comes next – be ready.”

**Hector O. Villagra**  
**Executive Director • ACLU of Southern California**

*The ACLU of Southern California is comprised of two separate entities, the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California, principally responsible for legislative and lobbying work, and the ACLU Foundation of Southern California, responsible for litigation and public education. Throughout this report they will be jointly referred to as ACLU SoCal.*



*After years of challenges from the ACLU SoCal, former Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca pleaded guilty to lying to federal authorities investigating the brutal and corrupt county jails. We'll keep a close eye on his criminal trial in 2017.*

*Spurred by an ACLU of California report, Governor Jerry Brown signed into law Senate Bill 443, which limits civil asset forfeiture abuse – also known as “theft by cop” – in California.*

*We're holding Governor Brown to account for underestimating savings from reduced prison incarceration rates and shortchanging reinvestment dollars for local communities, as required by Proposition 47.*

*“You can judge a society by how well it treats its prisoners,” Fyodor Dostoevsky once said. The ACLU SoCal is committed to helping our society improve conditions for incarcerated individuals. Our Jails Project expanded its vital work monitoring jail conditions into Santa Barbara County in the past year. In partnership with the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office Community Input Group, volunteers meet and communicate weekly with incarcerated individuals, allowing the project to help review and edit existing policies and create new ones when needed.*

**STAND FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

*“We become so focused on our daily tasks that we forget to look at things from a different perspective. We are pleased the Jails Project provides us with that different perspective.”*

*- Lt. Mark Maharin (Ret.), SBSO Grievance Oversight Coordinator*







*Paid sick leave is a human right. The ACLU SoCal continues to push for legislation like the landmark ordinance Los Angeles passed in 2016 that allows workers to earn six paid sick days.*

*A living wage is a human right. The ACLU SoCal is proud to partner with organizations like Los Angeles Raise the Wage to bring minimum pay up to \$15 an hour.*

*The suspension of democracy jeopardizes more than our civil liberties. That became plainly evident this year in Flint, Michigan, where wrong-headed decisions by an unelected emergency manager left the city water supply contaminated with lead. The ACLU brought the crisis to light and is working diligently to hold accountable those responsible and urge swift and full resolution of this disaster.*

*Economic rights are civil rights. The ACLU SoCal fights to protect some of society's most economically vulnerable residents, including low-income students, homeless people and low-paid workers seeking equitable working conditions and living wages. Our Dignity for All Project combines litigation on behalf of homeless plaintiffs with advocacy focused on the social policy changes needed to end homelessness and advance human dignity. In 2016, we highlighted Orange County's woefully inadequate policies on homelessness in a groundbreaking report, "Nowhere to Live: The Homeless Crisis in Orange County and How to End It."*

***"Whenever we are able to show evidence that changes in policy can save the taxpayers money, we have a better chance of advancing our cause."***  
- Tim Houchen, formerly homeless and now an advocate

**STAND FOR *ECONOMIC JUSTICE***



*With politically-motivated bullying of students on the rise, the ACLU of California sent a letter to every school superintendent in the state reminding them of laws that mandate equal access to school for all children regardless of immigration status, and that districts are obligated to protect students from discrimination and harassment.*

*Charter schools are required by law to admit all children, but an ACLU SoCal report revealed that many have illegal admissions requirements. Result: many charters flagged in the report corrected their policies.*

*The ACLU SoCal found that the L.A. Unified School District must correct a multi-million dollar spending error involving funds focused on high-needs students. Result: greater accountability on school spending.*

*The ACLU SoCal supports and defends equal rights and opportunities for all California students, including the right to learn in a safe and supportive campus environment. The presence of police officers on school campuses can stifle learning by making students feel anxious and unsafe. Too often, school districts rely on law enforcement to discipline common misbehavior that should be handled by trained counselors and educators. We're pushing for reforms that would reduce or eliminate police presence in schools.*

STAND FOR **EDUCATION EQUITY**

***"I'm a student not a suspect."***

*- Nico Conanan, 19, Inglewood*





*“Permitting [addition of a Christian cross on the county seal] and the associated expenditure of public funds place the county’s power, prestige, and purse behind a single religion, Christianity, without making any such benefit available on an equal basis to those with secular objectives or alternative sectarian views”*  
– U.S. District Judge Christina A. Snyder, from her April 2016 ruling.

*National Security Agency whistleblower Edward Snowden made a surprise video appearance at the ACLU SoCal’s annual Bill of Rights Dinner in 2016. It served as a reminder of the ACLU’s commitment to his civil liberties and to protect the rights of whistleblowers.*

*The First Amendment is the cornerstone of our free society, and the ACLU SoCal believes strongly in the constitutional mandate separating religion and government. It’s why we joined a group of religious leaders and scholars in a lawsuit against the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors over the placement of a Christian cross on the county seal. A federal judge agreed that the cross unconstitutionally promoted Christianity, and today, no religious symbols appear on the seal.*

**STAND FOR *FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS***

***“Our county seal should represent all the people of the state of California.”***  
– Rabbi Amy Bernstein







*Thanks to our partners and our continuing advocacy, the ACLU SoCal was instrumental in getting the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) to launch an investigation into systemic discrimination against women directors in television and film.*

*The ACLU SoCal worked to secure a ruling from the California Department of Education that the Young Oak Kim Academy, a Los Angeles public school, violated state law by segregating students by gender based on stereotypes that girls can only learn well if surrounded by other girls.*

*The ACLU SoCal is working to create a state where women and girls are free to live, learn and work as equals. Talented women are struggling to break through in key roles in television and film, especially among the ranks of directors. We're partnering with the entertainment industry's most respected and innovative women to bring long overdue gender equity to Hollywood.*

***"Now is the time to tell more stories  
about women and diversity."***

*– Catherine Hardwicke, film director, producer and activist*

**STAND FOR *GENDER EQUITY***



Thousands of children in immigration court each year do so without an attorney. **JEFM v. Lynch** fought to remedy this unfair and unacceptable situation. The ACLU is working in the federal courts to end this outrage.

Indigent people facing criminal charges are entitled to public defenders – but not in immigration courts. The ACLU SoCal is fighting for immigrants to receive free legal representation in deportation proceedings.

With the Muslim community under growing threat, the ACLU continues to monitor a secretive government directive that requires immigration officials to identify applicants as potential national security threats and often targets innocent Muslims.

The ACLU SoCal is at the forefront of local, state, and national efforts to protect all immigrants – citizens and non-citizens alike. “Discharged, Then Discarded,” a 2016 report by the ACLU of California, sheds light on an American travesty: the deportations of uncounted immigrant soldiers, eligible for citizenship, whom the government failed to help naturalize. The report prompted lawmakers to introduce legislation that will end this abominable practice.

# STAND FOR **IMMIGRANTS’ RIGHTS**

**“We feel like Americans that have been banished – in exile from the country we love the most.”**

- Daniel Torres, Marine Corps veteran of the Iraq War





*Backed by the ACLU of California, the California Healthy Youth Act, which mandates comprehensive sexual health education and HIV-prevention education programs in public schools, took effect on January 1, 2016.*

*The ACLU chalked up a win for transgender rights in June 2016, when a court ruled that a Virginia school district violated federal law and the Constitution by prohibiting high school student Gavin Grimm from using boys' restrooms.*

*The ACLU SoCal works to eradicate discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Our team is at the forefront of improving conditions for LGBTQ people in the criminal justice system, where they are significantly more vulnerable to violence and sexual assault and subject to administrative segregation without equal access to rehabilitative programming.*

STAND FOR **LGBTQ EQUALITY**

***“I was only allowed to leave my cell for 30 minutes a day.”***

*- Dan McKibben, former West Valley inmate*







*We demand accountability from the police. That's why we called on law enforcement agencies to develop strict rules for use of body cameras and release full videos of questionable encounters with the public.*

*The Los Angeles Police Department and city attorney are consistently unaccountable in their use of gang injunctions, which ensnare thousands based solely on where they live, how they dress, or what they look like. The ACLU SoCal filed a lawsuit seeking to end this unconscionable tactic.*

*The ACLU demands full accountability as the government collects data. That's why we sided with Apple as it fought a court order to help the FBI unlock an iPhone belonging to one of the San Bernardino shooters.*

*You are being tracked! Throughout the nation, police departments are storing millions of records about innocent drivers collected by automatic license plate readers that record the date, time, and location of every scan.*

*You have the right to expect that your life will not become an open book when you have not done – and are not suspected of doing – anything wrong. The ACLU is working diligently to protect your privacy rights as surveillance technology and the potential for government abuse proliferate.*

*"Based on information in the @ACLU's report, we are immediately suspending @Geofeedia's commercial access to Twitter data." @Twitter*

**STAND FOR *POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY***



*The ACLU SoCal joined colleagues in its Northern California and national offices in a lawsuit against the federal government, claiming it violates the constitutional guarantee of the separation of church and state by funding organizations that deny health care on religious grounds.*

*A 2015 ACLU SoCal study, “The ABC’s of Breastfeeding,” found dire need for strong lactation accommodations for students and teachers. We were pleased that 48 percent of L.A. County school districts have made improvements since the report’s release.*

*Abortion rights are under siege. The ACLU’s Reproductive Freedom Project joined with reproductive rights groups in litigation to protect and expand access to abortion in Alaska, Missouri, and North Carolina, and continues to monitor the growing wave of abortion restrictions.*

*The ACLU SoCal works to ensure equal access to comprehensive, quality, affordable, and confidential reproductive health care. Women should not be denied medical care based on a hospital’s religious affiliation – but it happens all too often. Our team successfully fought attempts by Dignity Health, a Catholic-sponsored provider, to withhold pregnancy-related care for reasons other than medical considerations.*

**STAND FOR REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE**

**“The decision that I made was between my family and my doctors and it should not involve Catholic bishops.”**

*- Rachel Miller, tubal ligation plaintiff*





*The City of Fullerton moved to district-based council elections to settle a 2015 ACLU SoCal lawsuit, which charged that the previous at-large voting system disenfranchised Asian and Latino voters in violation of the California Voting Rights Act.*

*Californians will be able to exercise their free speech rights at the polls starting in 2017 thanks to ACLU-supported legislation signed into law by Governor Brown permitting voters to take and distribute selfies of completed ballots.*

*Governor Brown bolstered voting rights by signing into law AB 2466, which was backed by the ACLU and rolls back discriminatory felony disenfranchisement statutes that disproportionately impact people of color.*

*The ACLU SoCal continues to fight for equal representation in government for all. Our role in ending discriminatory at-large voting in the City of Anaheim bore fruit with the election of a Latino city council member, breaking a decades-long imbalance that left many constituents without a voice.*

STAND FOR **VOTING RIGHTS**

**“The ACLU helped us stand up to the big-money interests and the establishment in Anaheim.”**

*- Jose F. Moreno, plaintiff and now Anaheim City Council Member*





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By providing for the ACLU through their estate plans, members of the DeSilver Society help to ensure that the ACLU will have the means to keep advancing freedom well into the 21st century. We gratefully acknowledge the generosity and foresight of these very special individuals.

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ACLU OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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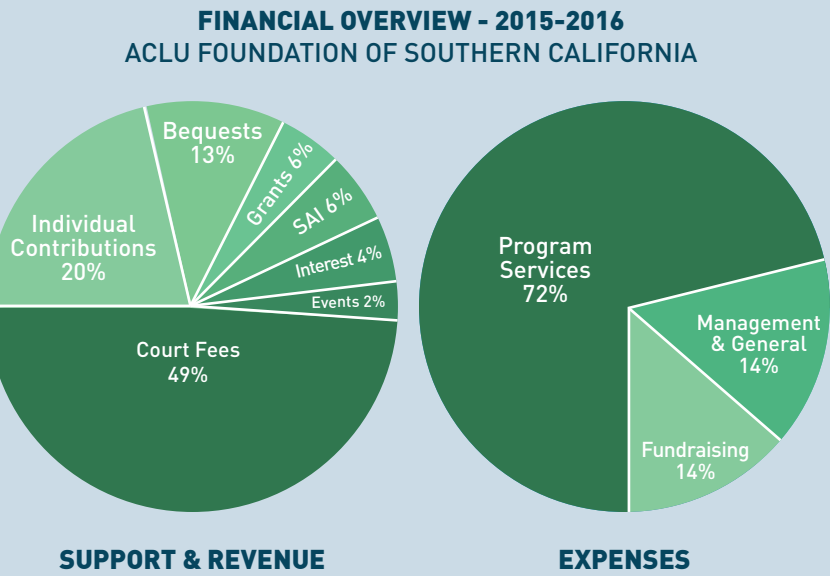
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ACLU OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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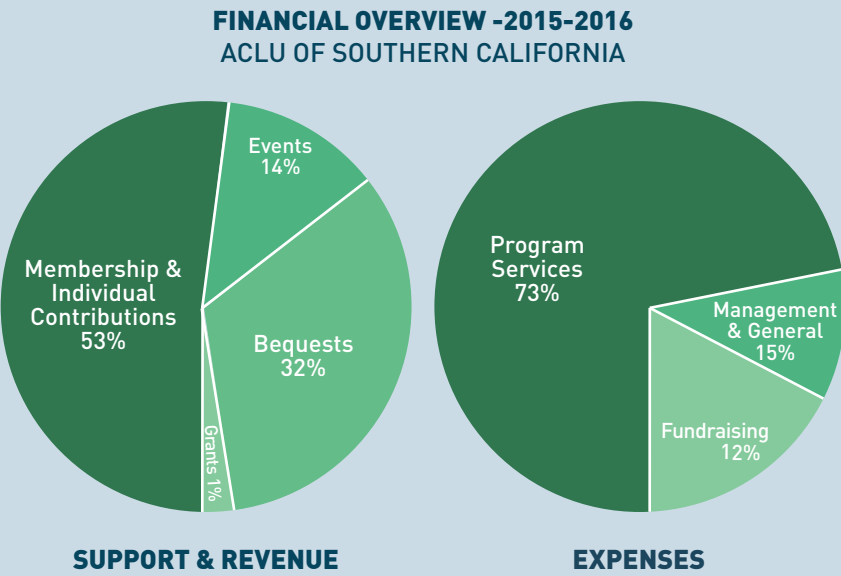
**THE ACLU OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA** is comprised of two separate entities, the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California, principally responsible for legislative and lobbying work, and the ACLU Foundation of Southern California, responsible for litigation and public education. A contribution to either entity is used to support, promote and defend civil liberties. Contributions to the Foundation {501(c)3} are tax-deductible, whereas contributions to the Union {501(c)4} are not tax-deductible. Many donors choose to give to both entities to maximize their impact on the defense of fundamental rights.



SUPPORT & REVENUE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Individual Contributions	2,749,531	20%
Events	265,428	2%
Restricted Foundation Grants*	819,087	6%
ACLU Strategic Affiliate Initiative Grant	891,007	6%
Bequests**	1,883,109	13%
Court Awarded Fees	6,935,721	49%
Interest & Other***	578,577	4%
In-Kind Legal Contributions	48,112	0%

EXPENSES	TOTAL	PERCENT
Program Services	4,852,561	72%
Management & General Operations	919,869	14%
Fundraising	957,157	14%

FOOTNOTES:  
National ACLU Foundation's revenue share of incentive income totals \$580,072.  
\* Grants awarded to the ACLU Foundation are restricted and earmarked for specific projects.  
\*\* National ACLU Foundation's revenue share of bequests totals \$1,491,667.  
\*\*\* Includes distributions of \$51,628 from the Watson Endowment, \$39,030 from the Permanent Endowment and \$40,920 from Trust for the Bill of Rights.



SUPPORT & REVENUE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Membership & Individual Contributions*	667,060	53%
Events	177,309	14%
Bequests	408,184	32%
Grants	12,000	1%
Interest & Other	5,012	0%
In-Kind Legal Contributions	4,960	0%

EXPENSES	TOTAL	PERCENT
Program Services	715,024	73%
Management & General Operations	147,742	15%
Fundraising	115,110	12%

FOOTNOTE:  
\*Represents net sharing with National ACLU of dues and contributions.

All figures provided are unaudited at time of publication.

# STAND FOR JUSTICE - STAND WITH THE ACLU

The ACLU needs your partnership. The ACLU's work is made possible by the financial support of over 500,000 members, activists, and philanthropists across the country who stand for justice, freedom, and equality.

## THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS YOU CAN STAND WITH THE ACLU:

### INVEST IN THE ACLU.

Make a tax-deductible donation to the ACLU Foundation of Southern California and help fund ACLU's litigation, public education, and community engagement work. You can also make a contribution to the ACLU of Southern California, though not tax-deductible, this critical support makes possible our legislative work and lobbying. The ACLU is able to accept donations via mail, online, or stock transfers.

ACLU Foundation of Southern California Stock Transfer:  
DTC: Code 40, DTC #0164, Charles Schwab & Co. Inc., Attn: Transfer of Accounts, 101 Montgomery St, San Francisco, CA 94101  
FBO: ACLU Foundation of Southern California, Account #1024-1241

You can make a tax-deductible gift online at [www.aclusocal.org/donate](http://www.aclusocal.org/donate) or for more information about stock transfers, donations in honor of a loved one, or other gifts call: **(213) 977-5216**.

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### LEAVE YOUR LEGACY.

Join thousands across Southern California who have become a member of ACLU's DeSilver Society, by naming the ACLU in their estate.

- Designate the ACLU as the beneficiary for part or all of your estate, through your will.
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### BECOME A MEMBER.

Become an official card-carrying member of the ACLU and connect to one of the largest advocate networks in Southern California and the nation. For more information about becoming a member visit [www.aclusocal.org/join](http://www.aclusocal.org/join) or call: **(213) 977-5248**.

The ACLU is a nationwide organization and donations to Southern California support the important work here as well as other ACLU affiliates in states where some of the most egregious civil rights and civil liberties violations occur and there is little financial support for their defense.

For more information about investing in the ACLU, charitable estate planning, or becoming a member you can also visit: [www.aclusocal.org/support](http://www.aclusocal.org/support).



# WHAT WE DO AND HOW WE DO IT

The government of the United States is built on two basic principles: (1) majority rule through democratic elections; and (2) protection of individuals from any attempts by the majority to curtail individual liberties and rights, as spelled out in the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

The Constitution and Bill of Rights set the ground rules for individual liberty, which include the freedoms of speech, association and religion, freedom of the press, and the right to privacy, to equal protection of the laws and to due process of law.

The ACLU was founded to defend and secure these rights and to extend them to people who have been excluded from their protection.

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## OUR WORK CAN BE CATEGORIZED AS FOLLOWS:

### FIRST AMENDMENT

The rights of free speech, free association, and assembly, freedom of the press and religious freedom, including the strict separation of church and state.

### EQUAL PROTECTION

The right not to be discriminated against on the basis of certain classifications, such as race, sex, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, disability, etc.

### DUE PROCESS

The right to be treated fairly, including fair procedures when facing accusations of criminal conduct or other serious accusations that can lead to results like loss of employment, exclusion from school, denial of housing, cut-off of certain benefits or various punitive measures taken by the government.

### PRIVACY

The right to a zone of personal privacy and autonomy.

### GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS THAT CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

The extension of all the rights described above to those who are still fighting for the full protections of the Bill of Rights, including women, immigrants, the poor, people of color, transgender people, members of minority religions, people with disabilities, lesbian, gay, or bisexual people, the homeless, prisoners, and children in the custody of the state.

### WE ACCOMPLISH THE ABOVE BY LOBBYING, PUBLIC EDUCATION, AND LITIGATION.



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