

2018 IMPACT REPORT



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When I was a kid, my parents taught me to speak up for what's right. Now, in the face of this administration's assault on our country's most vulnerable people, the whole ACLU family is speaking up – and making me incredibly proud to do the work I do.

In this report, you'll find a briefing on our response to Trump's horrific separation of migrant families and how, together, we won a huge victory when the court ordered an end to this policy and reunification of families.

You'll also read about how we're responding to other threats to families across the country, countering policies that endanger women, LGBT couples, trans kids, immigrant youth, and young people of color. With the balance of the Supreme Court set to shift, these families are at even-greater risk.

With you by our side, the ACLU is poised to fight back, building a future where we all have the power, and the freedom, to defend each other.

Thank you for all that you do,

Anthony D. Romero



Ilana Panich-Linsman/ACLU

ON THE FRONTLINE

The ACLU is leading the charge against an administration seeking to build its reputation on how harsh it can be to immigrants.

The government's cruel separation of families at the border exposes the Trump administration's willingness to attack the most vulnerable and heightens our shared responsibility to fight back.

With our 1.85 million members behind us, the ACLU has been working overtime in the courts, in the streets and in Congress to hold the Trump administration accountable.

At the same time, **we are empowering voters across the country to channel outrage into**

action on a wide variety of issues in the midterm elections. We've launched a nonpartisan electoral operation aimed at educating voters on where candidates stand on crucial issues such as family reunification, voting rights, criminal justice reform and reproductive freedom.

We've already seen early successes in places such as Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, where primary voters overwhelmingly rejected an incumbent Democratic sheriff known for enthusiastically participating in federal deportation activities and putting juveniles in solitary confinement. The ACLU is replicating this approach in dozens of key races up and down the ballot.

REUNITING FAMILIES

Months before the media began reporting that thousands of children were being separated from their families at the border, the ACLU was in court arguing on behalf of “Ms. L.,” a 39-year-old Congolese woman whose 7-year-old daughter was taken from her in November 2017 when she entered the United States legally and sought asylum in San Diego.

Ms. L. thought she had found safety at last when an immigration officer certified that she had a credible fear of harm if she were to return to violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo. What happened next has happened to thousands like her: Ms. L. was forcibly torn from her daughter, who was transported 2,000 miles away to Chicago.

In a legal complaint filed on the family’s behalf, the ACLU described the daughter’s screams as she was wrenched from her mother: “No one explained to Ms. L. why they were taking her daughter away from her or where her daughter was going or even when she would next see her daughter.”

Following public outcry and the ACLU’s lawsuit – which has since expanded into a national class action on behalf of at least 2,000 children separated from their parents – the two were finally reunited in March.

In June, a federal court gave the Trump administration a deadline to reunite all children under five with their parents by Tuesday, July 10, and all remaining children by July 26. Not surprisingly, the government has attempted to abdicate responsibility at every turn, even going so far as to resist reuniting toddler-age children with parents whom they have already deported to foreign countries. What’s worse, the administration has said it doesn’t even know the identities of the parents of 40 children.

The ACLU will not stop pushing until all families are reunited. As we have argued in court, this is a problem largely of the government’s own making, and it is incumbent on the government to fix it.

“This is the fight now,” says Lee Gelernt, Deputy Director of the ACLU Immigrants’ Rights Project and lead lawyer in the case. “We can’t give up on these kids.”

Ilana Panich-Linsman/ACLU

“This is the fight now. We can’t give up on these kids.”

- Lee Gelernt,
ACLU Attorney



ENGAGING THE VALUES VOTER

From the Scopes “Monkey Trial” to *Roe v. Wade*, the ACLU is well known for its role in virtually every major civil liberties case in its almost 100-year history.

Now, we’ve invested substantially in a new, nonpartisan electoral operation aimed at educating voters about where candidates stand on crucial civil liberties issues. Here’s what we’re doing to activate the “ACLU Voter.”

EDUCATING VOTERS



The ACLU’s goal is to make sure voters are not only engaged but also informed about candidates’ records.

We are doing this by:

- Informing voters about candidates and upcoming races through informational mailings and flyers.
- Distributing “scorecards” that rate candidates on key civil liberties issues.
- Mobilizing the ACLU’s grassroots organizing team, People Power, to knock on doors and make phone calls to connect with voters about upcoming elections.

GETTING OUT THE VOTE



One of the ACLU’s goals is to get all 1.85 million ACLU members to vote this November, but we’re not stopping there.

We launched aclu.org/Voter, which:

- Asks users to commit to vote like your rights depend on it!
- Encourages users to get family and friends to commit to vote.
- Provides up-to-date information on registering to vote, polling locations, how to get to the polls, and primary dates.

PROTECTING AND EXPANDING THE VOTE



The ACLU is working in courtrooms, in legislatures and on ballot measures across the country to ensure that we protect and expand access to the ballot box.

- We’re fighting laws that attempt to suppress the vote in 11 different states, including challenging restrictive photo ID requirements for voters in Missouri and attempts to illegally purge voters from the rolls in Indiana.
- The ACLU is using ballot measures to help widen access to voting as well. In Florida, the ACLU is a key partner in promoting “Say Yes to Second Chances,” a measure that would restore the voting rights of Floridians with felony convictions.



AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
125 BROAD STREET, 18TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10004
WWW.ACLU.ORG

Presorted
First Class Mail
US Postage
PAID
Trenton, NJ
Permit No. 1117

- **Reuniting Families**
- **ACLU Voter**
- **Critical Issues**

2018 IMPACT REPORT

WHAT'S NEXT

As the Trump administration sows further turmoil in its second year, the ACLU continues to lead the charge against critical threats to civil liberties on the horizon.

ADVANCING CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

State and local elections are key to stopping the revival of discredited “tough on crime” policies that helped fuel mass incarceration and disproportionately impacted people of color. As the mid-terms approach, there is a strong grassroots and bipartisan appetite for reform, thanks in part to the politically diverse coalitions the ACLU has helped build. Our work focuses on three under-addressed drivers of mass incarceration: prosecutorial abuse, bail, and parole.

DEFENDING LGBT RIGHTS

In *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado*, the Supreme Court notably affirmed that businesses cannot use religion as a license to discriminate. The ACLU continues to pursue a robust docket of cases that involve “religious refusals” in public accommodations, health care, and child placement services. And on transgender issues, we have already racked up encouraging wins. In April 2018, Anchorage, Alaska became the first American jurisdiction to uphold transgender protections on a standalone ballot measure. We remain hopeful.

PROTECTING REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM

It is no overstatement to say that we are in for the fight of our lives just to preserve the current state of access to abortion and birth control. On the federal front, the ACLU is gearing up for litigation against a number of possible abortion and reproductive health restrictions. On the state level, we blocked the enforcement of 17 abortion restrictions in 2017, ensuring that hundreds of thousands of women are able to get the care they need.

Questions?
Please contact the Special Gifts Department at (212) 549-2550 or fdngift@aclu.org.