

# Standing in Solidarity with You

## 2018 ACLU of Ohio Work Plan

*QUICK LOOK*

### LOOKING AHEAD

2018 will bring new challenges, and we're up for the task! We will be steadfast in the fight for equity across all systems and institutions – from mass incarceration to voting rights – and ensure that all of our work is rooted in racial justice. Today, the ACLU is the strongest we've ever been, and we need your continued support to resist any new attempts that would strip us of our civil liberties. Looking ahead, we stand in solidarity with you, ready to protect the cherished freedoms Ohioans hold dear.

#### **Criminal Justice Reform**

We're ramping up our efforts to diligently tackle unjust practices within the criminal justice system. We will work to reform Ohio's cash bail system, and end the predatory practices of mayor's courts that only further the criminalization of poverty. We will continue to fight back against the expansion of private prisons operating within our state, which house both state and federal detainees.

We will speak out against unconstitutional police practices, and hold cities accountable for their actions. As elected officials attempt to revitalize the "War on Drugs," we will remind Ohioans that it was a failed, destructive, and discriminatory policy. We must transform how our society views drug addiction and shift to strategies that treat it as a public health issue and not a criminal justice problem.

#### **Voting Rights**

Even in off-year elections, we remain focused on voting rights in order to expand access to the ballot. Our challenge to Ohio's unlawful purging of voter rolls has made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court this fall, and we're ready for the fight. We will carry on our education efforts by encouraging grassroots organizers to launch voting drives in county jails with the use of our Voting in Jail toolkit. We will continue to ask candidates in local elections the tough questions – focusing on issues from police accountability to government transparency.

We will ensure that individuals with disabilities have accessible voting opportunities throughout all 88 counties and are empowered with knowledge about their right to vote.

#### **Women's Equality**

Starting with January's "Women's March" – an epic display of our democracy at work – it's clear that women are leading the resistance. We will expand our work to combat gender bias across the state, particularly by expanding access to abortion services and fighting against discriminatory nuisance laws that target victims of domestic violence.

#### **Fighting Discrimination**

We will continue to advance non-discrimination protections for the LGBT community through our coalition, Ohio Business Competes. Ohio is far behind the rest of the nation when it comes to transgender rights, but we are hard at work to change that narrative. With your support – through advocacy, legislation and litigation – we will carry on the fight.

**If this past year has taught us anything  
it is that our supporters are engaged  
and ready to fight. Our vision for  
this upcoming year is simple –  
we the people dare to create a more  
perfect union – and with your support  
this vision will become reality.  
Together, we stand in solidarity.**

# YOUR VOICE, OUR STRENGTH

## Your Actions Make a Difference

In February, anti-choice politicians introduced SB 28, a bill that would require the cremation or burial of embryonic and fetal tissue after an abortion. **Over 1,800 Ohioans** stood up against this attack on reproductive freedom.

In February, HB 36 was introduced. Branded the “Pastor Protection Act,” this bill would have perpetuated the myth that ministers cannot refuse to perform any marriage that doesn’t conform to their sincerely held religious beliefs – which is already protected by the First Amendment. **More than 2,100 supporters** took action to stop this anti-LGBT bill.

In March, three bills quickly moved through the Ohio General Assembly that would have further criminalized drugs, and each one would have undoubtedly sent more Ohioans to our already overcrowded jails and prisons. **Over 1,200 individuals** stepped up to stop these bills from passing.

March marked two years since the city of Cleveland signed the consent decree – an agreement committed to fixing the rampant misconduct in the city’s police department. **Nearly 2,000 people** added their name to our petition to Mayor Frank Jackson and U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions, requesting stronger leadership in overseeing police reform.

In June, Ohio legislators considered adding anti-immigrant worker provisions to the state budget bill in an attempt to deny workers’ compensation to undocumented workers. **Just under 800 folks** told our elected officials to remove that harmful language and protect ALL Ohio workers.

In July, after a three-year moratorium, Ohio resumed executions. **Nearly 1,600 Ohioans** stood up to the death penalty and told Governor Kasich not to resume executions in our state.

## GAINING MOMENTUM

### Solitary Confinement

The ACLU of Ohio, along with Disability Rights Ohio, created new administrative rules, adopted by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC), to exclude all individuals with serious mental illness, juveniles, and pregnant women from solitary confinement of more than 30 days. We continue to monitor ODRC rules as they are implemented and to advocate for policies that adequately protect people with mental illness in prison.

### APRI v. Husted

The ACLU of Ohio challenged Ohio’s illegal voter purge, a process employed by the Secretary of State to remove infrequent voters from the rolls. We argued that voting is not a “use it or lose it” right, and as a result of our successful litigation, over 7,500 eligible voters were able to cast their ballot in the November 2016 presidential election who would have otherwise been turned away.

### Trans Spotlight Videos

We launched a comprehensive educational resource about transgender rights, anchored by the “Transgender Spotlight Video Series.” We have reached over half a million people, and have spurred momentum in public engagement to ensure legal protections for the trans community.

### Voting in Jail: An Organizer’s Toolkit

“Voting in Jail: An Organizer’s Toolkit,” was designed to spearhead grassroots campaigns to educate individuals on voting rights and increase turnout at the polls. We are training organizers across the state to help them take on the difficult work of protecting voting rights for individuals who are incarcerated.

### Opioid Task Force

A working group comprised of ACLU staff and board members is taking on the opioid crisis in Ohio. Robust plans have emerged from the legal, policy, and communications departments to thoughtfully and effectively approach the epidemic in a manner that aligns with our overall stance on drug policy and reform in Ohio.

### Political Redistricting

The maps defining Ohio’s state legislative and Congressional House of Representative districts drawn after the 2010 census have resulted in entrenched partisan skewing consistently in favor of one party’s candidates. The severity of this partisan gerrymandering is widely acknowledged. We are convening experts from across Ohio and beyond to study the problem and strategize legal remedies.



To read our entire work plan and donate online, visit [www.acluohio.org/workplan](http://www.acluohio.org/workplan)