



Ohio Civil Liberties Snapshot

Stepping Up, Ready for the Fight

From the campaign to the White House, we are seeing President Trump's unrepentant violations of civil liberties become reality. We are ready for the fight. Since Election Day hundreds of thousands of Americans are stepping forward to defend civil liberties. Both nationally, and right here in Ohio, people are standing up to fight injustice. This is the greatest outpouring of support for the ACLU in our nearly 100-years of existence, and thanks to all of you, **President Trump will confront the strongest ACLU in history.**



"I wrote a letter to the editor on a state-church issue, and later to the U.N., which persuaded my community to make a change the following year. This process is what prompted me to join the ACLU back in the early 1960s."

Carol Ganzel, Oberlin, Ohio

"As a social worker, I joined the ACLU because I wanted to make an impact on a more macro level. I am passionate about issues impacting vulnerable youth like the school-to-prison pipeline and the ACLU has made this issue a priority."



Ebony Speakes-Hall
Springfield, Ohio

Who We Are...

Why We Fight...

What's Important...

"Free speech and LGBT rights were the issues that first drew me to the work of the ACLU, shortly after college. Over the years, the ACLU has raised my awareness about other important civil liberties issues, including privacy rights, prison reform, and reproductive freedom, among others. The national organization and our Ohio chapter continue to define the causes that require my attention, my understanding and my support. Year after year, the ACLU demonstrates that it is vibrant and adaptive. It shines a bright light on injustice and oppression and works tirelessly to protect the freedoms that we cherish. Now more than ever, we need the ACLU."



David Wittowsky
Cleveland, Ohio



The ACLU continues to advocate for the voting rights of all Ohioans, and has several recommendations for election reform, including:

- Allowing multiple locations for early voting
- Improving communication on absentee ballots
- Reducing the use of provisional ballots
- Ensuring accessibility for voters with disabilities
- Allowing split shifts for poll workers
- Postage paid envelopes for absentee requests and ballots.

Silenced at the Polls? Not on our Watch!

Last year, Ohio was removing eligible voters from registration rolls simply because the voter had not cast a ballot for a few elections. The ACLU of Ohio filed a lawsuit, and after months of litigation, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Secretary of State Jon Husted could no longer purge infrequent voters from the rolls. Secretary Husted was ordered to give these voters an opportunity to cast their ballot in the 2016 presidential election using a provisional ballot. The ruling in this case, while a victory for Ohio voters, is only a temporary solution; we are continuing the fight by pushing for all illegally purged voters to be permanently added back to the rolls.

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Support our efforts by making a gift online at www.acluohio.org/donate.

We Refuse to go Back—Women’s Reproductive Rights are Front and Center

Ohio is attempting to ban abortion. One problem: it is unconstitutional. Two extremist bills swiftly moved through the Ohio legislature at the tail end of last year’s lame duck session. The first, Senate Bill 127, moved to ban abortion after 20 weeks of pregnancy. The second, House Bill 493, contained a last-minute provision that moved to ban abortion as early as six weeks.

These unconstitutional bans were passed in the 11th hour without input from the public; Ohioans deserve better than politicians passing harmful laws in the dead of night. A woman’s health should drive important decisions throughout her pregnancy, without interference from politicians.



Guide—the march showed how powerful we can be when we organize and stand together.

Access to safe and legal abortion is law of the land, and these attacks will not stand. Thousands of our members organized, mobilized, and fought back to protect this Constitutional right, urging Governor Kasich to veto these bills. While Governor Kasich caved to our collective pressure and vetoed the six-week ban, he unfortunately did sign the 20-week ban into law. Ohio now joins numerous other states who have enacted these restrictions.



Dissent is Patriotic; Protesting is Our Right

Inauguration Day weekend spurred a historic gathering of thousands standing up against threats to our democracy. Saturday, January 21, activists, organizations, and people of all creeds united for the Women’s March on Washington. Co-sponsored by the ACLU—who chipped in to provide a Protestors Know Your Rights

For those who were unable to make the trip to our nation’s capital, sister marches popped up all across the country; a country unified by a common goal. People in cities like Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, and Cincinnati, protected and encouraged by the Constitution, let their voices be heard. Faced with the promises of President Trump, we marched—a pillar of a true democracy.

For nearly one hundred years, the ACLU has fought to protect and strengthen our First Amendment, and recent protests are no different. Our nation was founded on political dissent, and joining others in peaceful assembly is vital to a thriving democracy.

Intimidation and Discrimination

During his first week in office, President Trump issued an executive order that amounted to a Muslim Ban. Picking out followers of a particular religion for scorn is a frightening form of discrimination, and we cannot – and will not – allow intolerance to shape policy. The U.S. Constitution guarantees equal

protection of the laws, and a federal law or policy that intentionally treats individuals differently on the basis of religion is unconstitutional.

Incendiary comments fueled Donald Trump on the campaign trail, and

his backers have since been empowered to act. In the weeks following the election, hateful incidents of harassment have been reported across the country, according to data compiled by the Southern Poverty Law Center. Much of this harassment and intimidation has been anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim in nature.



Prisons for Profit—Cruel and Unusual

Just two months after the Department of Justice (DOJ) announced it would stop using private prisons, the U.S. Department of Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) began seeking new facilities to house the unprecedented numbers of immigrants and families who are in its custody. While the DOJ has ended their relationship with for-profit prisons, the U.S. Marshals still have a contract to house prisoners in Youngstown. Essentially, ICE is cozying up with the same for-profit prison company that the Justice Department rejected, exposing immigrants to well

documented inhumane treatment. Additionally, Governor Kasich signed House Bill 185 into law during last year’s lame duck session. This will allow state prisoners in Ohio to be housed in for-profit federal prisons, a change made last minute, without public input.

