



PURPOSE *and* RESOLVE

ANNUAL REPORT

September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026

ACLU
Maine

*“Freedom is
not a state;
it is an act.*

...Freedom is the continuous action we all must take, and each generation must do its part to create an even more fair, more just society. The work of love, peace, and justice will always be necessary, until their realism and their imperative takes hold of our imagination, crowds out any dream of hatred or revenge, and fills up our existence with their power.”

John Lewis

Across That Bridge: A Vision for Change and the Future of America

“

These unprecedented assaults shocked the conscience and depressed the spirit. They overwhelmed and exhausted us. But, we did not despair, tune out, or back down. We fought back together.



”

Together, we've experienced incredible resilience, clarity of purpose, and commitment from people across the state and the ideological spectrum.

A letter from the Board President



Over the past year, our civil rights and liberties have been under fierce assault:

Birthright citizenship, as explicitly guaranteed in the Fourteenth Amendment, was, and continues to be, targeted in a cruel attempt to redefine who is American.

Masked federal agents have been unleashed in Maine, sowing terror and lawlessly abducting and detaining neighbors, friends, family, and colleagues. Their violence even led to the extrajudicial killing of Johan Sebastián Durán Guerrero, a young father and partner, in Biddeford.

Absentee voting and Maine's accessible and secure elections have been targeted, and the federal government continues demanding sensitive private data about every Maine voter, a violation of state privacy law, federal voting rights law, and the U.S. Constitution.

These unprecedented assaults shocked the conscience and depressed the spirit. They can overwhelm and exhaust us – as is often the goal of authoritarian tactics.

But we did not despair, tune out, or back down. We are fighting back together.

The ACLU of Maine is defending the civil rights and liberties of all Mainers by using every tool at its disposal, including impact litigation, legislative advocacy, community education and activation, and organizational partnerships.

Thank you for standing with us to defend freedom and justice in Maine. As I look ahead, the future remains bright because you are with us. Regardless of what new challenges may come, the ACLU of Maine will be ready, and I am deeply grateful for your support.

Lily Lu, Board President

A letter from the Executive Director



As anticipated, this has been a challenging year. We've seen unprecedented, sustained attacks on civil rights, civil liberties, and ethical norms, and

have weathered threats to our free press, independent judiciary, and election system.

Sweeping changes made by the Trump administration have impacted every aspect of our economy and civil society. They have caused immense harm to our people, and threaten the separation and balance of powers and the rule of law itself.

The ACLU of Maine has been there to fight back every step of the way, hand in hand with community partners, members, volunteers, and allies – here and in every state across the country.

Together, we've experienced incredible resilience, clarity of purpose, and commitment from people across the state and the ideological spectrum.

Your support made it possible for us to expand the size and skill of our team. We have grown our legal and engagement work significantly, while deepening and refining our focus to create durable change. Our expertise, scope, and nationwide network make us uniquely effective. We are ready to not only address constitutional violations, but to also envision new solutions to the challenges we face.

In the year to come, it will be even more important for all of us to share our voices and our convictions as we turn a time of crisis into a time for good music and good art, good trouble and good friends. Together, we can make Maine live up to its promise as a place where the value, dignity, and self-determination of each person is cherished and celebrated.

Molly Curren Rowles, Executive Director

In the Courts

PROTECT *Birthright* CITIZENSHIP

ACLU Maine

Our legal team works to protect the civil rights and civil liberties guaranteed by the U.S. and Maine Constitutions. We address systemic issues through litigation, and work with community partners to identify priorities and share relevant legal information.

This year, we established an immigration practice to take important cases addressing the significant, ongoing constitutional violations by ICE in Maine. We have also been active in holding government actors accountable through open records requests.

BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP

Barbara v. Trump

Just hours after taking the oath of office, President Trump signed an executive order to ban birthright citizenship and upend the Fourteenth Amendment. That same day, the ACLU of Maine filed suit, working in partnership with other New England ACLU affiliates and national partners.

In April 2026, our case made it to the U.S. Supreme Court, where we won.

The Fourteenth Amendment was enacted during Reconstruction as the nation rebuilt following the Civil War. It is a core reason that the United States has been seen for generations as a beacon of freedom and opportunity around the world.

The Court should never have considered such a blatantly unconstitutional order to begin with, but our victory reaffirms a principle that has been settled for over 150 years: If you are born in the United States, you are a citizen.

ICE AGENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Carvajal-Muñoz v. Ravencamp

We're suing federal immigration agents for abducting a Portland man and violating his civil rights during a surge of reckless federal operations in Maine.

Our client was driving to work when he was abruptly blocked by an unmarked SUV and violently abducted. He complied and posed no threat, but agents smashed his window, dragged him out at taser-point, handcuffed him, and put him in the SUV. They left his car running in the street, door open, keys

and bag inside, and his phone lying on the pavement.

The U.S. Supreme Court has made it incredibly difficult to hold federal officials accountable, so we're seeking justice under Maine law. This case could re-establish a crucial legal avenue to hold federal agents accountable under state laws, like the Maine Civil Rights Act.

FREE SPEECH AT GOVERNMENT EVENTS

McGonigle v. Curran

No matter who is in power, the Constitution protects our right to publicly joke, mock, insult, or dissent – but our client was barred from official vice-presidential events for doing exactly that.

Through the social media account @CatsOnACouch, our client criticizes the government, shares news, and promotes mutual aid efforts. Her account name references J.D. Vance's infamous comment about "childless cat ladies."

In retaliation for her speech, she was denied entry to official government events that were open for public registration. Armed agents even told her they "know where [she] stands" when they blocked her from a Bangor event.

Using humor and satire to criticize public officials has been a long-standing tradition since our founding. We brought this case to protect every person's right to dissent freely no matter who they are or who they criticize.

FRIEND-OF-THE-COURT HIGHLIGHTS

The ACLU of Maine has weighed in on several important cases, securing key victories in the First Circuit.

Voter Privacy:

United States v. Bellows

We're urging a federal appeals court to reject the Trump administration's

attempt to access sensitive Maine voter data, which could be used to build a national voter database and disenfranchise voters. This case is part of similar ACLU efforts to protect voter privacy in over 20 states.

Religious Liberty & LGBTQ Equality:

Crosspoint v. Makin & St. Dominic v. Makin

A federal appeals court ruled private schools participating in publicly funded programs are not exempt from the Maine Human Rights Act's ban on discrimination against students based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Academic Freedom:

Harvard v. HHS & AAUP v. Rubio

We're defending academic freedom from the Trump administration's attempted ideological takeovers. Academic freedom is a cornerstone of a free society, and universities must remain independent spaces for inquiry, debate, and dissent – even when that speech runs counter to the government's views.

See all cases at [ACLUMaine.org/Cases](https://aclumaine.org/Cases)



25

Active state and federal cases, including as amicus



30

New state and federal lawsuits



100+

State and federal open records requests



1

Landmark case before the U.S. Supreme Court

At the State House

ICE
OUT
OF OUR
CITIES

Unlike most advocacy organizations, the ACLU of Maine advances a wide array of priorities to expand freedom for all. We do this in a variety of settings and at every level of government. Prioritization and planning are particularly crucial tools for us to refine our scope and allow our team to work with intention and deliberation toward creating substantive, sustainable change.

This year, we deepened commitments to some of the most pressing issues facing our state that we are uniquely equipped to address. This has allowed us to work more collaboratively with external partners, setting clear parameters around goals, resources, and expertise required for success. It has also made it possible for us to develop new metrics to measure effectiveness, ensure accountability, and communicate what we are doing and why.

Over the past year, we've achieved new successes in our advocacy work, with specific efforts focused on key areas:

ICE OUT OF MAINE

In 2025, we championed three bills to limit ICE's violent civil rights abuses.

The "ICE Out of Maine" laws took effect in July 2026:

- **ICE Out of Policing** restricts state and local law enforcement cooperation with federal immigration agencies.
- **ICE Out of Schools and State Healthcare** empowers frontline employees at public schools, state libraries, and state healthcare facilities to deny ICE searches of private information and private spaces unless they have a valid judicial warrant.
- **ICE Out of Our Homes** prohibits landlords from sharing sensitive tenant information, including immigration information, with federal agents unless they have a valid judicial warrant.

Over the summer, we launched a public awareness campaign that fostered a unified voice among immigrants' rights advocates, engaged Maine media, and created accessible information to help Mainers understand the laws and how they can help ensure they are enforced.

Before the laws took effect, we engaged in Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) requests to help elected officials, the

media, and the public better understand how ICE was operating in Maine. We also conducted broad outreach to the entities responsible for implementing the ICE Out laws. Moving forward, we will continue providing information to public entities as they implement the laws, and will support compliance through public records investigations and activating communities.

Prior to the governor taking action on the ICE Out laws, we worked with several municipalities to create local ordinances limiting the use of their resources to support ICE operations.

PRIVACY & SURVEILLANCE

The ACLU of Maine has continued to advocate against unregulated government surveillance and data harvesting. We championed the Maine Online Data Privacy Act, which did not pass, but made it further in the legislative process than it has in prior sessions. We will build on this momentum to raise awareness and continue seeking limitations on how the government can surveil people by purchasing data that it otherwise would not be able to access without a warrant.

Additionally, we have utilized FOAA requests to expose towns and cities using automatic license plate readers (ALPRs). We have successfully used this information to rally and support community advocates across the political spectrum who have stopped ALPRs in several towns. We are excited to use this energy to advance a statewide ban.



FREEDOM OF SPEECH

The right to make your voice heard, listen to others, and access information free from government censorship is fundamental to our collective democracy and individual liberties. We are trusted experts as lawmakers navigate the legislative process, and we are frequently consulted to ensure new bills respect every person's First Amendment rights and foster the free exchange of ideas.

LGBTQ EQUALITY

This year we defeated eight bills targeting LGBTQ rights, particularly the rights of transgender Mainers. Alongside EqualityMaine and GLAD Law, we defended trans students' rights to participate fully in school spaces and activities – including sports – and stopped bills undermining anti-discrimination protections and attacking healthcare access for transgender youth and adults.



42

Trips to Augusta for
legislative advocacy



23

Bills testified on at the
Legislature



4,000+

Messages to legislators
from supporters

In Maine **Communities**



This year saw significant growth in the scope and scale of our public education and outreach, including a range of new opportunities for community members to engage with and benefit from the ACLU of Maine.

We continue to expand our geographic reach to bring resources to every Maine county, working collaboratively with nonpartisan community organizations, and in libraries, schools, houses of worship, and other civic spaces.

| EVENTS

The ACLU of Maine held a range of programs throughout the state.

We hosted Know Your Rights trainings on issues like immigration, voting rights, and LGBTQ+ students' rights. We connected with communities through local groups, libraries, and community centers from Sanford to Presque Isle.

Our team supported and joined a wide range of tabling and speaking opportunities at fairs and events of all types and sizes, from the Day for Democracy

at the University of Southern Maine and Indivisible gatherings, to the Common Ground Country Fair and Pride Aroostook.

Maine people joined trainings and updates in person and online to learn about our legislative work, litigation, and how they could take action in their communities and at the State House.

| VOLUNTEERS

This year we tripled our number of trained volunteers, offering training opportunities for tabling, legislative advocacy, community mobilization, video editing, legal intake, and more. With renewed investment in our engagement and outreach team, we look forward to continuing to grow this part of our work.

| COALITIONS

We work closely with other groups that share our values and goals, offering meaningful support and expanding our collective reach and power to effect change in Maine.

Over the past year, we deepened existing partnerships with EqualityMaine, GLAD Law, and other advocates on trans rights and LGBTQ+ equality. We partnered with the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition, Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project, and the Refugee and Human Rights Clinic at Maine Law to support Maine people targeted by ICE.

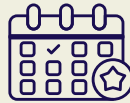
We also expanded our voting rights work. Throughout 2025, we partnered with a broad coalition to save absentee voting and defeat Question 1 at the ballot box. We built partnerships and found common ground with uncommon allies, leading to 64% of Maine voters and 12 counties voting no and preserving Maine's accessible and secure elections. More recently, we have launched a new partnership with the League of Women Voters of Maine. Together, we are tackling nonpartisan election protection initiatives to build voter confidence and safeguard our free, safe, and fair elections.

We are grateful for the many community organizations and groups of all sizes that we partner with, and will continue to develop these relationships and connections to strengthen our unified voice for progress, equality, and justice.

EMPOWERMENT IN THE FACE OF ICE

When ICE launched its reckless surge in January 2026, we prepared Maine residents to know their rights if agents knocked on their door or stopped them in the street. We partnered with the Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project and Maine Law to directly reach tens of thousands of people, as thousands more peacefully protested, joined mutual aid efforts, and kept their communities safe in the face of unchecked state violence.

Join us at an upcoming event:
[ACLUMaine.org/events](https://aclumaine.org/events)



90

Events hosted or supported



7,209

People personally reached through programming



11

Counties visited



10,000+

Know Your Rights pamphlets distributed



17,000

Active email subscribers



3,075

Mentions in Maine and national media

Thank You

for making this work possible.

This work is only possible because of you. We're honored by your partnership at this critical time in our state and our country. We hope this report helps demonstrate the impact of your support – in court, at the State House, and in the community.

Every gift and every donor makes a difference. Together, we are meeting this moment with courage and determination. Thank you for believing in this work and investing in our collective future so we may keep building a more perfect union.

10,387
Members

1,578
Donors

447
Maine Municipalities Where
Donors and Members Live

Learn about ways to give at
[ACLUMaine.org/Give](https://aclumaine.org/Give)

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Sign up for email updates and follow
@ACLUMaine for the latest news.



I'm always inspired by those who are willing to go toe-to-toe with the government to **preserve everyone's constitutional rights**. There are lots of reasons why ordinary people may be scared to speak up or fearful of retaliation.

There are attorneys and advocates who also have that same fear. But not the ACLU of Maine. **It has been steadfast in its knowledge, compassion, and support** – and I'm beyond thrilled by the representation, and I'm eager to give them that same support moving forward.

AMANDA MCGONIGLE

ACLU of Maine client in *McGonigle v. Curran*

1.2M

views of Know Your Rights
information during the
January ICE surge

16

full-time
staff

84,000

Maine supporters
connected or engaged
with the ACLU

17,000

active subscribers

ONE

united fight to protect and
expand the civil rights
and civil liberties for every
person in Maine

16 COUNTIES

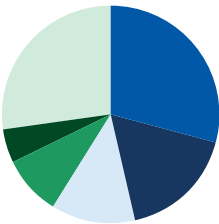
Donors, supporters, and
members in all Maine counties



FINANCIALS

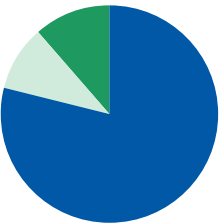
The ACLU of Maine Foundation and the ACLU of Maine (Union) are separate nonprofit organizations. **The Foundation** conducts litigation and public education programs. It is a 501(c)(3) organization, and contributions to it are tax deductible.

The Union conducts membership outreach and organizing, legislative advocacy, and lobbying. It is supported primarily by membership dues. It is a 501(c)(4) organization, and donations to it are not tax deductible.



REVENUE: \$6,040,842 (Financial Assets & In-Kind Support)

\$2,529,935 Individual Contributions	\$400,000 ACLU National Contributions
\$1,444,218 Grants	\$405,348 Investments, Events, and Other
\$407,696 Bequests and Planned Giving	\$853,645 Pro-Bono Legal Work from Co-Counsel & Other Contributed Non-Financial Assets



EXPENSES: \$3,289,206

\$2,608,267 Programs	\$309,804 Fundraising
\$371,135 Management & General	

Consolidated audited statement for the ACLU of Maine Foundation 501(c)(3) and ACLU of Maine 501(c)(4). Fiscal Year 26: April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026.

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WE THE PEOPLE
dare to create
A MORE PERFECT UNION

