

# 2025 Legislative Priorities

ACLU  
ME



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- 2. Meet the team**
- 3. Legislative goals**
- 4. Get Involved**
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2025 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

# Meet Today's Speakers



**MOLLY CURREN  
ROWLES**

Executive Director  
ACLU of Maine



**MICHAEL  
KEBEDE**

Policy Director  
ACLU of Maine



**ALICIA  
REA**

Policy Fellow  
ACLU of Maine



**SAM  
CRANKSHAW**

Communications Director  
ACLU of Maine

WHERE WE'RE LEADING THE CHARGE

# ACLU LEGISLATIVE GOALS

# LEGISLATIVE GOALS



**Data  
Privacy**



**Speedy  
Trial**



**Immigrants'  
Rights**



**Criminal  
Legal Reform**

LEGISLATIVE GOAL: DATA PRIVACY

**PROTECTING MAINERS FROM BIG TECH AND  
GOVERNMENT SURVEILLANCE**

GOAL: DATA PRIVACY

# ENDING MASS DATA SURVEILLANCE

## The Problem: Big Tech tracks our every move

- A handful of huge technology companies control the digital ecosystem (aka "Big Tech").
- Nearly every website and app has tracking systems that collect information about every user – whether you give consent or not.
- Your actions are tracked across different apps and websites.

GOAL: DATA PRIVACY

# ENDING MASS DATA SURVEILLANCE

# 3,000

One firm studied by the FTC reported having 3,000 data segments on nearly every U.S. Consumer.

*Source: Electronic Privacy Information Center, 2024*

# 66%

Up to 2/3 of web traffic consists of bots and other tracking mechanisms.



GOAL: DATA PRIVACY

# ENDING MASS DATA SURVEILLANCE

## The Problem: Big Tech invades our privacy and threatens due process

- The government can purchase or obtain that data without a warrant, threatening various constitutional rights (e.g. selling your location, period tracking apps).
- Data collection makes it easy for the government to spy on people outside the bounds of the law (e.g. Ring cameras).
- Big Tech can and does use our personal information to manipulate us into voting a certain way.

GOAL: DATA PRIVACY

# ENDING MASS DATA SURVEILLANCE

## The Problem: Big Tech risks safety, fuels discrimination

- By gathering and storing extensive data, our sensitive information (e.g. fingerprints, face scans, social security numbers) is vulnerable to data breaches and hacking.
- Algorithms can use our data to discriminate based on race and gender, when making decisions about hiring, offering loans, accepting students, and more (e.g. digital redlining).

GOAL: DATA PRIVACY

# ENDING MASS DATA SURVEILLANCE

## The Solution:

- Data minimization: Limiting the collection and use of personal information to what a consumer would expect a company to collect to provide a good or service.
- Civil rights protections: Making sure our technology is not being used to discriminate.

GOAL: DATA PRIVACY

# ENDING MASS DATA SURVEILLANCE

## The Solution:

- Safeguarding biometric data: Protecting things like fingerprints and palm prints.
- Consumer empowerment & consent: Data privacy protections give users the power to choose how their data is being used.

GOAL: DATA PRIVACY

# ENDING MASS DATA SURVEILLANCE

## The Solution: Empowering Maine's people

- Maine consumers should be empowered to share their personal information how they choose.
- Industries should not get to decide what they collect about you and sell it to the highest bidder without your clear consent.

GOAL: DATA PRIVACY

# ENDING MASS DATA SURVEILLANCE

## Related issues and legislation

- ISP privacy laws
- Restrictions on the government's use of facial surveillance
- REAL ID

LEGISLATIVE GOAL: A FAIR TRIAL

**UPHOLDING THE RIGHT TO  
A SPEEDY TRIAL**

GOAL: A FAIR TRIAL

# UPHOLDING THE RIGHT TO A SPEEDY TRIAL

## The Problem: Maine is failing to uphold the people's right to a speedy trial

- Hundreds of people across Maine are experiencing unprecedented delays, waiting months and years for a trial, often while incarcerated.
- The right to a speedy trial is guaranteed by both the US and Maine Constitutions, but for far too long, this right has existed only on paper in Maine, and not in practice.



GOAL: A FAIR TRIAL

# UPHOLDING THE RIGHT TO A SPEEDY TRIAL

## The Solution:

- Clear timelines for how criminal cases should proceed once a person is charged.
- When the state chooses to charge a person with a crime, it is the state's responsibility to carry out the legal process in a timely manner.
- No person should be jailed, separated from their family, and unable to work simply because the state cannot carry out its basic duties.

LEGISLATIVE GOAL: IMMIGRANTS' RIGHTS & COMMUNITY SAFETY

# **A FAIR, ORDERLY, AND HUMANE IMMIGRATION SYSTEM**

GOAL: IMMIGRANTS' RIGHTS & COMMUNITY SAFETY

# A FAIR, ORDERLY, AND HUMANE IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

**The Problem: Our immigration system continues to make our communities less safe**

- The current federal administration is creating an immigration system that is cruel, chaotic, and has a negative humanitarian and economic impact.
- Asking our state law enforcement to enforce immigration policy creates a chilling effect on public safety – people feel unsafe asking law enforcement for help when it is truly needed.

GOAL: IMMIGRANTS' RIGHTS & COMMUNITY SAFETY

# A FAIR, ORDERLY, AND HUMANE IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

**The Problem: Our immigration system continues to make our communities less safe**

- Immigration law is incredibly complex; our local law enforcement officials are not trained in this area, creating an additional burden on officers.
- When our local law enforcement is tied up in complicated immigration law that is outside the scope of their duties, they are not using their resources to keep our communities safe.

GOAL: IMMIGRANTS' RIGHTS & COMMUNITY SAFETY

# A FAIR, ORDERLY, AND HUMANE IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

## The Solution

- Prohibiting state and local officials from inquiring about immigration status.
- Asserting Maine's state and local law enforcement's independence.

LEGISLATIVE GOAL: CRIMINAL LEGAL REFORM

**REDUCING RELIANCE ON POLICING AND  
PUNISHMENT**

GOAL: CRIMINAL LEGAL REFORM

# REDUCING RELIANCE ON POLICING AND PUNISHMENT

## The Problem: Government relies too heavily on policing and punishment

- Criminal records can prevent people from living a stable life.
- Our criminal legal system is racially disparate and exacerbates our social problems.
- Youth incarceration also exacerbates racial disparities and detains children instead of providing care.

# REDUCING RELIANCE ON POLICING AND PUNISHMENT

## The Solution: Addressing root causes of social issues

- Communities are safest when people have what they need to thrive. Evidence-based public safety solutions include affordable access to housing, health care, job training, and education.
- Creating new crimes and incarcerating more people than any other country has not made our communities safer.
- Maine must reform existing laws that are overly harsh and entangle people in the legal system (e.g., LD 179, bipartisan bail reform).



GOAL: CRIMINAL LEGAL REFORM

# REDUCING RELIANCE ON POLICING AND PUNISHMENT

## The Solution:

- Expanding the existing criminal records sealing system and opposing legislation that does the opposite.
- Repurposing Long Creek Youth Development Center (Maine's youth prison) and setting a floor on the minimum age for prosecution in Maine.
- When children misbehave, they need support services, counseling, and after school programming – not incarceration.

HOW WE'RE SUPPORTING OUR PARTNERS & COMMUNITIES

# COALITION PRIORITIES

# COALITION PRIORITIES



**Indigenous Justice**



**Reproductive Freedom  
& LGBTQ Equality**



**Drug Policy Reform**



**Voting Rights**

LEGISLATIVE GOAL: INDIGENOUS JUSTICE

**STRENGTHENING WABANAKI SOVEREIGNTY  
AND ENHANCING INDIGENOUS STUDIES**

GOAL: INDIGENOUS JUSTICE

# WABANAKI SOVEREIGNTY

**The Problem: Maine is the only state that denies federally recognized tribes many protections under federal law**

- The Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980 dramatically limits the rights of the Wabanaki Nations: Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Passamaquoddy Tribe, Penobscot Nation, and Mi'kmaq Nation.
- Outside of Maine, Indigenous nations are experiencing a 30-year economic boom. Due to restrictions, the Wabanaki are excluded from this growth.

GOAL: INDIGENOUS JUSTICE

# WABANAKI SOVEREIGNTY

## The Solution:

- Enact the 22 consensus recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act.
- Follow the Wabanaki Alliance's work ([WabanakiAlliance.org](https://WabanakiAlliance.org))

GOAL: INDIGENOUS JUSTICE

# WABANAKI STUDIES

## **The Problem: The Wabanaki Studies Law enacted in 2001 is not meaningfully enforced across the state**

- A visionary 2001 law mandates public schools teach students about the Wabanaki, but it is not being effectively implemented.
- Schools and teachers do not have the resources they need to consistently and appropriately include Wabanaki Studies in their curriculum.

GOAL: INDIGENOUS JUSTICE

# WABANAKI STUDIES

## The Solution:

- Implement the recommendations of the report on Wabanaki Studies authored by the Abbe Museum, ACLU of Maine, Maine Indian-Tribal State Commission, and the Wabanaki Alliance.

## THE WABANAKI STUDIES LAW

21 Years After Implementation



Abbe Museum

ACLU  
Maine

MAINE INDIAN  
TRIBAL-STATE  
COMMISSION





LEGISLATIVE GOAL: REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM & LGBTQ+ EQUALITY

# **PROTECTING REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM & GENDER AFFIRMING CARE**

GOAL: PROTECTING REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM & GENDER AFFIRMING CARE

# REPRODUCTIVE & LGBTQ+ RIGHTS

## The Problem:

- Maine has strong protections, including a shield law, but we expect legislation attacking access to reproductive healthcare.
- Maine lawmakers have already submitted at least 10 bills attacking transgender people, particularly youth.

GOAL: PROTECTING REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM & GENDER AFFIRMING CARE

# REPRODUCTIVE & LGBTQ+ RIGHTS

## The Solution:

- Stopping legislation that restricts the rights of trans and gender nonconforming youth in the state.
- Promoting access to reproductive healthcare.
- Ensuring protections in the Maine Human Rights Act are upheld and enforced.

LEGISLATIVE GOAL: DRUG POLICY REFORM

**SAFER, HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES**

GOAL: DRUG POLICY REFORM

# SAFER, HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

## The Problem: Criminalizing substance use does not make our communities safer or healthier

- Maine continues to wage a failed war on drugs by criminalizing substance use instead of treating substance use for what it is: a public health issue that demands a public health response.
- Criminalizing people who use drugs has significant adverse economic and social costs and ignores the root causes of the issue.

GOAL: SAFER, HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

# SAFER, HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

**The Problem: Criminalizing substance use does not make our communities safer or healthier**

- A year in a state prison costs more than twice as much as it would cost to provide housing, weekly counseling, and medication-assisted treatment for a year.
- Criminalization places lawyers and police in charge of health care decisions.

GOAL: SAFER, HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

# DRUG POLICY REFORM

## The Solution:

- We're committed to drug policy reform as part of a commitment to individual freedom.
- We support our coalition partners working to enhance Maine's best practices in public health, policy, harm reduction, and recovery.
- We oppose drug policy that further criminalizes substance use and creates disparate impact on communities of color.

LEGISLATIVE GOAL: PROTECT VOTING RIGHTS

# VOTING RIGHTS



GOAL: PROTECT VOTING RIGHTS

# VOTING RIGHTS

## **The Problem: Mandatory voter ID makes it harder for people to vote and does not make elections any safer**

- This is not a simple voter ID measure. Voter ID for ME would change Maine's popular, accessible, and secure voting procedures for eligible voters.
- It would restrict where people can drop off absentee ballots, making voting less accessible in rural areas and creating additional burden for local elections workers.
- Older and disabled voters would be forced to request a ballot for every single election instead of automatically receiving one.

GOAL: PROTECT VOTING RIGHTS

# VOTING RIGHTS

## The Solution:

- Support legislation that affirms our commitment to safe, secure, and accessible elections.
- Stop legislation that would change Maine's voting laws in a way that makes it more difficult to vote and silence Maine voters.

GET ENGAGED

# STAY UP TO DATE

Sign up for periodic email updates at [ACLUMaine.org](https://aclumaine.org)

Follow @ACLUMaine on Bluesky, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter



ACLU  
ME

GET ENGAGED

# TAKE ACTION

Sign up to volunteer and contact lawmakers about priority legislation at [ACLUMaine.org/Act](https://aclumaine.org/Act)

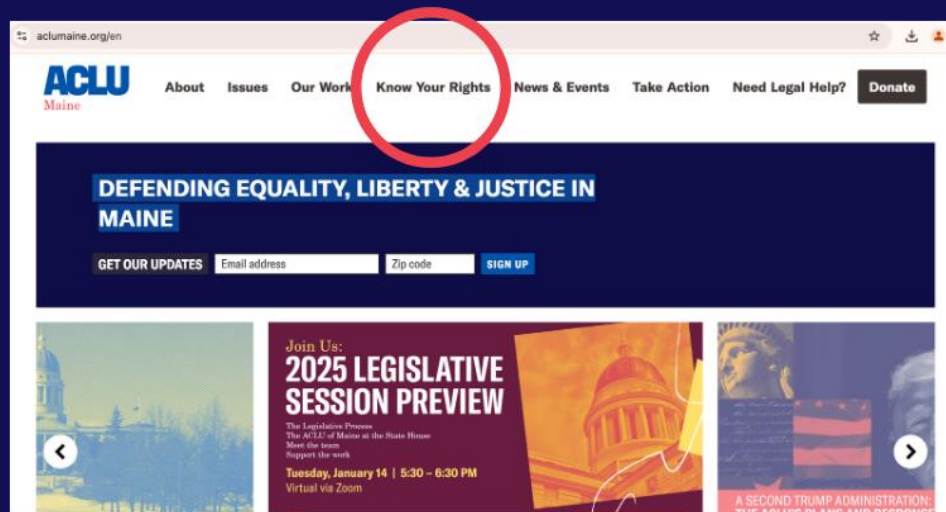
The screenshot shows the ACLU Maine website interface. The browser address bar displays 'aclumaine.org/en'. The navigation menu includes 'About', 'Issues', 'Our Work', 'Know Your Rights', 'News & Events', 'Take Action', 'Need Legal Help?', and a 'Donate' button. The 'Take Action' link is highlighted with a red circle. Below the navigation is a dark blue banner with the text 'DEFENDING EQUALITY, LIBERTY & JUSTICE IN MAINE'. Underneath the banner is a 'GET OUR UPDATES' section with input fields for 'Email address' and 'Zip code', and a 'SIGN UP' button. The bottom of the page features a carousel of promotional cards. The central card is titled 'Join Us: 2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION PREVIEW' and provides details for a virtual Zoom event on Tuesday, January 14, from 5:30 to 6:30 PM. To the right, a card titled 'A SECOND TRUMP ADMINISTRATION' is partially visible.

GET ENGAGED

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Make sure you, your family, and community know your rights at [ACLUMaine.org/KnowYourRights](https://aclumaine.org/KnowYourRights):

- Interacting with law enforcement
- Immigrants' rights
- Students' rights
- & More



GET ENGAGED

# SUPPORT THE WORK

Make a tax-deductible donation or join nearly 6,000 card carrying members in Maine at [ACLUMaine.org/Give](https://aclumaine.org/Give)

You can also gift a membership, donate in someone's honor or memory, and learn more about planned giving.



GET ENGAGED

# JOIN US

## Know Your Rights trainings:

February 10 @ 4 PM EST

February 20 @ 8 PM EST

March 3 @ 4 PM EST

March 20 @ 8 PM EST

April 7 @ 4 PM EST

April 24 @ 8 PM EST

**Legal update:** Early March



Visit [ACLUMaine.org/Events](https://aclumaine.org/Events)  
for details as event plans are  
finalized.