

ACLU

Maine

FALL
2019

A BEACON OF REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

DEAR FRIENDS,

Over the last eight years, I've been saddened to watch legislatures across the country pass over 400 laws

to restrict safe and affordable access to abortion care. But in the face of these nationwide attacks on reproductive freedom, Maine has become a source of great pride and hope.

With your help, we joined our coalition partners to push for two key bills in the last legislative session to protect and expand access to safe abortion care for all Mainers. And earlier this summer, we watched as Gov. Mills signed them both into law.

The first, LD 820, requires that all insurance coverage – public and private – that includes prenatal care also include abortion care. The second, LD 1261, ends a ban on qualified nurse practitioners and other advanced practice clinicians (APCs) providing abortion care throughout the state.

Both of these laws will help ensure that all Mainers



ACLU legal team and plaintiffs in our case challenging the ban on Medicaid coverage for abortion.

can access abortion care in their communities, regardless of where they live or how much money they make.

I'm proud to say that lawsuits filed by the ACLU of Maine paved the way for both bills. In 2015 we filed *Mabel Wadsworth Center et al. v. Lambrew* to challenge Maine's ban on Medicaid coverage for abortion. And in 2017 we filed *Jenkins et al. v. Lynch et al.* to challenge Maine's law that blocked nurse practitioners and APCs from performing abortions. Both lawsuits were put on hold as we pursued a path to legislative victory.

These new laws affirm that abortion is health care, and that everyone should have access to the health care they need.

Today, Maine stands as a shining example for the rest of the nation. Together, we've come so far – and together, we'll never go back. Thanks for all you do in this work.

Best,

Alison Beyea,
Executive
Director

As this goes to print, we are awaiting word on whether Maine's new insurance coverage law will face a challenge at the ballot. Anti-choice activists are attempting to gather signatures to put the measure to a repeal vote in an upcoming election. Stay tuned for updates on how you can make sure Maine's hard-fought victories for reproductive rights stay won.

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ACLU of Maine
PO Box 7860
Portland, ME 04112
(207) 774-5444
info@aclumaine.org
www.aclumaine.org

WELCOME TO THE TEAM

DHIVYA SINGARAM

ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR

WHAT WILL YOUR ROLE AT THE ACLU INVOLVE?

I will be organizing volunteers to mobilize around and support the ACLU of Maine's legislative, legal and advocacy work through both new and existing projects.

WHY DO YOU THINK PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WORK IS IMPORTANT?

Public engagement is action and action is power. It is an opportunity to connect, collaborate and inspire change around issues that matter to people.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT?

I'm most excited to get to know our volunteers and connect with people from all over the state!

WHY DID YOU WANT TO WORK AT THE ACLU?

I first joined the ACLU of Maine as a volunteer. As a born and raised Mainer, I've always been energized to support communities in our state. While working as a paralegal in Portland, I wanted to continue this work by organizing to defend our civil liberties.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MOVIE?

RBG (this film is honestly an anthem).



EMPOWER THE FUTURE

Your IRA, Keogh, 401(k) or 403(b) plan is a great way to provide for your retirement. It can also be an incredible way to advance civil rights now and into the future. For many, these plans are the easiest way to make a meaningful charitable gift. And, if you are 70 ½ or older, you can make direct transfers from your IRA up to \$100,000 annually without a tax penalty.

For more information on these and other ways to give, please email Laura Retherford at lretherford@aclumaine.org.

LEGAL UPDATE

In difficult times, it is sometimes necessary to look to the courts to protect our fundamental rights. Courts act as a check on the misuse of government authority, and as a counter-balance to the powers of the political branches of government.

There are some values that are simply not up for debate—freedom from discrimination, the right to criticize the government, the right to liberty. Our legal program has been busy fighting for these rights and more. Thanks for standing with us. —Zach

GAUL V. YORK COUNTY

On January 30, 2018, Caleb Gaul drove down his steep, icy driveway to ensure the path was clear for his wife, who was following in their van to take their three small children to school. He encountered a school bus parked on the Gauls' private property and blocking their driveway, with the bus driver waiting to start morning pick-up.

The bus driver refused to move the bus and instead called his supervisor at the school transportation department, who called the sheriff's department.

Ultimately Mr. Gaul, who used no force or intimidation, was arrested for obstructing government administration, handcuffed in front of his young children, and transported to the York County Jail in a police cruiser, where he was strip searched and held for five hours before making bail. All charges against him were later dropped.

We filed a lawsuit on Mr. Gaul's behalf, arguing that his arrest and treatment violated the constitutional prohibition on unreasonable search and seizure and guarantee of safety and due process.

These sorts of unnecessary arrests damage lives, waste resources, and serve no good purpose. It's time to end this misuse of our justice system and stop filling our jails with people who don't need to be there.



Zach Heiden, Legal Director

CASEY ET AL. V. YARMOUTH

Meagan Casey was elected to serve on the Yarmouth Town Council last year, a position she loves. But Ms. Casey, a high school Latin teacher, won't be able to run for re-election next year if a new amendment to the town charter is allowed to stand.

The charter amendment, adopted in November, bars school and town employees from serving on the town council. This includes teachers, custodial workers, even volunteer firefighters (who draw a small stipend from the town).

The First Amendment protects the right to campaign for public office, to serve in public office, and to vote for the candidate that best represents one's views. Yet the charter amendment throws those rights out the window. And it will keep a large group of Yarmouth residents with relevant experiences and perspectives from serving on the council.

In August, we filed a challenge to the amendment on behalf of six Yarmouth residents. They believe, like we do, that towns should be encouraging people to run for public office – not banning them from doing so. *Read more about our legal work: aclumaine.org/cases*

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PO Box 7860
Portland, ME 04112
www.aclumaine.org

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Tess Gerritsen

ACLU OF MAINE ANNUAL MEETING

October 21
5:30 p.m. Reception, 6 p.m. Program
at the Lewiston Public Library

Best selling author Tess Gerritsen will share her own story about growing up the daughter of a Chinese immigrant mother and Chinese-American father. Followed by a dynamic training with our legal team and **Prevention. Action. Change.** about interacting with law enforcement.

RSVP: www.aclumaine.org/annualmtg19

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