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Action Report



America has turned the page on a dangerous era. Four years of unrelenting assaults on civil rights and civil liberties have tested our democracy as never before. An autocrat and his cronies tried to subvert the will of the voters, tore families apart, promoted white supremacy, and waged a war on a free press, on reproductive rights, and on LGBTQ people.

At every step of the way, your ACLU challenged these attacks on liberty and democracy. We filed more than 400 legal actions and mobilized thousands of people to resist by showing up at airports, in courts, in legislatures, online, and in the streets. We protected and expanded voting rights, advanced abortion access, and battled Trump's Muslim ban in court—starting here in the Commonwealth, where the ACLU of Massachusetts won the first nationwide injunction against the ban.

Now, we must move freedom forward. We must dismantle the structures of racial oppression and strengthen our democracy to ensure that future would-be tyrants find no foothold.

Together, we must both repair the damage of the previous administration and advance a new vision of democracy, liberty, and justice for all. Together, we will reimagine policing, defend privacy and autonomy in the digital age, demand equal rights for all, and fight the scourge of racism until all people are free. Together, we will build a more just world for today and for future generations.

With this report, we reflect on how your support has enabled the ACLU to emerge from these last four years more effective and more vital than ever. We take stock of this historic moment and gather inspiration to build freedom anew. Thanks to you, we now have the strongest ACLU our nation has ever known. Together, we will build a more perfect union.

Carol Rose
Executive Director, ACLU of Massachusetts

2017

JANUARY

ACLU Blocks Trump's First Muslim Ban

After hearing reports of immigrants and refugees detained unlawfully at airports around the country, ACLU attorneys spring into action. In Boston, our immigration lawyers emerge from the federal courthouse in the early hours of the morning, having secured one of several monumental rulings that temporarily block Trump's Muslim ban.



APRIL

21,587 Cases Dismissed in MA Drug Lab Scandal

After years of litigation and advocacy from the ACLU and its partners, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court rules that over 20,000 drug cases tainted in the Hinton lab scandal involving Annie Dookhan must be thrown out—likely the single largest dismissal of wrongful convictions in the nation's history.

JULY

ACLU Challenges ICE Detainers

The ACLU celebrates the *Lunn v. Commonwealth* decision, in which the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court rules that local police cannot hold people in detention solely at the request of ICE. The ACLU's amicus brief supported this victory, which limits the scope of cooperation between local and federal law enforcement and sets a precedent for future challenges against Trump's deportation machine.

OCTOBER

ACLU Secures Jane Doe's Abortion

A 17-year-old refugee held in government custody receives abortion care after the Officer of Refugee Resettlement attempts to block her from doing so. ACLU attorneys rush to court on her behalf and obtain an emergency court order allowing her to access the medical care she needs. The government later drops this policy after an ACLU class action suit.

DECEMBER

"What a Difference a DA Makes" Launches in MA

Ahead of the 2018 elections, the ACLU of Massachusetts launches its groundbreaking "What a Difference a DA Makes" campaign, highlighting the key role that district attorneys play in determining the effectiveness and fairness of the criminal legal system. The campaign plays a prominent role in the DA elections, hosting one of the first-ever candidate forums held in a correctional facility and boosting voter turnout.



FEBRUARY

ACLU Fights Family Separation

The ACLU files the first major lawsuit to stop the Trump administration's barbaric practice of forcibly separating migrant families. As the government locks away thousands of children in dangerous conditions and deports their parents—with no plan to ever reunite them—the ACLU wins a court order to stop this cruel practice and then leads the ongoing campaign to reunite the lost children with their families.

APRIL

Keeping Families Together

The ACLU of Massachusetts files a class action lawsuit on behalf of immigrants pursuing legal status through their spouses, including Lillian Calderon, a mother of two, who was ambushed by ICE after what she thought was a successful green card interview. Another ACLU of Massachusetts client, Lucimar De Souza, is released to her family just in time for Mother's Day.



JUNE

ACLU Secures Landmark SCOTUS Ruling on Privacy

The U.S. Supreme Court rules that the government needs a warrant to access a person's cell phone history. In *Carpenter v. United States*, the ACLU challenges the government seizing—without seeking a warrant—months of location information from a man's cell phone company. The victory creates momentum for expanding privacy protection to cover other sensitive digital data.

ACLU Exposes Kobach's Voter Fraud Sham

After a three-week trial, at which ACLU lawyers repeatedly expose his arguments as nonsense, Kris Kobach, one of the loudest exponents of voter ID laws and Trump's go-to resource on alleged voter fraud, suffers a major blow when a federal judge rules that a Kansas voter ID law violates the National Voter Registration Act and the U.S. Constitution. The law blocked tens of thousands of voters from casting ballots.



NOVEMBER

MA Voters Uphold Protections for Transgender People

In a victory for transgender rights, Massachusetts voters overwhelmingly back Yes on 3, which protects transgender people from discrimination in public places. As a member of the Yes on 3 Executive Committee, the ACLU committed \$400,000 to support and empower transgender and nonbinary people through the campaign.

FEBRUARY

ACLU Challenges Trump's Border Wall

The ACLU files a lawsuit challenging the construction of Trump's border wall, days after he issued an executive order to divert billions of dollars appropriated for other purposes. Several judges rule against Trump—but the Supreme Court stays their orders, allowing construction to proceed while the case is pending.

JUNE

ACLU Wins Census Victory at SCOTUS

The U.S. Supreme Court denies the Trump administration's effort to include a citizenship question on the 2020 census. This ACLU case represents a major victory for voting rights and for hard-to-count communities, who faced the loss of political representation and power as a result of Trump's deceptive attempts to sabotage the census.

"Press Pause on Face Surveillance" Launches

The ACLU of Massachusetts launches a campaign to end the unregulated government use of a dangerous, dystopian technology that threatens our most cherished freedoms. The campaign seeks municipal bans and a statewide moratorium on government use of face surveillance until safeguards are in place.

ACLU Ensures Just Treatment in MA Jails

A federal judge orders that a Massachusetts woman be provided with her prescribed medication for addiction treatment while incarcerated. The ACLU case against the Federal Bureau of Prisons marks a first-of-its-kind victory for the rights of the Commonwealth's incarcerated population.



AUGUST

Rights Vindicated for Trans Student

A federal judge rules in favor of ACLU client Gavin Grimm, a young transgender student who challenged the discriminatory bathroom policies at his Virginia high school. The court rules that requiring Grimm to use private bathroom stalls, segregated from his peers, is a violation of his constitutional rights.

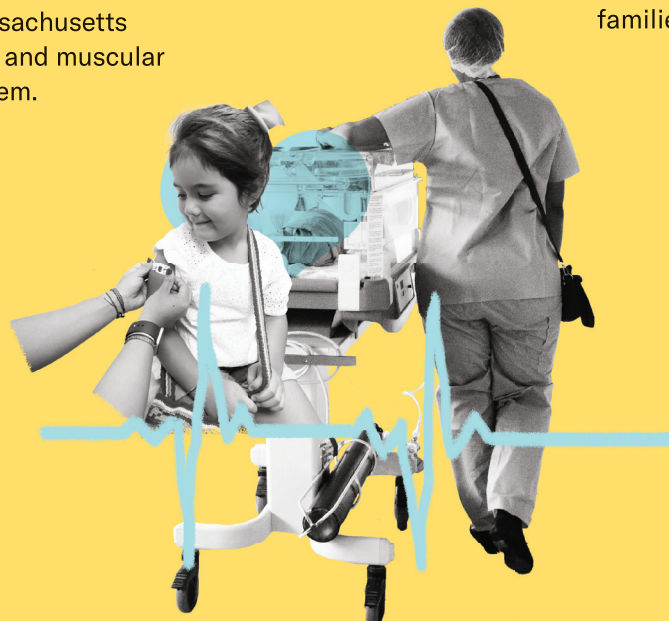
ACLU Protects Life-saving Program for Sick Families

After public outcry and an ACLU of Massachusetts lawsuit, the Trump administration reverses course and reinstates a program that protects immigrants with life-threatening health conditions from deportation. This includes children seeking treatment in Massachusetts for illnesses such as cancer, cerebral palsy, and muscular dystrophy—and the parents who care for them.

NOVEMBER

ACLU Pushes for Fair Immigration Hearings

The ACLU of Massachusetts successfully defends due process when a federal judge rules the government must bear the burden of proof in immigration bond hearings. This monumental decision overhauls the 20-year practice in New England of detaining immigrants by default while their cases proceed. Now, people are much more likely to be with their families during that time.



JANUARY

A Family Reunites

The ACLU of Massachusetts files a lawsuit challenging the Trump administration's Migrant Protection Protocols, a cruel border policy that forces over 60,000 asylum-seekers to wait in dangerous regions of Mexico for months at a time. Subsequently, our client in Massachusetts is reunited with her husband and their son at Logan airport.

FEBRUARY

Congress Impeaches Trump

The Senate votes to acquit Donald Trump after his impeachment in the House. The ACLU Board of Directors reaffirms its belief that Trump committed impeachable offenses, having already passed a unanimous resolution to that effect. This is the first time since Nixon that the ACLU has called for a president to be impeached.

MARCH

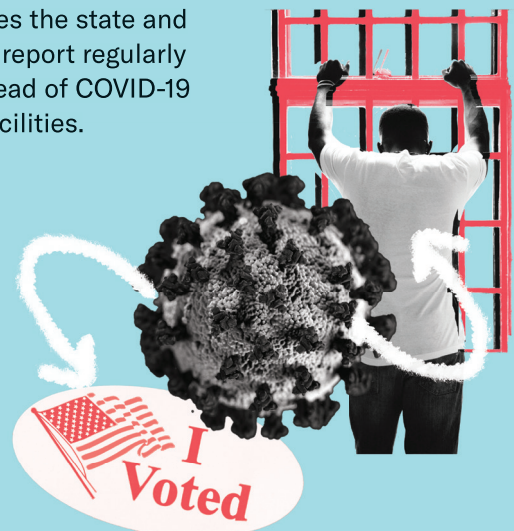
ACLU Responds to COVID-19

The ACLU files 37 legal actions before the election to expand or facilitate absentee voting to ensure that voters do not have to put their own health at risk to exercise their rights. In Massachusetts, our litigation to protect the health of incarcerated people results in a significant reduction of prison and jail populations and requires the state and sheriffs to report regularly on the spread of COVID-19 in these facilities.

JUNE

ACLU Secures Landmark LGBTQ Ruling

Two U.S. Supreme Court rulings on LGBTQ workplace rights make history, thanks to the heroism of ACLU clients Aimee Stephens and Donald Zarda, both of whom sadly pass away before their cases can be resolved. Their legacies and these decisions affirm that employers cannot fire people based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.



JULY

MA Municipalities Ban Face Surveillance

Easthampton becomes the seventh city to ban face surveillance, marking a major victory for the ACLU's "Press Pause on Face Surveillance" campaign. The list of municipalities includes Boston, the largest city on the East Coast to pass such a ban. Collectively, over 1 million people in the Commonwealth now enjoy safeguards against this invasive technology.

AUGUST

Robert Williams Speaks Up About Biased Technology

The ACLU agrees to represent Robert Williams, the first-known victim of a wrongful arrest in the U.S. based on facial recognition software. Williams, a Black man living in the Detroit area, was handcuffed in his driveway, and taken away while his daughters watched in tears. He was in custody for over 30 hours before police realized their mistake.

SEPTEMBER

ACLU Honors Ruth Bader Ginsberg

The ACLU mourns the passing of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, founder of the ACLU Women's Rights Project and a towering figure on the U.S. Supreme Court. In honor of its most distinguished alumna, the ACLU announces the dedication of its Center for Liberty as the Ruth Bader Ginsburg Liberty Center.



NOVEMBER

Every Vote Counts

The ACLU concludes a months-long campaign to ensure that all eligible voters can cast their ballots without intimidation, interference, or unnecessary obstacles, especially in battleground states of Georgia, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania. In all, the ACLU's voting rights litigation secures 26 victories in 20 states, covering 154 million Americans and 247 Electoral College votes.

2020

DECEMBER

MA Improves Abortion Access

As a founding member of the ROE Act Coalition, the ACLU of Massachusetts celebrates the passage of legislation that removes medically unnecessary barriers to abortion. Massachusetts is the first state to legislatively ease restrictions on young people's access to care, ensuring that no 16- or 17-year-old will ever be forced to navigate the court system to get the health care they need.

Police Reform Passes in MA

The killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, and others spark a nationwide reckoning with police brutality. Months after protests cascaded across Massachusetts, the state legislature passes a compromise bill with several key provisions—advocated by the ACLU of Massachusetts—that will save lives, advance civil rights, and safeguard liberties.

ACLU Secures First Amendment Victories

The ACLU of Massachusetts celebrates two major legal victories projecting fundamental civil rights: one case establishing the right to secretly record police in public places, and one striking down unlawful bans on seeking charity from motorists.



2021

The ACLU of Massachusetts in 2021

In the wake of January's horrifying attack on the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., and with the dawn of a new administration, the ACLU is committed to moving freedom forward in 2021 by strengthening our democracy and tackling systemic barriers to equality, justice, and liberty so that **We the People**—not a white supremacist mob—may determine our nation's destiny.

In the State House

The ACLU will be working with our partners on Beacon Hill to push for new bills on face surveillance, voting rights, immigrants' rights, drug policy, and sentencing reform. Last year, we showed that Massachusetts can be a leader once again in the protection and expansion of civil rights and civil liberties. We'll work to ensure the Commonwealth continues to live up to its promise.

In the Halls of Congress

The new administration offers delegates and appointees from Massachusetts the opportunity to be leading voices in the fight to undo the harm caused by the Trump administration—and to build something better in its place. The ACLU will use every means at its disposal to hold our federal government accountable, especially those who represent the Commonwealth.

In the Courts

The ACLU of Massachusetts will continue its fight in the courts to hold our government accountable at the local, state, and federal levels. In addition to pursuing pending litigation on immigrants' rights, our legal team will push for increased transparency in police departments and other agencies, and for just treatment of those who are incarcerated in the Commonwealth.

In Cities and Towns

The ACLU has built strong relationships with community organizations and elected officials in cities and towns across the Commonwealth, passing municipal ordinances that limit local cooperation with ICE and protect people from unregulated surveillance. We'll continue to lift up local voices in their pursuit of safer, healthier communities, free from over-policing and government overreach.

On the Streets

Since Trump took office, the ACLU has forged itself into a powerful force for change, bolstered by a formidable collective of activists and supporters who are committed to building a better future. We will continue to engage, organize, and mobilize our passionate supporters in pursuit of social, racial, and economic justice in the courts, the legislature, and the streets.

On the Airwaves

The ACLU of Massachusetts has earned a reputation as the leading authority on civil rights and civil liberties in the Commonwealth, in large part because we can tell powerful, compelling stories through both traditional and digital media. In 2021, we'll continue to drive the narrative using innovative tools like social media and data analysis, and by uplifting those voices most affected by systemic oppression.

Thank You

The ACLU of Massachusetts is profoundly grateful for the partnership of individuals, companies, and foundations whose support enables the ACLU to protect and advance the civil liberties of everyone in this country. Together, we will continue to stand up for our nation's enduring principles of justice, liberty, democracy, and equality.

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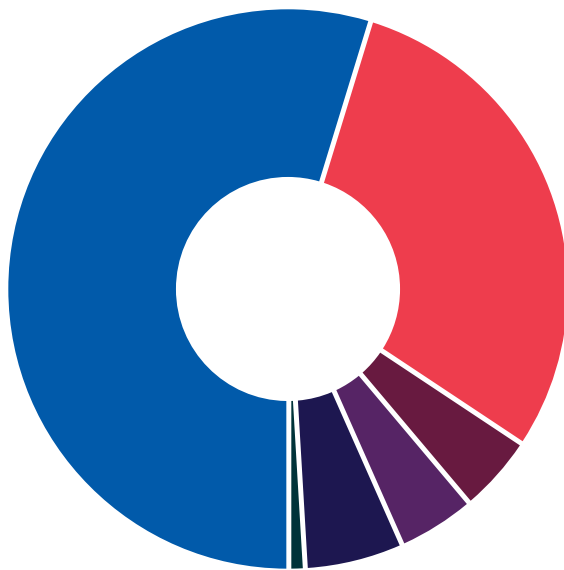
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ACLU of Massachusetts and ACLU Foundation of Massachusetts FY20 Combined Revenue and Expenses



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Individual Contributions	\$5,193,215
Memberships	\$2,800,558
Grants	\$406,000
Bequests	\$435,725
Interest/Other Income	\$561,126
Legal Fees	\$83,654



Expenses

Program	\$5,196,553
Fundraising	\$837,178
Management/Admin	\$921,218

For comprehensive audited financials, visit aclum.org/2020

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