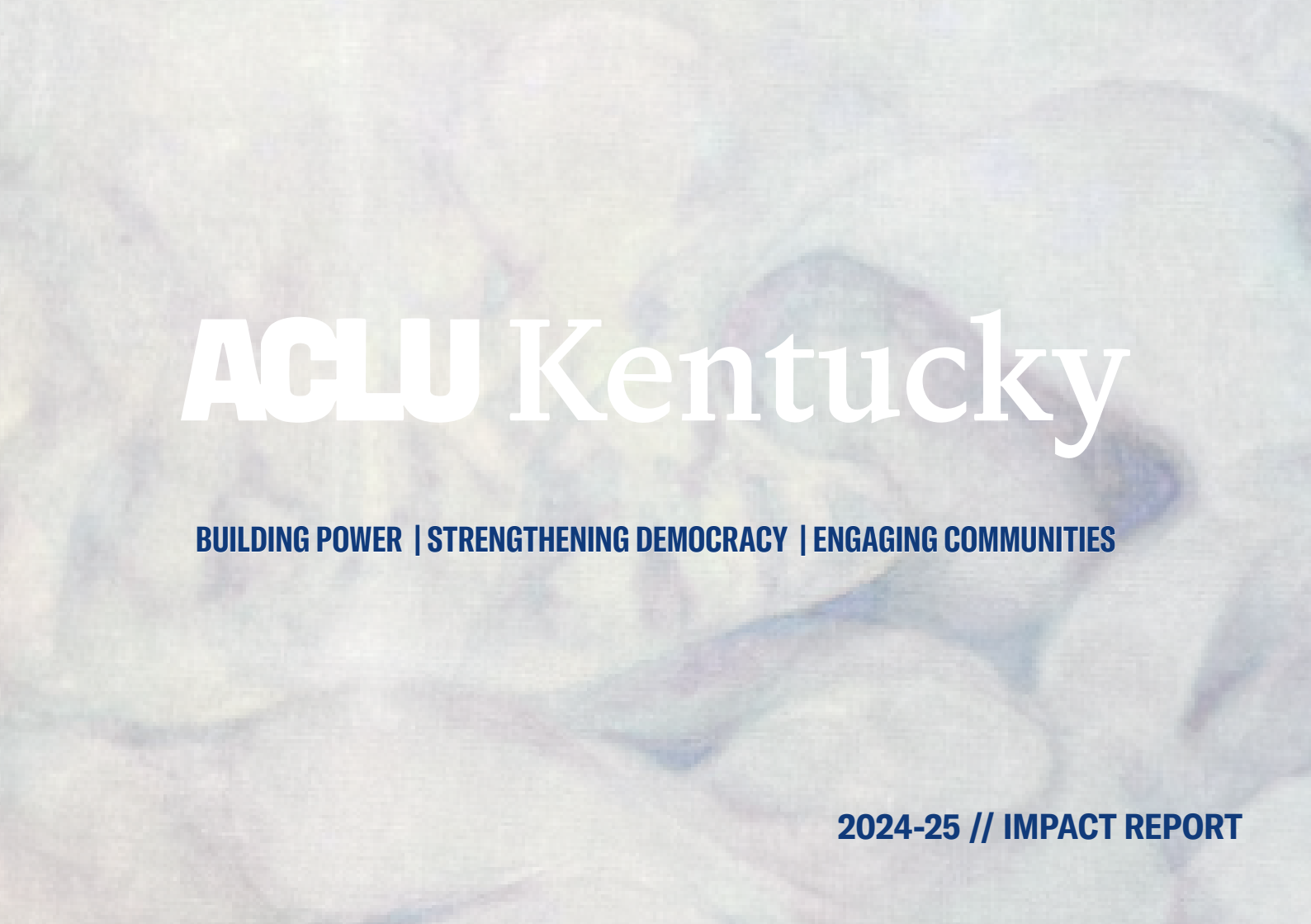




ACLU Kentucky

BUILDING POWER | STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY | ENGAGING COMMUNITIES

2024-25 // IMPACT REPORT

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About the Artwork in This Report

Paul Chevarnak, artist and ACLU of Kentucky supporter, offered his artwork "Walking on, Friend or Afraid" for our use in this report. We appreciate his contribution to our work.

Artist's Statement

"I believe we are all a part of nature and the choices we make affect everything that is. As an artist I concentrate on the balance of color and light, letting the image present itself, like looking at clouds, hopefully stirring emotion in the viewer."



MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Amber Duke
Executive Director

There's no way to sugarcoat it. The last year has been hard. Hard on our staff, board members, coalition partners, and volunteers. Most importantly, it's been hard on the people of our Commonwealth who have already borne the brunt of bad policy, hateful legislation, and an onslaught of attacks on civil liberties.

And, if I can match that frankness with realism, our fight ahead is not just difficult, it's critical.

In our 2025 Fiscal Year, we aggressively fought House Bill 5, one of the most regressive justice reform bills the Commonwealth has ever seen. Despite our exhaustive efforts, it was passed into law over the Governor's veto. In the months since, HB5 has caused irreparable harm to our houseless neighbors, entrapped people with substance use disorders in the justice system, and exacerbated our mass incarceration crisis.

And, as Kentucky continues as a forced pregnancy state, we're seeing some of the worst maternal health outcomes in the country, right here in our Commonwealth. On top of all that, we are responding daily to efforts to limit free speech. It's clear that our fight must continue on all of these fronts. We know these divisive efforts will only grow louder and more exaggerated as we move toward the midterm elections.

These fights are not new, but neither are we. We are armed with 70 years of history and uniquely positioned to lead this work through litigation, advocacy, and mobilization of directly impacted people across issue areas to address the challenges to civil liberties in the Commonwealth – relentlessly. We know our most vulnerable citizens rely on the ACLU of Kentucky to defend their rights, just as we've done for seven decades and will continue to do.

We are excited to have a new strategic plan to guide our work and lead the way to equal protection for ALL Kentuckians.

We will dissent when we are wronged, object when we are cheated, and march when our rights are threatened. This is patriotism in its highest form.

We are grateful you continue to stand with us.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amber L. Duke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'A' and 'D'.

MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Omar Salinas Chacón Board President

It's been a year of pain and loss for an uncountable number of people throughout the country, especially those who look like me.

Normally, Amber and I team up to write this annual letter to you. But there's nothing normal about this moment. My name is Omar Salinas Chacón. I'm the President of the ACLU of Kentucky Board, and I don't know when, or if, I will see my parents again.

A few months ago, I said goodbye to them as they reluctantly returned to El Salvador. We made the tough decision to get them out of the country because we saw what is happening to other immigrants who are detained, kept in inhumane conditions, and denied their right to due process. I did not want to risk my parents being among those thrown in a detention center and have their human rights violated. As soon as they left the United States, they were hit with a 10-year ban on re-entry. And because of my DACA status, I can't go visit them.

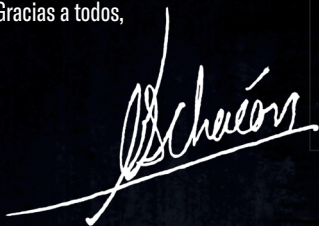
Unfortunately, my story is not unique. What makes me so angry is that this is happening all across the country.

There's no place for an ICE Gestapo in a democratic society.

This is everyone's fight.

¡El pueblo unido jamás será vencido!

Gracias a todos,



PROTECT **IMMIGRANTS**

ACLU

IMPACT LITIGATION

EK v. DoDEA

Jessica Henninger was worried about her kids' education. Jessica is a military spouse, and her experience with the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools had always been positive. In particular, she liked how diverse the schools in the DoDEA system were, with people of varied backgrounds, experiences, and cultures living in a subset of the rest of the world ... she called it a "microcosm of the world at large."

But in February 2025, she noticed some disturbing changes. Her kindergartner's teacher reached out asking for an early return of some library books, because the library was closing "for an unspecified period of time." Then, her fourth grader's Black History Month project, which her child had been hard at work on, was also canceled.

Jessica raised her concern with the school, but she knew all this activity was likely in response to the Trump Administration's executive orders eliminating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and "gender ideology" from educational curriculum.

Jessica's family is stationed at Fort Campbell in Kentucky, so she reached out through our legal intake form to ask for help. Soon, other families on U.S. military bases began sharing similar stories, and on April 15, 2025, the ACLU of Kentucky, the ACLU of Virginia, and ACLU National filed suit against DoDEA on behalf of 12 students from 6 families, ranging from pre-K to 11th grade, who attend DoDEA schools in Kentucky, Virginia, Italy, and Japan.

The suit was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia and the court recently ordered the books returned and curricula restored in our clients' schools while the case continues.





“

Our clients have a right to receive an education that includes an open and honest dialogue about America's history. Censoring books and canceling assignments about the contributions of Black Americans is not only wrong, but antithetical to our First Amendment rights.

- Corey Shapiro, Legal Director

”

**WE DON'T
NEED YOUR
[REDACTED]
CENSORSHIP.**

IMPACT LITIGATION

Standing Up for Voters in Real Time

On November 5, 2024, Jefferson County voters faced unprecedented delays at polling locations due to technical failures with electronic pollbooks. Multiple simultaneous data downloads caused web crashes, leaving voters waiting for hours - or in some cases, unable to cast their ballots.

The ACLU of Kentucky responded immediately. Our legal team engaged with media partners, provided guidance through our Voter Protection Hotline, and filed a same-day lawsuit - an action we believe is unprecedented in the history of ACLU-KY. We sought to ensure polling locations remained open for all voters affected by these delays, demonstrating our commitment to fairness, equity, and the constitutional right to vote.

While the court ultimately denied the petition to extend polling hours, our swift and decisive action highlighted our ability to react in real time to protect democratic participation. This incident reflects the ACLU of Kentucky's ongoing dedication to safeguarding voting rights and ensuring every eligible Kentuckian can have their voice heard.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS WHEN VOTING

Check your registration and register to vote at www.govote.ky.gov

Make a plan for Election Day. Know when and where you will cast your vote, how you will get there and what documents you may need to have with you.

YOUR RIGHTS

If you cannot vote in-person on Election Day, you can vote early or by absentee vote-by-mail ballot.

Kentucky allows any voter to vote absentee, and you can request an absentee ballot on the Secretary of State's website.

WHAT TO DO

Learn about your options to exercise absentee or early voting in your state.

Check the deadlines for registration and requesting an absentee ballot at <https://www.govote.ky.gov>.

GENERAL RIGHTS ON ELECTION DAY

If the polls close while you're still in line, stay in line - you have the right to vote.

If you make a mistake on your ballot, ask for a new one.

If the machines are down at your polling place, ask for a paper ballot.

If you run into any problems or have questions on Election Day, call the Election Protection Hotline:

English: 1-866-OUR-VOTE / 1-866-687-8683

Spanish: 1-888-VE-Y-VOTA / 1-888-839-8682

Arabic: 1-844-YALLA-US / 1-844-925-5287
For Bengali, Cantonese, Hindi, Urdu, Korean, Mandarin, Tagalog, or Vietnamese: 1-888-274-8683

COMMONWEALTH VOTER CAMPAIGN

Engaging the Community

2024 was an important election year at both the Federal and State levels. In Kentucky, all state House seats, and half of state Senate seats, were on the ballot.

The ACLU of Kentucky is a nonpartisan organization - we don't advocate for or endorse political candidates. We do, however, educate voters about their rights and issue areas like reproductive freedom and smart justice.

In August 2024, we launched the Commonwealth Voter Campaign (CVC). The campaign was focused on mobilizing high-opportunity voters in three key districts around Kentucky. We provided meaningful opportunities for volunteers to participate and stay involved in our organizing work in a transformative way. Volunteers helped educate fellow voters on criminal legal reform and reproductive freedom work, engaging directly with community members to have important conversations around voting.



IMPACT ADVOCACY

The Family Preservation Act



Jayden Spence, pictured testifying in Frankfort was just 5 years old when he woke up to his mother being arrested in their home. He recalls his disrupted family dynamic, and how he shifted from anger and sadness, to longing, to bitterness and resentment.

Kentucky incarcerates women at some of the highest rates in the world, creating an outsized impact on Kentucky kids.

And, Kentucky has the 2nd highest rate of kids with incarcerated parents in the nation. Research shows that children of incarcerated parents face increased risks of emotional, physical, educational, and financial challenges which can lead to a cycle of intergenerational incarceration.

In 2024, our advocacy team spent countless hours working with lawmakers and partner organizations to laser focus on one piece of legislation that addresses our key issue areas while simultaneously playing defense as lawmakers continue to strip rights away from Kentuckians.

The Family Preservation Act combines our commitments to reproductive freedom and criminal legal reform. We spent the session educating the public on what the bill would mean for Kentucky families and communities by mounting a targeted communications campaign. This bill passed the house unanimously giving us hope and confidence that we will get it to the governor's desk in 2026.

These advocacy efforts are a critical component of the legislative process. Your contributions allow us to mobilize our volunteers, bring directly impacted people to the Capitol, and generate public education to our communities across the state who must live under the resulting laws.



Senator Julie Raque Adams and Representative Nick Wilson at a press conference announcing the Family Preservation and Accountability Act.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

In 2024, the ACLU of Kentucky demonstrated the power of rapid, community-centered response. We leaned into proactive immigration work because the need was dire. We helped build community capacity by helping to form The Louisville Community Immigration Support (LCIS) initiative, designed to prevent crises and respond immediately to urgent needs, keeping families together and individuals safe.

When ICE raids intensified nationwide, we moved swiftly to distribute “Know Your Rights” cards, equipping immigrant communities with critical information in real time. This effort was essential as fear and uncertainty spread as we began to see evidence that ICE agents were not consistently following the law. By empowering people with knowledge of their rights, we provide a crucial tool for protection and security.

We also expanded our efforts to address systemic justice issues through our Jefferson County Amnesty Court dockets, offering individuals with active bench warrants a chance to resolve their cases without fear of arrest. These programs are central to keeping our jails from becoming overcrowded and unsafe. Building on this success, we are eager to bring Amnesty Court’s to other counties.

Through these initiatives, the ACLU of Kentucky reaffirmed our commitment to swift, decisive action that safeguards civil liberties and strengthens the communities we serve.



KNOW
YOUR
RIGHTS

KONNEN
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CONOZCA
SUS
DERECHOS

MENYA
UBURENGANZIRA
BWAVE

JUA
HAKI
ZAKO

BY THE NUMBERS

17 STAFF
MEMBERS

1,197 INDIVIDUAL
FOUNDATION DONORS

1,631 TOTAL NUMBER OF
FOUNDATION DONATIONS

5,350 UNION
MEMBERS



SCAN CODE TO
DONATE OR
VISIT [ACLU-KY.ORG/
DONATE](https://aclu-ky.org/donate)

45 LEGISLATOR
MEETINGS

294 BILLS
TRACKED

317 VOLUNTEERS
ENGAGED

1,117 PEOPLE FILLED OUT
ACTION FORMS

30,115 TEXT MESSAGES
SENT

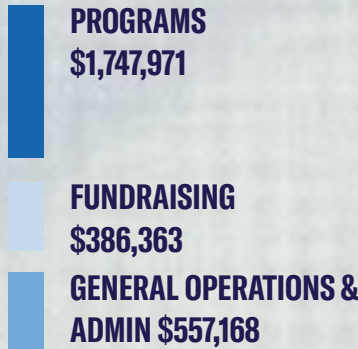
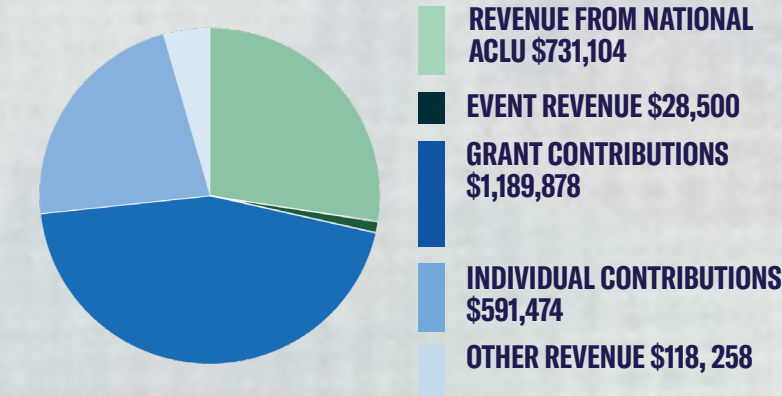
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ANGELA COOPER COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR	JILL SEELMEYER DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
BETHANY BAXTER STAFF ATTORNEY	KATE MILLER ADVOCACY DIRECTOR
CHLOE TREAT DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE	KUNGU NJUGUNA POLICY STRATEGIST
COREY SHAPIRO LEGAL DIRECTOR	RICHELLE HARRIS ADVOCACY ADMINISTRATIVE ASST.
ERIC KING DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIST	T GONZALES DEPUTY DIRECTOR
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FINANCIALS



TOTAL REVENUE	TOTAL EXPENSES	NET INCOME
\$2,659,214	\$2,691,502	(\$32,288)

*Consolidated audited statement for ACLU-KY and ACLU-KY Foundation, Fiscal Year 25 (April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025)

A NOTE FROM DEVELOPMENT

For 70 years, the ACLU of Kentucky has been a steadfast protector of civil liberties in the commonwealth. With each passing year, we honor those who came before us with our work and our gratitude.

This year brought challenges we haven't seen before, in ways we prepared for but hoped we would not have to face. It is a struggle to watch as our immigrant friends and neighbors experience cruelty, our LGBTQ community members continue to suffer attacks from the state and federal government, and our constitutional rights trampled.

But we keep going. We meet each challenge with determination, passion, and confidence in our vision of a better future. Your gifts sustain our work, by funding our efforts, and by telling us you've got our back, and you see a better future, too.

We are deeply grateful for your support, and we are committed to fighting for you.

In Solidarity,
Jill Seelmeyer
Jill Seelmeyer



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