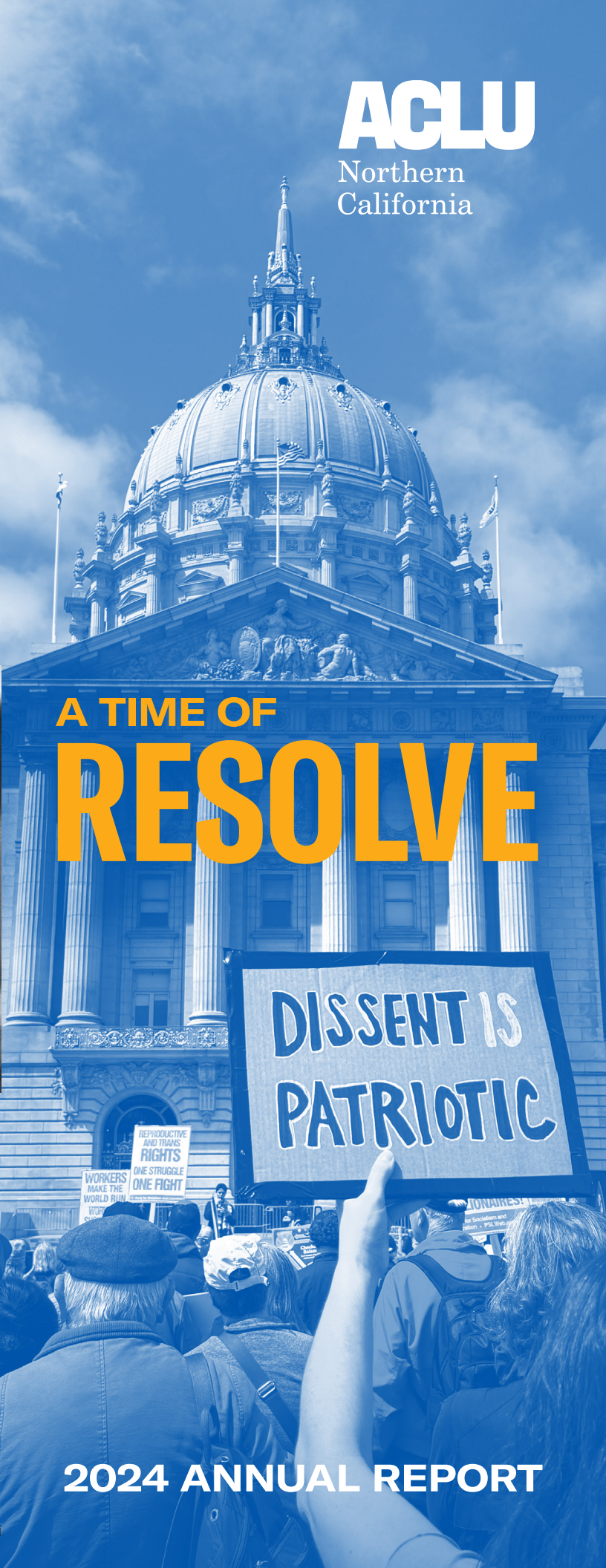


DECADES OF
COURAGE



ACLU
Northern
California



A TIME OF
RESOLVE

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



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Cover images, left column: 1940s Japanese American internment, one of ACLU NorCal's earliest lawsuits; our 1990s "Driving While Black or Brown" campaign; and 1970s pro-choice demonstrators, all from a mural by Mitzi Trachtenberg in our Drumm St. office. Right column: 2025 rally to support democracy, San Francisco Civic Center Plaza, by Cori Stell.

Images at left: From ACLU NorCal's historical mural, a 1994 protest against California's Prop 187 that attacked undocumented immigrants, and students at an ACLU NorCal youth activist conference in the early 2000s. Lower left: ACLU NorCal at one of many No Kings protests in defense of our democracy in June 2025.

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Writers: Pauly Pagenhart & Cori Stell

Designers: Gigi Harney & Ison Design

Printer: Madison Street Press

ACLU
Northern
California

COURAGE & RESOLVE

Dear friends,

This annual report is one way we offer our gratitude to you, our partners in the fight for justice. While it focuses on the impact you helped make possible in 2024, it also looks at the urgent battles under the second Trump administration.

With each day's news of unlawful, unconstitutional, and inhumane acts from this administration, the mission before us becomes clearer. Our courage becomes sharper. Like you, and with you, we are resolved.

We are resolved to vigorously defend our constitutional rights and fight abuses of power that violate civil liberties in California and nationwide.

We are resolved to defend the rights of all people to speak out, protest, and assemble without fear of retribution by the government.

We are resolved to continue to make progress on local issues, in Northern California cities and counties where civil liberties and civil rights are on the line.

We are resolved to defend those communities that are the first targets of harmful policies: immigrants, transgender people, people who are incarcerated, poor and unhoused people, people with disabilities, and Black, Indigenous, and other people of color.

We are resolved to do our best work with you, our community of members and donors, and our many community partners, clients, volunteers, and cooperating law firms.

With you, we are resolved to meet this moment.

Thank you for your continued, courageous partnership.

With appreciation and resolve,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Abdi Soltani".

Abdi Soltani,
Executive Director



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adam P. Bailey".

Adam Bailey,
Chair, ACLU Boards
of Directors



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cori Stell".

Cori Stell,
Director of
Development

ACLU VS. TRUMP 2.0

During the first Trump administration, the ACLU took legal action against his unlawful policies more than 400 times. We knew the challenges this time would be much greater. And we were ready.

LEGAL ACTIONS SO FAR*

In response to the Trump administration

ACLU NORCAL

National TPS Alliance v. Noem

We sued the Department of Homeland Security to ensure that nearly a million Venezuelan and Haitian Temporary Protected Status holders retain their work authorization and deportation protections. The Supreme Court dealt a setback to the federal court decision in our clients' favor, but the case continues.

United Farm Workers v. Noem

We sued the Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection, and U.S. Border Patrol and won an injunction which prohibits unlawful stops, arrests, and deportations fueled by racial bias.

OTHER ACLU AFFILIATES & NATIONAL ACLU

- **Free speech & transparency:** 50 legal actions
- **Immigrants' rights:** 35 legal actions
- **Abuse of power:** 20 legal actions
- **Racial justice:** 7 legal actions
- **Trans justice:** 5 legal actions

* As we go to press, late May

We took every Trump speech and every page of the Project 2025 Playbook seriously. We prioritized threats and drafted legal briefs. We strengthened connections with partners and focused on where we could make the strongest impact—both nationally and here in California.

Within 90 minutes of Trump's first Executive Order—his attempt to end birthright citizenship—we filed suit. Within the first 100 days, we'd already taken over 100 legal actions against this administration's attempts to strip away our most fundamental rights. And we're not alone: dozens and dozens of challenges have been filed by state governments and advocacy partners. As these lawsuits slow and stop unjust policies, the work goes far beyond courthouses to the statehouses, Congress, and the streets.

We developed our own playbook of over 40 policy proposals to advance with state and local actors such as governors, attorneys general, and mayors. We've mobilized the ACLU community to send hundreds of thousands of messages to Congress demanding they check DOGE's privacy violations, and to ICE demanding they free students exercising their First Amendment rights. We've shifted our Know Your Rights trainings into overdrive and supercharged production of informational videos.

There are years of battle ahead of us, on behalf of immigrants facing unlawful deportations, trans people seeking the gender-affirming healthcare that is their right, and organizations speaking out about equity, diversity, and inclusion free from extortion by their own government. We're ready.

We will not let anti-democratic threats and acts go unchallenged or become normalized, not on our watch. The ACLU has held 19 presidential administrations accountable; it's what we do. When brazen, authoritarian contempt for the rule of law comes from the top, there is no greater urgency. We're answering the call with everything we've got.

2024 BY THE NUMBERS

Filed 43 new legal actions adding to **31** ongoing cases
from 2023



Submitted 66 Public Records Act requests
to support civil rights litigation, advocacy efforts, and work with media

Sent 108 advocacy letters and reports to educate
local and state elected officials and influence policy



Volunteer intake counselors spent 1,800 hours fielding over **2,600 requests for legal assistance** through our Civil Liberties Intake program, via our website, U.S. Mail, and by phone

Monitored 670 bills, actively opposing 99 (defeating or resolving our concerns on 78 of them), and supporting 95 (half of which made it into law)



Over 100,000 ACLU members active in Northern California

13 volunteer chapters tackled issues impacting some 16+ million people across 34,000 square miles from Trinity to Tulare counties



THE YEAR IN REVIEW



Below are highlights from just a few of the cases we worked on in 2024. Each reflects a different stage in the legal advocacy life cycle, engages distinct civil liberties issues, and impacts diverse communities of Californians. The **courage** and **resolve** of our clients and community partners inspire us to persevere in our work toward freedom, equality, and justice for all.

EQUAL PROTECTION UNDER THE LAW: FUNDAMENTAL, YET UNREALIZED

Case: Office of the State Public Defender, Eva Patterson, LatinoJustice PRLDEF, Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, and Witness to Innocence v. Bonta

The death penalty in California, as elsewhere in the United States, is indelibly racist. Dozens of studies reinforce the stark truth that our state's legal system disproportionately arrests, convicts, and issues death sentences to people of color, compared to white defendants in similar circumstances. Black defendants are up to eight times more likely to be sentenced to death than other defendants.

We're now bringing that evidence to the California Supreme Court. With our partners at the Legal Defense Fund, WilmerHale, and the Office of the State Public Defender, we argue that the state's death penalty system violates the equal protection guarantees of the California Constitution, because the system is racially discriminatory in its application. While Governor Newsom has instituted a moratorium on executions, we ask the Court to respond in accordance with the gravity of the evidence and permanently halt the pursuit of death sentences in California.

The lawsuit is ambitious, yet it's gotten farther than any similar challenge. It has drawn remarkable "friend of the court" briefs from former judges and nearly two dozen legislators from both chambers, and the Attorney General agrees the Court should hear the case.

A person may not be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law or denied equal protection of the laws.

—California Constitution, Article 1, Section 7

FOR THREE SEPARATED IMMIGRANT FAMILIES, A MEASURE OF VINDICATION

Case: Wilbur P.G. et al. v. United States of America

The world watched in horror when the first Trump administration began to forcibly separate children from their parents at the U.S.-Mexico border. It was state-sponsored child abuse. An ACLU lawsuit led to a court order to halt the separations and reunite over 4,600 children with their parents. Even today, nearly a third of these children remain unaccounted for.

Three Bay Area families were among the thousands separated at the border. In 2021, ACLU NorCal, along with Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Keeker, Van Nest & Peters, filed a civil suit for damages on their behalf. Over three years later, as the trial approached, the case ended in the largest monetary settlement awarded to separated families to date. No act of justice can heal the emotional traumas these and all separated children and parents endured. But cases like this establish an indisputable precedent: the family separation policy *intended* to inflict harm, and the U.S. government can be made to answer for the emotional distress it caused.



Plaintiff and UC Santa Cruz professor Christine Hong speaks in downtown Santa Cruz before the first hearing of the *Ellutzi et al.* case.

CAMPUS PROTESTS: PROTECTING FREE SPEECH

Case: *Hannah (Elio) Ellutzi et al. v. The Regents of the University of California*

In the spring of 2024, UC Santa Cruz officials arrested more than 110 students and faculty during an anti-war, pro-Palestine protest and summarily banished them without the due process required by law. While final exams were underway, students lost access to housing, jobs, classes, school resources, even healthcare.

Together with the Center for Protest Law & Litigation and civil rights attorney Thomas Seabaugh, we sued the university. A few weeks after filing, the university changed its policies for on-the-spot banishment, thereby ensuring that lawful protest activity will not get punished by overzealous police in the future. Given the Trump administration's orders to universities to quash protests, protecting the constitutional rights of those who dissent is now more important than ever.

Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble...

—U.S. Constitution, First Amendment

THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT STOCKPILE OUR MOST PRIVATE DATA

Case: *Center for Genetics and Society et al. v. Bonta*

Every bit of information collected from us can be aggregated and abused: at the least, for profit; at the worst, for illegitimate policing. There's a reason the right to privacy is in our state's constitution. And DNA is some of the most private information we have.

If you're arrested for a felony, the police will take a sample of your DNA. But if you're not charged or convicted, you *should* be able to have that DNA data automatically purged from government databases. Yet the California Department of Justice has stockpiled the DNA of hundreds of thousands of people in this very position. With co-counsel Michael Risher, we argued that this was a clear constitutional overreach, violating both privacy rights and protections against unlawful search and seizure. Now, as a result of this lawsuit, the government must expunge this data.

REGIONAL WINS, NATIONAL IMPACT: WHY CALIFORNIA MATTERS

- With 39 million residents, our legislation and court rulings impact **12% of the nation's population**.
- Policymakers here have **the ability to safeguard and expand rights** in the face of a hostile national political climate.
- California is **an incubator for policies that go on to shape the nation** — more so than any other state.
- It has the **largest court system in the world** — 10 times larger than U.S. federal courts.
- Our State Supreme Court has established **multiple precedents which were subsequently adopted**, in later cases, by the U.S. Supreme Court.

DEVELOPMENT & FINANCIAL REPORT

MAKE A GIFT TODAY

Thank you for all the ways you showed up for civil liberties over the past year. Whether you lobbied your legislator, joined an ACLU chapter, worked with us as a client or community partner, or gave financial resources, your contributions are deeply appreciated and vital. We look forward to our continued partnership as we work to defend civil liberties in these truly unprecedented times.



You'll find information on many ways to give now to ACLU NorCal, such as gifts of cash and by credit card, workplace giving, and gifts of stocks and securities, at aclunc.org/donate.

For information on ways to make a legacy gift to ACLU NorCal—such as through insurance and retirement accounts, gift annuities, charitable trusts, and estate plans—visit aclunc.org/donate/planned-giving.



For more information on these or other ways to support the ACLU, contact Director of Development Cori Stell at (415) 621-2493 or giving@aclunc.org.

ABOUT SOURCES OF INCOME

The ACLU Foundation of Northern California (Foundation) and the ACLU of Northern California (Union) are separately incorporated nonprofit organizations operating in Northern California. The Foundation conducts litigation and public education programs in support of civil liberties. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization, and contributions to it are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. 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, which means that donations to it are not tax deductible.

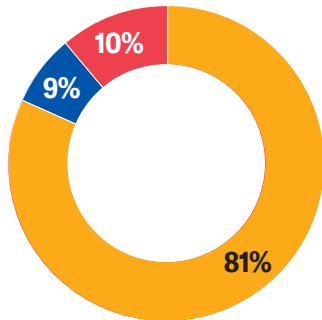
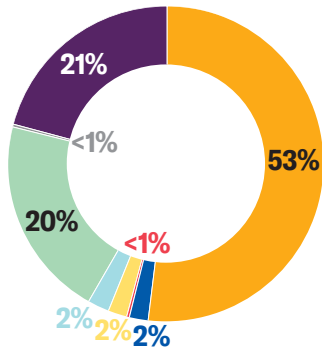
Most of the funding for the Foundation and the Union comes from individuals like you. The organizations' effectiveness and impact depend upon our full community of stakeholders, which includes those contributing financial resources: private donations, foundation grants, bequests, and membership dues from individuals and organizations that are dedicated to advancing civil liberties for all. Neither the Foundation nor the Union accepts government grants, but the Foundation may receive court-awarded attorneys' fees from successful cases. The Foundation never charges clients for legal representation.

HOW WE ADVANCE WORK HERE AND NATIONWIDE

The ACLU is a federated organization, comprising both the national ACLU and affiliates in every state, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. The national ACLU and the ACLU of Northern California share your generous donations made in our region. Recognizing differences in available local support, the ACLU makes additional investments in its affiliates around the country that otherwise would be unable to address the serious threats to civil liberties in their states.

OPERATING INCOME & EXPENSES, 2023–2024

APRIL 1, 2023 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2024



ACLU FOUNDATION OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

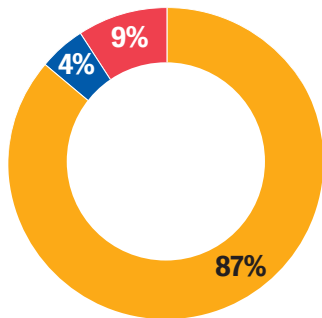
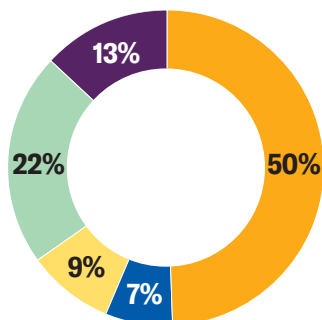
Support and Revenue

Annual and Special Contributions	\$ 10,271,635
Foundation Grants	\$ 299,500
Grant from National ACLU	\$ 125,000
Bequests/Planned Gift Contributions	\$ 358,428
Court Awarded Attorney Fees	\$ 449,253
In-Kind Legal Contributions	\$ 3,897,778
Other Income	\$ 33,544
Investment Income	\$ 4,071,571
Total	\$ 19,506,709

Expenses

Program Services	\$ 18,646,237
Fundraising	\$ 2,056,941
Management and General	\$ 2,313,275
Total	\$ 23,016,453

The gap between Revenue and Expenses was made up by a transfer of funds from the organization's reserves.



ACLU OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Support and Revenue

Memberships	\$ 3,490,499
Annual and Special Contributions	\$ 488,836
Grant from ACLU Foundation of Northern California	\$ 600,000
Bequests/Planned Gift Contributions	\$ 1,528,387
Investment Income and Other	\$ 891,645
Total	\$ 6,999,367

Expenses

Program Services	\$ 5,882,461
Fundraising	\$ 268,545
Management and General	\$ 637,699
Total	\$ 6,788,705

The costs of membership acquisition and renewals are reflected on the National ACLU financial statements.

Source: The charts on this page are based on audited financial statements and underlying accounting data provided to the auditor, Leaf & Cole, LLP, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024. A complete copy of the Fiscal Year 2023–24 audited financial statements is available at aclunc.org/about/financial-info-reports or by writing: ACLU NorCal, 39 Drumm Street, San Francisco, CA 94111.

THANK YOU

THANK YOU TO THESE PRO BONO LAW FIRMS

The following law firms donated their time in 2024. The ACLU community deeply appreciates your partnership and your commitment to our shared principles.

BraunHagey & Borden LLP	Fenwick & West LLP	Latham & Watkins LLP	Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	Swanson & McNamara LLP
Clarence Dyer & Cohen LLP	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	Lieff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein LLP	Paul Hastings LLP	Tobener Ravenscroft LLP
Coblentz Patch Duffy & Bass LLP	Goodwin Procter LLP	Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP	Rukin Hyland & Riffin LLP	Van Der Hout LLP
Conrad, Metlitzky, Kane LLP	Greenberg Glusker Fields Claman & Machtinger LLP	Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP	Sidley Austin LLP	Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP
Cooley LLP	Jenner & Block LLP	O'Melveny & Myers LLP	Steptoe & Johnson LLP	WilmerHale LLP
Covington & Burling LLP	Keker, Van Nest & Peters LLP		Sullivan & Cromwell LLP	

THANK YOU TO OUR CIVIL LIBERTIES INTAKE COUNSELORS

Our volunteer Civil Liberties Intake Counselors answer hotline calls, review online submissions, and read letters from community members seeking legal support. When we can't provide assistance, we refer to direct service organizations, attorney referral services, and legal information resources.

Angelica Aban	Isela Chacon	Richard Idriss	Hannah Meng	Samantha Sorisho
Ariana Anayat	Colette Cross	Carlie Jones	Loan-Anh Pham	Natalie Valle
Gabby Bates	Bria Goeller	Patti Kouba	Emma Rouda	
Beverly Belisle	Lynn Halcomb	Amina Malik	Alison Skjeie White	

THANK YOU TO OUR INTERNS

Legal Advocacy Interns

Noosha Aliabadi
Yosha Auch-Kness
Olivia Callan
Maxwell Davis
Ilana Dutton

Yana Gagloeva
Charlotte Godart
Lynn He
Jin Heo
Alex Holran
Erin McGuire
Troi Newman

Maripau Paz
Sinporion Phuong
Layla Rao
Shivank Singh
Ramya Sinha
Kiran Wattamwar
Brian Xu

Organizing Interns

Samantha Carrola-Landry
Kim Galvin
Madeleine Hernandez Bazan
Dana Johnson

Christopher Melgar
Olivia Rubin
Hanna Seidner
Rachel Simms
Arely Valencia

THANK YOU TO VOLUNTEERS AT OUR CHAPTERS

Alameda County	Mid-Peninsula	Sacramento County	Shasta, Tehama, and Trinity Counties	Sonoma County
Fresno County	Monterey County	Santa Clara Valley	Solano County	Stanislaus County
Merced County	North Peninsula	Santa Cruz County		

THANK YOU TO OUR BOARD MEMBERS WHO SERVED IN 2024

ACLU of Northern California Board of Directors

Allen Asch	Kori Cordero	Marina Hsieh	Chowning Poppler	Beverly Tucker
Adam Bailey	Veronica Diaz	Sukaina Hussain	Zainab Ramahi	Beth von Emster
Katelynn Bishop	Graham Drake	Theresa Lofty Juelch	Magan Ray	Anthony Wan
Adrienne Bousian	Daniel Galindo	Kobe Martinez Moore	Niki Solis	Natalie Wormeli
Anita Brady	Autumn Gonzalez	Meredith Marzuoli	Kassie Stone	Mariko Yoshihara
Betsy Buchalter Adler	Steven Hensley	D. Kris Meadows	Nancy Stuart	

ACLU Foundation of Northern California Board of Directors

Christopher Argyros	Betsy Buchalter Adler	Meg Durbin	Jim Lawrence	Beth von Emster
Adam Bailey	Jallé Dafa	Daniel Galindo	Zainab Ramahi	Anthony Wan
Katelynn Bishop	Veronica Diaz	Marina Hsieh	Kassie Stone	Robert White
China Brotsky	Graham Drake	Ajay Krishnan	Beverly Tucker	

THANK YOU TO COMMUNITY MEMBERS ON ADVISORY COMMITTEES OF OUR BOARDS

Sunil Baliga	Dan Geiger	Laura Juran	Mary McNamara	Louise
Bob Capistrano	Peter Gelblum	Steven Mayer	Zachary Nightingale	Rothman-Riemer
Chris Flynn	Maria Hekker	Dennis McNally	Jessica Reed Saouaf	Mickey Welsh
David Fry	Amelia Johnson			

THANK YOU TO OUR STAFF

We are deeply grateful to our dedicated staff, whose talent, passion, and tireless efforts make our work to advance justice and equity across Northern California possible. For a list of ACLU NorCal staff, including biographies, please visit aclunc.org/about/staff.

We the People
insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence
and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution

Article I.

Section. 1. All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and Representatives.

Section. 2. The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct. The Number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty Thousand, but each State shall have at least one Representative; and until such Enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall be entitled to choose three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania four, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.

When vacancies happen in the Representation from any State, the Executive Authority thereof shall issue Writs of Election to fill such Vacancies. The House of Representatives shall choose their Speaker and other Officers; and shall have the sole Power of Impeachment.

Section. 3. The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof for six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote.

Immediately after they shall be assembled in Consequence of the first Election, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three Clases. The Senators of the first Class shall be vacated at the Expiration of the second Year, of the second Class at the Expiration of the fourth Year, and of the third Class at the Expiration of the sixth Year, so that one third may be chosen every second Year; and if Vacancies happen by Resignation, or otherwise, during the Term of the Legislature of any State, the Executive thereof may make temporary Appointments until the next Meeting of the Legislature, which shall then fill such Vacancies.

No Person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and when elected, shall have no other Qualifications than those which are required of the Representatives.

The Senate shall have the sole and exclusive Power of Impeachment. When sitting for that Purpose, they shall be on Oath or Affirmation. When the Senate is on Oath or Affirmation, the President of the United States shall be present. When the President is absent, the Vice President shall act in his stead. When the President and Vice President are absent, the Senate shall choose a President pro tempore.

The Senate shall have the sole and exclusive Power of trying all Impeachments. When sitting for that Purpose, they shall be on Oath or Affirmation. The Chief Justice shall preside. Judgment may be rendered by a Majority of the Members present.

Impeachment shall not extend further than to the Person impeached, and shall not affect his Inability to hold and enjoy any Office or Profit under the United States, but the Party impeached shall be liable and subject to Indictment, Trial, Judgment and Punishment according to Law.

Section. 4. The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of choosing Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every Year, and such Meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by Law appoint a different Day.

Section. 5. Each House shall be the Judge of the Elections, Returns and Qualifications of its own Members, and a Majority of each shall constitute a Quorum to do Business, but a smaller Number may adjourn from day to day and may be authorized to compel the Attendance of absent Members, in such Manner as they shall judge proper.

Each House may punish its Members for Disobedience to its Orders, for Disorderly Behaviour, or for any other Cause which may appear to it to require Punishment, and may suspend its Members from their Seats for any Period not exceeding thirty Days, and may expel its Members for any other Cause which may appear to it to require Expulsion.



**2024 ANNUAL
REPORT ONLINE**

Check out a video
message from Executive
Director Abdi Soltani at
aclunc.org/AnnualReport.

STAY CONNECTED

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**FOR MORE
INFORMATION**

Visit us online at aclunc.org,
email us at giving@aclunc.org, or
call us at (415) 621-2493.