

BLACK LIVES

The names below belong to Black people killed by police (including off-duty and retired police) in the United States between the years 1998 and 2020. It is by no means a comprehensive list; the Black lives lost to police violence and white supremacy are incalculable. Between 2015 and 2020 alone, police have killed at least 1,296 Black people (more than double the rate that white people have been killed by police).

Ahmaud Arbery
Akai Gurley
Alberta Spruill
Albert Ramon Dorsey
Alfred Olango
Alteria Woods
Alton Sterling
Amadou Diallo
Anthony Ashford
Anthony Hill
Antonie Scott
Antwon Rose
Arthur McAfee, Jr.
Atatiana Jefferson
Aquan Salmon
Aura Rosser
Barry Gedeus
Bennie Lee Tignor
Bettie Jones

Bobby Gross
Botham Jean
Brendon Glenn
Breonna Taylor
Brian Easley
Brian Leslie Statler
Calin Roquemore
Charles David Robinson
Charles Rountree
Charly Leunde
Keunang
Christopher Alexander
Okamoto
Cornel Young, Jr.
Cynthia Fields
Dalvin Hollins
Danny Washington
Darell Richards
Darrell Allen
David Joseph

David McAtee
Dazion Flenaugh
Dion Johnson
Dennis Todd Rogers
Desmond Phillips
Dominic Hutchinson
Dominique Antwon
Anderson
Dontre Hamilton
Donnell Thompson
Donnie Sanders
Dreasjon "Sean" Reed
Elliot Earl Williams
Eric Garner
Eric Harris
Ezell Ford
Felix Kumi
Freddie Gray
Gabriella Nevarez

George Floyd
Grechario Mack
India Kager
Isaiah Lewis
Isaiah Thomas
Isaiah Tucker
Jacob Servais
Jamar Clark
James Bauduy
Janisha Fonville
Jerame Reid
Jeremy McDole
Jesse Quinton
Jessica Nelson-Williams
Jessica Williams
Jontell Reedom
Jordan Michael Griffin
Joseph Mann

Kathryn Johnston
Kayla Moore
Keita O'Neill
Keith Childress
Keith Dutree Collins
Keith Harrison McLeod
Kendra James
Kenneth Chamberlain Sr.
Kenney Watkins
Kevin Matthews
Kris Jackson
Laquan McDonald
Lavall Hall
Lawrence Hawkins
Levonnia Riggins
Lionel Gibson
Lorenzo Antoine Cruz
Luvelle Kennon
Malik Ali Gresham

Mario Woods
Marquintan Sandlin
Maurice Gordon
Michael "Blue" Thomas
Michael Brown
Michael Dean
Michael Marshall
Michael Noel
Michael Russo
Michelle Cusseaux

Michelle Shirley
Mikel Laney McIntyre
Miles Hall
Moises Nero
Mycael Johnson
Naeschylus Vizant
Nana Adomako
Nathaniel Harris Pickett
Nathaniel Holland
Richard Perkins
Rodney Watts

Oscar Grant
Peter Gaines
Philando Castile
Rayshard Brooks
Rayshard Scales
Redel Jones
Rekia Boyd
Ricco Devante Holden
Richard Perkins
Rodney Watts

Ronnell Foster
Ryan Twyman
Sam Dubose
Sandra Bland
Sean Bell
Stephen Murray
Stephon Clark
Steven Taylor
Tamir Rice
Tanisha Anderson

Terence Crutcher
Terrance Franklin
Tony McDade
Trayvon Martin
Tyisha Miller
Vaughn Denham
Walter Scott
Wendell Celestine Jr.
William Chapman II
William Howard Green

MATTER

WHAT'S INSIDE:

2 Board Election Notice ♦ 3 Indigenous Education Advocacy Project ♦ 4 Legal Updates ♦ 5-9 Spotlight on COVID-19
10 Legislative Updates ♦ 11 Vote NO on Proposition 20 ♦ 12 ACLU-NC Statement on the Murder of George Floyd

A HUMANITARIAN CRISIS: THE ACLU DEFENDS RIGHTS OF THE INCARCERATED DURING PANDEMIC

BY TAMMERLIN DRUMMOND

When COVID-19 began to spread, public health experts warned that without an immediate reduction in the number of incarcerated people, the highly infectious virus would rampage through immigration detention centers, jails, and prisons, causing serious illness and death. People forced to eat, sleep, and live in cramped quarters can't possibly stay six feet apart. The unsanitary conditions and inadequate medical care make these facilities ripe for a rapid transmission of infection. The ACLU Foundation of Northern California recognized a looming humanitarian crisis, so we launched an emergency campaign to free husbands, mothers, sons and grandmothers from inhumane and dangerous conditions.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California
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San Francisco, CA 94111

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BOARD ELECTION NOTICE

Pursuant to Article VI, Section 4 of the American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California's bylaws, there are two ways for members to participate in the Board nominating process.

Candidates and ballots will appear in the Fall issue of the *ACLU News*. Elected Board members will begin their three-year term in January.

We're always looking for committed members to join the Board. The nominating committee is now seeking suggestions from the membership to fill positions on the Board. ACLU members may participate in the nominating process in two ways:

1. Send suggestions for the nominating committee's consideration by Aug. 16, 2020. Address suggestions to: Nominating Committee, ACLU-NC, 39 Drumm Street, San Francisco, CA 94111. Include your nominee's qualifications and how the nominee may be reached.
2. Submit a petition of nomination with the signatures of 15 current ACLU-NC members. Petitions of nomination, which should also include the nominee's qualifications, must be submitted to the Board by Oct. 3, 2020 (20 days after the September Board meeting).

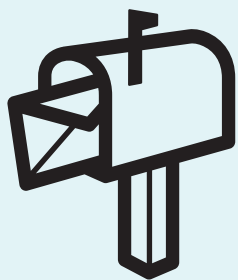
Current ACLU members are those who have renewed their membership during the last 12 months. Only current members are eligible to submit nominations, sign petitions of nomination, and vote. No member may sign more than one such petition. ACLU members will select Board members from the slate of candidates nominated by petition and by the nominating committee. The ballot will appear in the Fall issue of the *ACLU News*.

BYLAWS OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

ARTICLE VI, SECTION 4B NOMINATIONS BY MEMBER PETITION

Any 15 or more members of this corporation in good standing may themselves submit a nomination of a member in good standing of this corporation to be included among those voted upon by the general membership by submitting a written petition to the Board not later than 20 days after the adoption by the Board of the slate of Board nominees. No member of this corporation may sign more than one such petition and each such nomination shall be accompanied by a summary of qualifications and the written consent of the nominee. This provision of these bylaws shall be printed in an issue of the *ACLU News* or other document mailed to this corporation's members before each election, together with an article advising members of their rights in the nominating process.

WANT TO CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS OR MAILING PREFERENCES?



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[GIVING@ACLUNC.ORG](mailto:giving@aclunc.org)

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American Civil Liberties
Union of Northern California

For more information about the ACLU,
call (415) 621-2493 or visit www.aclunc.org.
Address changes: giving@aclunc.org

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TO OUR MEMBERS

Mailings to our members and the general public provide opportunities to describe complicated legal and political issues in ways not possible in other media and to describe strategies we plan to use for future actions. They enable us to explain, in detail, the benefits and provisions of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, the ways our rights can be protected in today's world, and the costs of preserving those rights. We use the mail to inform people of the importance of our legal work and to solicit funds that enable us to continue our litigation, public education, and legislative lobbying.

Sometimes, as part of our program to find and recruit members, we exchange or rent our list of members' names to like-minded organizations and publications. We do this so that we will be able to send our membership letters to their lists.

The ACLU never makes its list available to partisan political groups or those whose programs are incompatible with the ACLU's mission. Whether by exchange or rental, the exchanges are governed by strict privacy procedures, as recommended by the U.S. Privacy Study Commission. Lists are never actually given into the physical possession of the organization that has rented them or exchanged for them. No organization ever possesses our list and no organization will ever see the names of the members on our list unless an individual responds to their mailing.

While mailings—under strict privacy guidelines—form the basis of our new member acquisition program, and are key to our growth, we understand some members do not wish to receive solicitations from other groups and we gladly honor requests from our members to be removed from the process. Once you make this election, you do not need to do so again unless you wish to change your preference back.

If you do not wish to receive materials from other organizations, please complete this coupon and send it to:

ACLU Membership Department
125 Broad Street, 18th Floor
New York, NY 10004

☐ I prefer not to receive materials from other organizations.
Please eliminate my name from membership exchange/rental lists.

Member # _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

LAUNCHING THE INDIGENOUS EDUCATION ADVOCACY PROJECT

Whether you’ve been reading the *ACLU News* for decades or for only a couple of years, you’ve heard about our partnership with North Coast tribes. This year, we’re taking new strides forward. Working with the Northern California Indian Development Council (NCIDC), made up of 13 Tribes and Tribally affiliated organizations, we are launching the Indigenous Education Advocacy Project. The ACLU-NC will provide legal and policy support and work alongside NCIDC for systems and policy change, and is committed to helping NCIDC to raise funds for the new Indigenous Education Advocate position, which will work to educate and empower native students, families, and communities to advocate for their rights in the public school system.

INTRODUCING RAIN MARSHALL, INDIGENOUS EDUCATION ADVOCATE

Rain was interviewed by Tedde Simon, Acting Indigenous Justice Program Manager at the ACLU of Northern California

RAIN, TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND

I was born in Arcata, where Humboldt State University is located. I’m the product of the Indian Relocation Program—my mom is from Oklahoma, and my dad is from South Dakota. They were sent to California, and they met at Humboldt State University. I’m enrolled in the Yankton Sioux Tribe, *Ihanktonwan*. Thanks to my parents, I have those deep roots. I’m a Tribal citizen. I participate in my tribal cultural activities, and I’m learning my language and teaching my two daughters about their Tribes. I went to law school in South Dakota, and lived and worked on the reservation, and taught at the community college.

Growing up in Humboldt County, I attended the local Yurok, Hupa, Wiyot, Tolowa, and Karuk ceremonies—the Brush Dance, the Jump Dance, the White Deer Skin Dance. I feel very lucky to be culturally connected to these people here, and to know their ways of life and their worldviews and their knowledge.

I’ve been teaching in various Tribal Universities and Community Colleges since 2004, in Native American studies and Indian Education. I bring that knowledge to this position in terms of curriculum, educational materials, and my legal background, which will help with advocacy and access to knowledge and resources.

WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT THE INDIGENOUS EDUCATION ADVOCACY PROJECT?

Because I have a background in education and academia, and I’m a tribal member, I am passionate about helping to alleviate inequities in education, empowering tribal communities to have the resources they need to be their own advocates, and have a better reflection of Indigenous cultural identity in schools in the area. I am excited to do the advocacy that’s necessary for all of our Indigenous youth to have a quality and meaningful education that reinforces their identity and their self-worth, and who they are as Indigenous people.

HOW HAS COVID IMPACTED NATIVE STUDENTS, AND WHAT’S YOUR RESPONSE?

Indigenous education has had a long tragic history of forced removals from loving homes to placement in harsh Indian boarding schools where various forms of abuse took place which led

Partnering with NCIDC creates a strong bridge to local tribes and communities that have historically not had a voice in the educational system.

to intergenerational trauma. Today, Indigenous children face erasure in school textbooks, perpetuation of false narratives, low graduation numbers, and high suicide rates. They often suffer from low self-esteem, depression, and anxiety due to this trauma. In addition, Indigenous families often live below the poverty line and have difficulty accessing basic necessities, and they face food insecurity and difficult access to wifi and computers. In this new online learning environment, it is this population that will be at a disadvantage and we are advocating for the proper usage of the Title VI and VII (Impact Aid) funds from Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to help these families get access to the resources they need for technological assistance, mental health resources, and fair educational opportunities.


Also, we are advocating that in this new virtual environment, there will not be a deficiency in providing for the delivery of services for Indigenous students who have disabilities in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities and Education Assistance Act (IDEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act for Indigenous students.

WHY A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE ACLU AND NCIDC?

The ACLU has a historical legacy of fighting for—and winning—many rights in the U.S. Partnering with NCIDC creates a strong bridge to local tribes and communities that have historically not had a voice in the educational system. NCIDC’s mission and goals of serving and educating local youth and providing services presents a great opportunity for the ACLU to work in partnership with that knowledge and those relationships.



WHAT SHOULD PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT HUMBOLDT AND DEL NORTE COUNTIES?

I live in Wiyot territory. I have seen the Wiyot Tribe go from a very small Tribe, who commemorated the massacre that nearly erased their people by candlelight vigil, to a Tribe with its own strong cultural revitalization program today. And they’ve claimed their land back. Part of it was given back to the Tribe after years of advocacy and education with the City of Eureka, and part of the land they bought. They had to rehabilitate it, remove battery acids and other toxins. And after 154 years, since the time of the Indian Island Massacre, they brought back their World Renewal Ceremony. For me to have seen that in my lifetime is very inspiring. It shows strength, resiliency and perseverance. I have Wiyot students in my classroom today! 

WHAT CAN ACLU MEMBERS DO TO SUPPORT INDIGENOUS JUSTICE?

Uplift local Tribes. You can support Tribes in your area, whenever they are raising awareness about issues of inequity and injustice, of human rights violations and discrimination that has been so persistent in California and throughout the nation. Non-Indigenous people have a lot to learn from Indigenous people, especially during this time of climate change. You can be an advocate for incorporating Indigenous value systems into education. Tribes have deep knowledge about that going back thousands of years, that teachers and schools can utilize, and that will benefit everyone.

LEGAL UPDATES



BY BRADY HIRSCH AND CARMEN KING



SACRAMENTO SHERIFF SCOTT JONES CANNOT CENSOR BLACK LIVES MATTER ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Sacramento Sheriff Scott Jones and Black Lives Matter leaders reached a settlement after a United States District Court judge ruled that Sheriff Jones violated the Constitution when he banned activists from commenting on his “Sheriff Scott Jones” Facebook page, affirming that government social media pages are protected by the First Amendment and the California Constitution. The two plaintiffs, Tanya Faison and Sonia Lewis, are vocal activists in the Black Lives Matter and Black Liberation movements.

In November 2018, Sheriff Jones banned Faison and Lewis from his official Facebook page and deleted their comments after they criticized his attempts to evade oversight for the fatal shooting of Mikel McIntyre, a Black man who was experiencing a mental health crisis. A number of Black men have been killed during Sheriff Jones’ tenure, and his decision to censor our clients follows a consistent pattern of trying to control conversations about police brutality, racial bias, and transparency.

The ACLU Foundation of Northern California and the law firm of Rogers Joseph O’Donnell, PC sued Sheriff Jones for unlawfully censoring Faison and Lewis. They asserted that the Sheriff cannot censor criticism on his official Facebook page, just as he wouldn’t be allowed to silence or remove people from a public meeting based on the content of their speech, their viewpoint, or their identity.

The terms of the settlement require that Sheriff Jones establish a social media policy that protects the free speech rights of the public to comment on his official social media

As debates about critical issues like accountability of law enforcement increasingly move into the digital world, it’s critical that government officials can’t shut down speech merely because they disagree with what the speakers are saying. This was true before COVID-19, and is especially important during this time of social distancing, and the cry for justice.

accounts. The County of Sacramento has agreed to pay \$16,000 each to plaintiffs Faison and Lewis, and cover their legal fees. Sheriff Jones also agreed to unban other activists on his Facebook page pursuant to the new policy.

As debates about critical issues like accountability of law enforcement increasingly move into the digital world, it’s critical that government officials can’t shut down speech merely because they disagree with what the speakers are saying. This was true before COVID-19, and is especially important during this time of social distancing, and the cry for justice.

CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT RULES IN FAVOR OF TRANSPARENCY OF POLICE BODY CAMERA FOOTAGE

In 2014, when community members took to the streets to protest the grand jury decisions to not indict the police officers who killed Eric Garner and Michael Brown, Hayward police officers used crowd control techniques that injured many people.

In 2015, the National Lawyers Guild’s San Francisco Bay Area Chapter submitted a public records request to the Hayward Police Department seeking body camera footage from the Hayward police officers who were at the demonstrations in 2014.

The Hayward Police Department proceeded

to charge the Guild \$3,248 for its labor to redact confidential portions of the footage.

Body cameras have emerged as a way to expose racially biased policing and police brutality. Similarly, the California Public Record Act was created to increase transparency and accountability through access to law enforcement records. But body cameras can’t serve their function of promoting police accountability if it is prohibitively expensive for the public to get access to the footage.


On Sep. 15, 2015, the ACLU and the Law Offices of Amitai Schwartz filed a lawsuit against the City of Hayward and its Police Department for the excessive fees charged. The ACLU won in the trial court, but the decision was overturned in the Court of Appeal. The case then went to the California Supreme Court.

The issue before the California Supreme Court was to decide if Hayward’s redaction of the footage constituted an “extraction,” which would have allowed them to charge labor costs to the requester—even though the cost of redaction cannot be imposed for copies of paper records. Since almost all records are now kept electronically, permitting the government to charge for redactions would have subverted the intent of the Public Records Act.

In May of 2020, the ACLU Foundation of Northern California received a unanimous California Supreme Court opinion stating that the term “data extraction” does not cover the process of redacting exempt material from otherwise disclosable electronic records. To put it plainly, the government agency must pay for its own electronic redaction costs.

“Everyone, rich or poor, deserves access to these records.”

–ACLU of Northern California
Senior Staff Attorney
Kathleen Guneratne

This decision will help members of the public, including family members whose loved ones have been killed by police, to access critical electronic public records, such as police body camera footage. 

Brady Hirsch and Carmen King are Associate Communications Strategists at the ACLU of Northern California.

Protecting Civil Liberties During COVID-19

THE ACLU GOES TO COURT TO PROTECT VOTING RIGHTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

BY TAMMERLIN DRUMMOND

After nearly four years of the Trump Administration's relentless assaults on the Constitution and civil liberties, our democracy now faces a powerful new threat from the coronavirus. The ACLU is taking swift action to protect the November 2020 presidential elections from the Republican Party's naked efforts to suppress turnout—especially among African Americans and young people who tend to vote Democrat.

This is not new terrain for the ACLU. Long before the pandemic, we were in court challenging voter ID laws, poll closures that make it harder for people who live in communities of color to vote, registration roll purges, notary requirements, and other tactics designed to limit access to the ballot for people who tend to support Democrats.

Now, we are battling those seeking to exploit a global public health crisis for political gain. We're pressing states to take immediate measures to guarantee the constitutional right to vote. "The COVID-19 pandemic poses an unprecedented threat to the way that most people vote—in person, on election day," said Dale Ho, director of the voting rights project at the American Civil Liberties Union. "But there are several obvious steps we can take to ensure that no one has to choose between their health and their right to vote."

The ACLU is calling for all states to send mail-in ballots to every eligible voter with a self-sealing, addressed, and stamped envelope, whether they request one or not. This is critical at a time when we foresee a drastic reduction in the number of polling places due to the pandemic—and when many voters will understandably be fearful of voting at those locations that do exist. Meanwhile, we've filed lawsuits across the country over burdensome, unsafe, or financial barriers to mail-in voting. We sued Georgia over its failure to provide pre-paid postage for absentee ballots. In Michigan we're challenging a requirement that mail ballots be received by Election Day in order to be counted.

KEY VICTORIES FOR VOTING RIGHTS

The ACLU and our legal partners filed a federal lawsuit to thwart Florida's efforts to make an end-run around Amendment 4—the 2018 voter-approved law that restored the right to vote to 1.4 million people with

.....
We will not stand by while an authoritarian president and his party attempt to use the pandemic crisis as an excuse to disenfranchise millions of Americans.
.....



felony convictions who had completed their sentences. In an effort to block the newly enfranchised from voting, Florida officials rushed to pass a law requiring them to pay back all restitution and court fees in order to vote. A federal court quashed these shameful tactics, rightly concluding that they amounted to an illegal poll tax.

In more good news, the ACLU reached a settlement with Virginia, which agreed to remove its notary requirement. Citing our lawsuit, the Missouri legislature followed suit, but only for voters at high risk of severe COVID-19. So, our lawsuit there continues.

As COVID-19 continues to cut a deadly swath, encouraging vote-by-mail is just common sense. It helps protect the health of voters, poll workers, and elections officials. We all saw the insanity during the April Wisconsin primary where voters were forced to stand in long lines at the polls. More


than 50 reportedly caught the coronavirus. More recently, we saw chaos in Georgia and Wisconsin.

California, Alabama, Indiana, New Hampshire, New York, and West Virginia have all taken steps to expand vote-by-mail. But the Republican leadership has waged a relentless attack on mail voting in an attempt to sow doubt about the fairness of the elections and depress turnout to their party's advantage.

After advocacy by the ACLU of Northern California and other voting rights supporters, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed an executive order requiring elections officials to automatically send mail-in ballots to all eligible voters. A little over two weeks later, The Republican National Committee, National Republican Congressional Committee, and California Republican Party filed a federal lawsuit against Newsom and Secretary of State Alex Padilla to block the order, claiming it was unconstitutional and would invite voter fraud. We will continue to fight for everyone's right to vote by mail.

Vote-by-mail, however, is not enough. That's why the ACLU is also calling for some in-person polls for those who can't use a mail ballot: limited English speakers, those with disabilities, and others need voting assistance that is only available in person. Unsheltered people have more difficulty accessing mail-in ballots as well.

We've also urged the federal government to require all states to have a minimum mandatory early voting period of 14 days and to provide funding to counties and states to help them implement the needed reforms.

Of this you can be sure: We will not stand by while an authoritarian president and his party attempt to use the pandemic crisis as an excuse to disenfranchise millions of Americans. 

Tammerlin Drummond is a Communications Strategist at the ACLU of Northern California.

THE ACLU DEFENDS RIGHTS OF THE INCARCERATED DURING PANDEMIC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“These facilities have a constitutional obligation to protect the health and safety of people in their custody and they are failing in that duty,” said Abdi Soltani, Executive Director of the ACLU of Northern California. “This makes the many people confined in these facilities, the staff, and the broader community extremely vulnerable to outbreaks of COVID-19.”

IMMIGRATION DETENTION

There are nearly 26,000 immigrants being held in overcrowded and unsanitary immigration centers and jails across the country that are breeding grounds for COVID-19. The ACLU has sued requesting court orders requiring the release of people in ICE custody who are at risk of contracting COVID-19. In the first case, *Bahena v. ICE*, we were part of a legal team that filed a lawsuit on behalf of 13 immigrants detained in Mesa Verde Detention Center in Bakersfield and Yuba County Jail.

Then, in April, as part of another legal coalition, we sued ICE demanding the immediate release not only of those medically at risk of a life-threatening infection but of all people confined in fundamentally unsafe conditions at the two detention centers. As a result of the class action *Zapeda Rivas v. Jennings*, U.S. District Judge Vince Chhabria ordered ICE to provide information on every detainee at Mesa Verde and Yuba County Jail to review them for potential bail. In his April 29 order, the judge took ICE to task for not having already compiled a list of detained individuals who are medically vulnerable.

“The fact that ICE does not have such a list ready, six weeks after Gov. Newsom shut down the entire state and one week after this lawsuit was filed, speaks volumes about where the safety of people at these facilities falls on ICE’s list of priorities,” Chhabria wrote in his April 29th emergency order.

As of press time, at least 228 people had been released from ICE detention as a result of our lawsuits.

In May, we joined our fellow California affiliates in a lawsuit filed in the state Supreme Court that would have forced the governor to stop the transfer of people from county jails and state prisons to ICE detention centers. The court rejected our demands in *California Attorneys for Criminal Justice et al. v. Gavin Newsom*.

“The outcome was disappointing,” said Angélica Salceda, an attorney with the ACLU of Northern California. “However, that does not change the fact that the governor and attorney general have a moral and constitutional obligation to stop transferring people to potential COVID-19 death traps during the pandemic.”

Otay Mesa Detention Center in San Diego has the unfortunate distinction of being the first ICE facility in the country to have someone die of COVID-19 in its custody. Carlos Ernesto Escobar Mejia, 57, was an immigrant from El Salvador. His foot had been amputated due to diabetes—a condition that put him at high risk for a severe COVID-19 infection.

At the time of Escobar’s death, the ACLU had a federal lawsuit pending, seeking the release of medically vulnerable detainees from Otay Mesa. Escobar was one of the plaintiffs. He died in the hospital from coronavirus in May after a week on a ventilator. Otay Mesa has the largest COVID-19 outbreak at an ICE detention facility in the country. At least 158 people there have tested positive. The situation is so dire that detainees have gone on hunger strikes to highlight their safety concerns.

JAILS AND PRISONS

When COVID-19 first became a public health crisis in California, the ACLU immediately called on Gov. Gavin Newsom, county sheriffs, district attorneys, judges, and parole officials to release as many people as possible during the pandemic, particularly those who are elderly or who have medical conditions that make them susceptible to a fatal COVID-19 infection.

Although jail populations are down, conditions remain crowded, unsanitary, and dangerous, and incarcerated people’s lives remain in peril. Outbreaks are spreading throughout the prison system and the death toll continues to rise. In partnership with community-based organizations, we continue to advocate with local and state elected officials to protect and support our communities by releasing incarcerated people back to their families.

The ACLU has filed dozens of lawsuits nationally on behalf of people in jails and prisons. In April, the ACLU Foundation of Northern California and our other affiliates in

California were part of a legal team that filed an emergency lawsuit in the state Supreme Court to force the governor and attorney general to drastically reduce the populations at county jails and juvenile facilities during the pandemic. *National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers v. Gavin Newsom* argued that the unsafe conditions violate the 8th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which bans “cruel and unusual punishments” and the 14th Amendment guarantee of due process. Though the court refused our request, it said our claims had merit and should be addressed at the local level.

In May, we filed another lawsuit, *Latrill Wilkerson et al v. Gregory Ahern* in Alameda County Superior Court. Our goal in that case was to compel the sheriff to release all medically vulnerable people in custody at Santa Rita Jail in Dublin—or in rare circumstances transfer them to home confinement. Although we were not successful, our legal arguments will lay the groundwork for future cases.


Meanwhile, the ACLU Foundation of Southern California and legal partners filed two class action lawsuits on behalf of incarcerated people at federal corrections institutions in Lompoc in Santa Barbara and on Terminal Island in Los Angeles, where at least 1,600 people, including incarcerated people and staff, have tested positive for COVID-19. At least 12 people at Terminal Island have died from the coronavirus—more than at any other federal prison in the country.

CUTTING OFF THE JAIL PIPELINE

Securing people’s releases won’t do much good unless we also cut off the flow of our communities into jails and prisons.

The ACLU has pushed for a limit on new arrests, and supported a statewide emergency order passed in April that set bail at \$0 for most misdemeanor and low-level felonies.

The new schedule had the greatest impact on low-income Black and Brown people, who are disproportionately unable to afford cash bail and, according to statewide COVID-19 demographic data, are at a higher risk of infection and death.

We also called out rogue district attorneys in Stanislaus and Tulare counties who tried to circumvent this legal order. However, California justices rescinded the statewide emergency order in early June, so we are bringing the fight back to county judges and district attorneys to ensure that wealth is not the deciding factor between freedom and detention or life and death. 

GRANDMOTHER FREED FROM COVID-19 TINDERBOX

One October day in 2019, Sofia Bahena Ortuño, 64, was pulled over in a traffic stop while on her way to pick yams in northern California's Central Valley. At first, the grandmother of 6, who was a passenger in a co-worker's car, thought they were being stopped by sheriff's deputies.

She began to cry when she learned it was Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). She was arrested and taken to Mesa Verde Detention Center in Bakersfield.

Bahena, who has lived in the small town of Lamont for 20 years with her family, was confined with 50 other women. They were forced to eat, sleep, and live in tight quarters where social distancing was impossible.

Bahena suffers from hypothyroidism and diabetes—two chronic conditions that make her a high risk for a potentially fatal COVID-19 infection. She was terrified that she would catch the coronavirus because guards would come to work coughing, not wearing masks, and the conditions were unsanitary.

She acted with courage to serve as the lead plaintiff in a landmark federal class action lawsuit brought by the ACLU

Under pressure from our lawsuits, ICE has voluntarily released detainees at Mesa Verde and Yuba County Jail.

There are now
352 fewer detainees
at press time, in no small part due to our litigation.

Foundations of Northern California and Southern California, Lakin & Wille LLP, the San Francisco Public Defender's Office, and the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area. It called for the immediate release



Sofia Bahena Ortuño, lead plaintiff in a landmark federal class action lawsuit to release medically vulnerable immigrants held in ICE facilities.

of medically vulnerable immigrants in two California ICE facilities. After the plaintiffs' attorneys informed the federal government they were going to sue, Bahena was released—hours before the case was filed.

Bahena is living with her family while her immigration case proceeds.

"I'm still worried about contracting the coronavirus given my health," Bahena said after her release, "but I'm very happy to be able to be with my family again and to live with them." 

No matter the obstacles, we will continue to fight to protect those who remain confined in COVID-19 tinderboxes—whether in ICE detention, jail, or prison.



ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF THE ACLU

A Few Highlights of ACLU of Northern CA COVID-19 Actions

As local and state government action and inaction regarding the COVID-19 pandemic have reverberated throughout our communities, the ACLU of Northern CA has demanded protections for people who are unhoused, urged school districts to provide equitable access to educational resources, advocated for the public's right of access to court hearings, pushed for advances to workers' rights, and called for the collection of racial demographic data to track the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 upon communities of color.

HOUSING AND TESTING FOR UNHOUSED PEOPLE

Since the onset of the pandemic, the ACLU of Northern California has sent nearly a dozen letters to state and local governments demanding that they act to protect, house, and provide COVID-19 tests to unhoused people in our communities. In San Francisco, the ACLU, in coalition with partner organizations, sent a letter to Mayor Breed demanding that the City and County of San Francisco comply with a recent local law requiring that hotel rooms be made available for unhoused people during the shelter-in-place ordinance. At the time of printing, the City had not provided the number of hotel rooms mandated by the law.

In Sacramento, our advocacy efforts put a stop to the city's cruel sweeps of unhoused people's encampments and personal belongings. The sweeps, which directly contradicted CDC guidance, put already vulnerable people at an increased risk of contracting COVID-19.

Many factors, including limited ability to social distance and limited access to health care and hygiene facilities, put unhoused people at an increased risk of suffering severe outcomes from a COVID-19 infection. Racial disparities related to COVID-19 are amplified among unhoused populations, as people of color are more likely to experience homelessness than their white counterparts.

EDUCATION EQUITY DURING COVID-19

The ACLU of Northern California has called upon school districts to proactively support vulnerable and under-resourced students by ensuring that they have access to remote learning tools, mental health and counseling services, and services for students with disabilities and students experiencing homelessness.

Access to tools for remote learning are especially critical and districts have a legal obligation under the California Education Code to provide an inclusive learning environment for all students. In letters sent to districts, the ACLU has made clear that districts must also protect the privacy of students and families using technology

for remote learning and must not monitor, collect, or store student information gathered from online accounts and services.

In response to ACLU advocacy, the Lemoore Union Elementary School District rescinded an unfair rule that required graduating eighth graders to have attended 70 percent of remote learning classes in order to participate in remote graduation ceremonies. This requirement would have disproportionately impacted under-resourced students and students of color who are more likely to face challenges connecting to classes remotely.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO COURTS

The ACLU of Northern California has been monitoring courtrooms across Northern California to prevent the public and the press from having their constitutionally protected right to view judicial proceedings unnecessarily curtailed. Public access to the courts is a pillar of our democracy. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, initial proceedings such as bail hearings are critically important because a court's decision to release someone from an overcrowded jail pending trial can now mean the difference between life and death.

Since March, we've sent 9 letters to courts across California urging them to install public dial-in lines or implement video access so that family, community members, and the press can participate in court proceedings. Although many courts promptly responded to our demands, many others remain closed to the public with no meaningful access for the public or the press.

In June, we sent a letter to the California Judicial Council calling on them to provide clear guidance and recommendations to all 58 superior courts to address the widespread court secrecy that has occurred since courts began shutting down due to the pandemic.

EXTENDING PAID FAMILY LEAVE

COVID-19 has accentuated the challenges that many of California's frontline workers face when they need to take paid leave to care for themselves and their families. Existing laws fall short. Most Californians are only given three paid sick days per year and


millions in the country do not qualify for any. Without paid leave, people are less likely to see a healthcare provider when they fall ill and are more likely to go to work contagious.

The ACLU of California is pushing hard to change the state's laws to protect the health of our workforce and our community. We are supporting AB 3216, a bill that would guarantee 10 days of emergency paid sick leave to all workers, 12 weeks of job-protected emergency family and medical leave, and a right of recall and retention for workers who have been laid off in industries heavily impacted by COVID-19. (See page 10 for legislative details.)

COLLECTING RACIAL DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

In the past few months, we've witnessed devastating racial disparities in COVID-19 infections and deaths. Nationally, Black Americans are dying at a rate 2.4 times higher than whites, and although data is limited, we know that Native Americans are also suffering from much higher rates of infections and deaths.

California is no different. Black people are only six percent of the population, but account for 10 percent of deaths. As disturbing as these numbers are, they do not tell the full story. As a state and a country, we are not collecting the data necessary to understand the true size of the COVID-19 racial gap. If we don't know precisely which neighborhoods, occupations, ethnicities, gender identities, and age groups are being hit the hardest, we won't be able to take the necessary steps to protect their health.

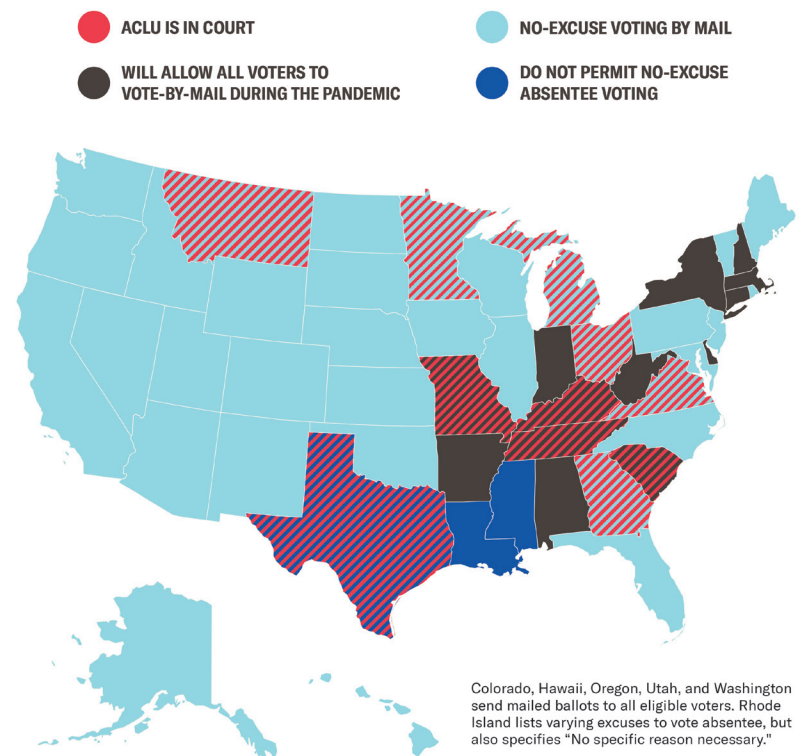
The ACLU of California, in partnership with a coalition of over 60 organizations, is calling on Governor Newsom and top state department health officials to implement a detailed, standardized demographic data collection model that counties and cities can follow. We are also calling on the state to proactively dedicate resources to counteract the years of racially discriminatory policies and government neglect that have left so many communities of color without access to necessary medical care and with much higher rates of preexisting conditions. 

Nationwide ACLU Actions on COVID-19

VOTE BY MAIL

The COVID-19 pandemic presents substantial challenges for holding the November 2020 election in a manner that will be safe, secure, and accessible for all voters. The ACLU is committed to ensuring that no one has to choose between their health and their right to participate in our democracy. ACLU attorneys across the country are in court to ensure that every eligible voter in their state can vote by mail.

At the same time, we're demanding the inclusion of safe, in-person voting options for limited-English speakers, people with disabilities, unhoused people, and others who need in-person voting services. In California, we are also recommending that significant resources be allocated for public education campaigns focused on communities that do not traditionally vote by mail. See the article on page 5 for details.



IMMIGRATION DETENTION

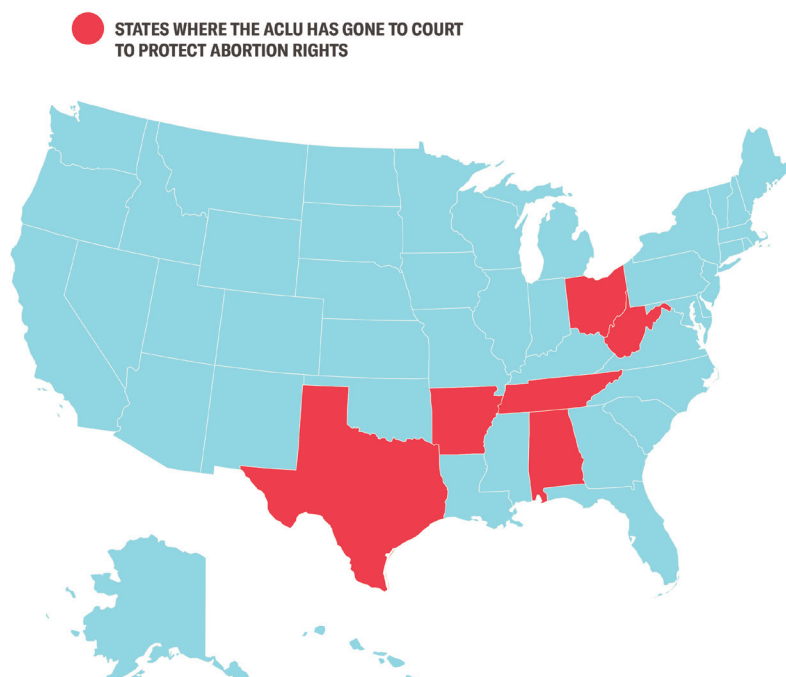
The ACLU has filed over 40 lawsuits against ICE detention centers nationwide demanding the release of individuals most vulnerable to severe illness or death due to COVID-19. Public health officials and immigration advocates across the country have joined the call, blasting ICE for overcrowded and unsanitary conditions that make it impossible for detainees to protect themselves and practice social distancing. Conditions in these centers not only threaten those who are detained; they also threaten staff and the greater community. So far at least 70 people have been released from ICE detention centers as a result of our lawsuits. Detention should not be a death sentence.

RELEASING PEOPLE FROM PRISONS AND JAILS

Prisons and jails have been at the center of some of the most catastrophic COVID-19 outbreaks, but the models used to estimate the number of COVID-19 deaths consistently disregard incarcerated people. This omission is particularly harmful to Black and Brown people, who have long been targeted by a discriminatory and overly punitive criminal legal system.

A recent ACLU study shows that we can save the lives of as many as 23,000 people in jail and 76,000 in the broader community if we stop arrests for all but the most serious offenses and double the rate of release for those already detained.

To accomplish this, the ACLU and partners have been working around the clock to get people out of jails and prisons. We've mobilized in 25 different states with a mix of lawsuits and campaigns to demand that all levels of government save lives by getting people out of detention. So far, we have secured the release of 26,000 people.



PROTECTING ABORTION CARE

As COVID-19 started tearing through the country, anti-abortion politicians began using the pandemic as cover to attack reproductive rights. Against the advice of public health experts, eight states tried to institute measures to cut off access to abortion care.

The ACLU immediately took action to challenge these unconstitutional and repressive laws. We filed numerous lawsuits, arguing that abortion care is an essential service and blocking access will cause irreparable harm to people seeking time-sensitive reproductive care during the pandemic. Thanks to our litigation, abortion care is still available in Alabama, Arkansas, Iowa, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas, and West Virginia.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

BY KEVIN BAKER

Like much of the state, the California Legislature has been upended by COVID-19. The Legislature abruptly recessed in March and returned in May with a compressed calendar and narrowed agenda centered on legislation responsive to the public health crisis and economic downturn. During this time, the ACLU of California Center for Advocacy & Policy has been working to ensure the rights of all Californians are respected, protected, and upheld. The ACLU has mobilized anew in the wake of the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and so many other Black lives lost to police brutality. Here are just a few of the areas we are focused on this year.

POLICING

In recent years, the ACLU of California has worked in coalition with our community partners to pass transformational legislation to increase accountability and transparency, and to reduce violence in policing. This session we are committed to continuing this work by advancing legislation that prioritizes divesting from police and investing in our communities.

California has an opportunity to support community-based alternatives to police by passing and funding the CRISES Act. AB 2054 creates a pilot grant program for community organizations to provide stability, safety, and culturally informed and appropriate responses to emergency situations such as a mental health crisis, people experiencing homelessness, intimate partner violence, and natural disasters. These organizations will also aid in the follow-up to those emergencies by engaging community resources with deeper knowledge and training in responding to those situations. The ACLU is also working on legislation that will end the employment of officers who have committed misconduct and restore the original intent of civil rights laws to provide effective remedies for victims of police violence.

We continue to monitor over 15 pieces of new legislation that seek to make additional reforms to policing, including barring carotid holds, new investments in school-based mental health services as an alternative to law enforcement, and banning the use of rubber bullets and tear gas on peaceful protestors.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

The economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are just beginning. We know that the effects of this crisis will reverberate for many years to come. Investing in communities includes addressing the economic well-being of workers, the formerly incarcerated, and those without permanent shelter.

The ACLU of California is cosponsoring AB 3216, which expands paid sick leave and job-protected family leave benefits so that nearly all California workers can take leave to care for themselves and their families without losing their jobs during and after the public health crisis. AB 3216's emergency paid sick days, family and pregnancy leave, right of recall, and worker retention provisions are essential to protect our workers, families, and communities.

We are also advocating for the elimination of criminal fees through SB 144. These punitive surcharges on defendants often force entire

families to choose between paying off their debt or buying necessities like food, impeding successful re-entry. Criminal fees are an ineffective and inequitable tool for revenue generation, costing much more to collect than they receive.

PROTECTING PRIVACY

We successfully defeated a bill that would have authorized the use of face surveillance technology by both law enforcement and businesses, and we continue to monitor government contracting with technology companies that might use this public health crisis to undermine the medical privacy of Californians through contact tracing apps or testing programs. We are also committed to protecting student data as school districts have transitioned to distance learning.

PROTECTING VOTING RIGHTS

In addition to new privacy issues, COVID-19 has changed the way the November election will proceed in California. We successfully advocated for vote-by-mail legislation and in-person voting options for the many voters that need them, including voters in underrepresented communities, such as accessible voting machines, voting materials and support in non-English languages, and same-day registration.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

COVID-19 has highlighted abhorrent conditions in prisons, jails, and detention facilities across the state. As cases continue to rise and conditions worsen, we have called on the governor and attorney general to use their authority to release the medically vulnerable and those that are detained for parole and probation violations, limit unnecessary jail admission and pretrial detention, and stop all transfers to federal immigration authorities when people have completed their sentences.

Addressing the needs of those impacted by the criminal justice system includes improving conditions for incarcerated pregnant people through AB 732, which would standardize care across state prisons and county jails to improve the health and well-being of both the parent and infant. In addition, we are working to improve the treatment of transgender people in state prison through SB 132, the Transgender Respect, Agency, and Dignity Act, so that transgender people would be housed and searched according to their gender

identity and/or sense of safety, not their sex assigned at birth, and addressed by staff through the use of appropriate pronouns and honorifics.

RIGHTING HISTORIC INJUSTICE IN NOVEMBER

The ACLU supported both ACA 5 and ACA 6, which have now qualified for the November ballot. ACA 5 seeks to remove barriers to opportunity by righting the systemic discrimination of Proposition 209, passed by the voters over two decades ago. Voters can act in November to restore equal opportunity in public contracting, hiring, and education.

Our co-sponsored bill ACA 6 also passed the Legislature, giving voters the opportunity to end ballot box discrimination for people on parole. ACA 6, known as the the Free the Vote Act will allow the nearly 50,000 people on parole to actively participate in our democracy. Felony disenfranchisement laws are rooted in a history of Jim Crow segregation and, because of inequalities in the criminal legal system, these policies disproportionately silence the voices of Black and Brown people. Voting is a fundamental right, and it's time for California to restore this right for people on parole.

Now, more than ever, we need your help to advance legislation that makes meaningful strides to end systemic racism, expand economic opportunity, and protect the rights of all Californians. 

Kevin Baker is the Legislative Director for the ACLU of California Center for Advocacy & Policy.

WANT TO TAKE ACTION?

Join our email list to stay informed about current issues and campaigns, upcoming events, and opportunities to get more involved in the fight to protect and expand civil liberties.

Subscribe to our email
action list at
ACLUNC.ORG/EMAIL

THIS NOVEMBER, **VOTE NO** ON PROPOSITION 20

CALIFORNIA HAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO START SHRINKING ITS MASSIVE SYSTEM OF IMPRISONMENT, BUT WE NEED TO PROTECT OUR REFORMS TO DO SO

*One of the ACLU of Northern California's top priorities in the 2020 election is to defeat this measure.
We are one of the early founders of the campaign to defeat it.*

BY LIZZIE BUCHEN

In the decade since the U.S. Supreme Court held that incarceration in California prisons amounted to cruel and unusual punishment, the state has taken on a number of critical reforms that have significantly reduced state incarceration. These gains were reinforced by Gov. Gavin Newsom's recent revised state budget proposal, which included plans to close two of our 34 state-run prisons over the next few years. However, an initiative eligible for the November ballot threatens to thwart that plan and bring back the tough-on-crime approach that the voters have continuously signaled they want no part of.

The initiative would gut critical reforms that the voters overwhelmingly approved in recent years, including limiting access to parole for people with nonviolent convictions, lowering the threshold for felony theft to one of the lowest in the nation, and expanding DNA collection. In 2014, Proposition 47 reduced the classification of many drug- and petty-theft-related offenses from felonies to misdemeanors. Two years later, Proposition 57 established a parole process for

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The initiative would gut critical reforms that the voters overwhelmingly approved in recent years.

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people in state prison convicted of nonviolent offenses, allowing people to earn their release after they have completed the sentence for their primary offense.

These commonsense and humane measures have allowed our state to take its first steps away from the destructive and cruel failures of incarceration and towards a brighter future that prioritizes community safety and well-being over punishment and oppression.

This initiative would send us hurtling backwards, endangering not only the governor's plan to save California hundreds

of millions of dollars per year but, more importantly, the Black, Brown, Indigenous, and low-income communities that have long borne the brunt of our draconian criminal legal system.

In pushing the ballot measure, law enforcement officials are resorting to their usual emotional scare tactics—pitting communities against each other and claiming that our state needs to ratchet up our reliance on incarceration despite crime rates remaining near historic lows. Research shows that investments in housing, quality education, mental and physical health care, childcare, and job opportunities would do far more to support community safety and quality of life for all California communities.

As we prepare for the November election, we are going to take every step to make sure communities across this state reject this sham initiative. We hope you'll join us in making your voice heard. 


Lizzie Buchen is Director of the ACLU of California's Criminal Justice Project.

RECENT NATIONWIDE VICTORIES

A LANDMARK SUPREME COURT DECISION AFFIRMS LGBTQ RIGHTS

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that LGBTQ people cannot be fired because of their sexual orientation or because they are transgender as a matter of federal law, affirming legal protections from job discrimination for millions of people.

The ACLU was counsel in two of the cases before the Supreme Court: *R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Homes v. EEOC* (Aimee Stephens) and *Altitude Express v. Zarda* (Donald Zarda). A third case, *Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia*, was consolidated with Zarda.

In a 6 to 3 decision, the Supreme Court affirmed that it is illegal for employers to fire or otherwise discriminate against someone simply because they are LGBTQ. Though more work remains to protect the rights of the LGBTQ community, this decision will go a long way towards affirming legal protections in education, housing, credit, and health care—areas where too many LGBTQ people, particularly Black and Brown LGBTQ people, still face discrimination. 

AMAZON AND MICROSOFT ANNOUNCE MORATORIUM ON SELLING FACE RECOGNITION TECH TO POLICE


On June 10, Amazon announced a one-year moratorium on its sale of face recognition technology to law enforcement. Two years ago, the ACLU revealed that the company was secretly selling this technology to police, and was part of a coalition effort calling on the company to stop fueling police abuses and civil rights violations with the sale of this technology to governments.

"It took two years for Amazon to get to this point," said Nicole Ozer, ACLU-NC Technology and Civil Liberties Policy Director, "but we're glad the company is finally recognizing the dangers face recognition poses to Black and Brown communities and civil rights more broadly."

The following day, Microsoft also announced a moratorium on its sale of face recognition technology to law enforcement.

"When even the makers of face recognition refuse to sell this surveillance technology because it is so dangerous," said Matt Cagle, ACLU-

NC Technology and Civil Liberties Attorney, "lawmakers can no longer deny the threats to our rights and liberties. It should not have taken the police killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and far too many other Black people, hundreds of thousands of people taking to the streets, brutal law enforcement attacks against protesters and journalists, and the deployment of military-grade surveillance equipment on protests led by Black activists for these companies to wake up to the everyday realities of police surveillance for Black and Brown communities."

We welcome these companies finally taking action—as little and as late as it may be. We also urge these companies to work to forever shut the door on America's sordid chapter of over-policing of Black and Brown communities, including the surveillance technologies that disproportionately harm them. 

IN RESPONSE TO THE MURDER OF GEORGE FLOYD

A LETTER FROM ACLU OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ABDI SOLTANI AND COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR CANDICE FRANCIS

As America witnessed the killing of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police, no one could argue that his blackness wasn't the catalyst that led to his murder. His demise has returned the spotlight on racist policing and the dehumanization of African Americans in the criminal legal system. Floyd's premature death reads like an installment in an ongoing tragedy, with intervals so short between chapters that one Black life taken is followed by another and another in rapid succession. Say their names: George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Oscar Grant, Stephon Clark, Mario Woods, Jessica Williams, Steven Taylor, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Trayvon Martin, Sandra Bland, Amadou Diallo, and on and on and on. This is the backdrop that frames our response to the death of George Floyd, along with the devastating effect of COVID-19 and its disparate impact on the Black community.

We share the grief and anger that's spilling into the streets, calling for justice. We're learning from members of the Black community how systemic racism forces so many African Americans to contain their sorrow and rage even when there isn't a vessel large enough to hold it.

A THREE-STEP PROCESS

Reaction to the killing of Mr. Floyd presented many challenges. **First**, as defiant and angry protests rose up throughout the nation, including in our own backyard, a slew of hastily announced "curfews" were imposed in several cities and counties across California. We worked with local community partners to speak out against such measures arguing that curfews threaten free speech and the right to assemble. Together, we asserted that blanket closures of public spaces gave police unfettered discretion, creating a high potential for the exact type of racialized abuses that were being protested. Through legal, digital, and grassroots tactics, we demanded curfews be lifted, and like dominoes they began to fall. We are working to address the citations that were issued when the curfews were in effect and the requirement of protestors to appear in court, face criminal charges, and/or pay fines.

Second, we must advance urgently needed reforms of our local police departments. The repetition of unjustifiable homicides and shootings must cease, replaced by broad changes to law enforcement policies, practices, and cultures. Over the past decade, with the extraordinary leadership of people affected by police violence, California has passed meaningful legislation to gain access to racial profiling data, open misconduct records, and impose limits on police use of deadly force. Each of these laws must be faithfully and immediately implemented, which requires pressure from the public and leadership from elected officials. This year our focus is on continuing to hold police accountable, limiting the potential for abuse, and shifting resources

away from police and toward community-based initiatives that support true safety, health, and well-being. To that end, the ACLU signed a letter by the Movement for Black Lives (M4BL) calling for divestment of police resources and investment in communities.

Third, we call on members and supporters of civil liberties and civil rights organizations like the ACLU to proactively fight racism and to support and lift up Black-led organizations with pro-Black agendas. We must focus on the issues that bring us here today: the stark racial divide that persists in our social fabric and the current manifestation of white supremacy. Guided by our shared humanity, we must support Black leadership in the quest for justice and power without expecting Black people to "cure" or "fix" the racism imposed upon them.

DONATING TO COMMUNITY-LED GROUPS

We urge you to donate to community-led organizations mobilizing to stem the impact of police violence. Just a few of those groups are listed below.

- Anti Police-Terror Project
- Justice Teams Network
- Black Organizing Project
- Youth Justice Coalition in LA
- Young Women's Freedom Center
- Transgender Gender-Variant & Intersex Justice Project
- Families United for Justice
- Law Enforcement Accountability Network



ACLU of Northern California
Executive Director Abdi Soltani and
Communications Director Candice Francis

It is up to us to join forces
and secure the monumental
changes that are needed so that
the George Floyds of the world
can live out their natural lives in
peace and with justice.

THE PATH FORWARD

At this moment, when government forces threaten those who dare to resist, including the press that reports on this resistance, we must continue to speak up unambiguously for racial justice and the right to protest. In honor of George Floyd and all Black and Brown people who have unjustly lost their lives to police violence, we must reaffirm our unequivocal stance against police brutality.

We're living in an unprecedented time requiring us to make stark choices. How many more George Floyds can we watch die before us? How long can we tolerate a system that recycles fallacies about the value and worth of one human being compared with another? How long can we tolerate responses to crises that underscore the disparities that exist among us?

The answer is obvious, but the road to get there is unpaved. History is replete with examples of barriers so imposing, it wasn't clear if they could ever be challenged—but somehow they were. It is now up to us to join forces and secure the monumental changes that are needed so that the George Floyds of the world can live out their natural lives in peace and with justice.

Abdi Soltani

Abdi Soltani, Executive Director
ACLU of Northern California

Candice Francis

Candice Francis, Communications Director
ACLU of Northern California