

# ACLU SUMMER 2006 news

BECAUSE FREEDOM CAN'T PROTECT ITSELF

VOLUME LXX ISSUE 3

**SPECIAL ALERT! Teen Safety on California Ballot Again: Vote NO on Prop 85 this November**

## TEEN SAFETY THREATENED: VOTE "NO" ON PROP 85

By Margaret Crosby

This fall California voters will be asked once again to consider whether to restrict teenagers' access to abortion. Proposition 85 on the November 2006 ballot is almost identical to Proposition 73, the parental notification measure that voters defeated last November. California voters got it right the first time. In rejecting Prop 73, they voted to protect the safety of our teenagers.

Californians understood that government cannot mandate family communication. While we all want pregnant teenagers to turn to supportive parents, some teenagers who sadly live in homes marked by violence, dysfunction, or even sexual abuse simply cannot safely talk to their parents. These parental notification measures put those vulnerable teenagers at risk.

The new initiative, Prop 85, is a virtual photocopy of Prop 73. In 3000 words of text, the authors have changed only 300 words this time around.

Like Prop 73, Prop 85 would amend the California Constitution to restrict young women's access to abortion. Like Prop 73, Prop 85 would require every pregnant teenager who cannot tell her parents to travel to court, no matter how distant, to personally face a judge. She must prove her case through clear and convincing evidence, the highest civil standard of proof.

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## ACLU DEMANDS TELEPHONE COMPANY GIANTS END PRIVACY VIOLATIONS

By Stella Richardson

The ACLU sued telecommunications giants AT&T and Verizon to stop them from continuing to provide the National Security Agency (NSA) with the personal phone records of millions of California customers.

The three California ACLU affiliates (Northern California, Southern California, and San Diego & Imperial Counties) filed the May 26, 2006 suits on behalf of 17 individual plaintiffs and more than 100,000 ACLU members statewide.

Articles in USA Today and elsewhere revealed that the telephone companies have been providing the NSA with customers' private records since September 11, 2001. Records given to the NSA include phone numbers for both incoming and outgoing calls, as well as the time, date, and duration of each call. This information was turned over without customers' knowledge

or consent, and without any court order, warrant, or other proper legal process.

"On a massive scale, the phone companies have violated

one of our most precious rights—the right to privacy guaranteed by our state constitution," said Dorothy Ehrlich, ACLU-NC Executive Director. "In the face of this unprecedented illegal and unconstitutional activity, we are asking the court to order the phone companies to stop turning over Californians' private phone records to the government."

The suit asserts that the telephone providers have violated two sets of California laws: California's constitutional right to privacy and the state's Public Utilities Code. Article I, Section 1 of the California Constitution guarantees Californians' right to

privacy. This provision was passed overwhelmingly by California voters in 1972 to prohibit illegal data sharing and government spying. In addition, a state public utilities law bars the

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ACLU-NC Technology and Civil Liberties Policy Director Nicole Ozer (left) and Staff Attorney Ann Brick speak to the press about the lawsuit.

## BOARD ELECTIONS NOTICE

The ACLU-NC Board of Directors, in accordance with changes adopted in 2003, have an election schedule as follows:

Nominations for the Board of Directors will now be submitted by the September Board meeting; candidates and ballots will appear in the Fall issue of the ACLU News; elected board members will begin their three-year term in January.

As provided by the revised ACLU-NC by-laws, the ACLU-NC membership is entitled to elect its 2006-2007 Board of Directors directly. The nominating committee

is now seeking suggestions from the membership to fill at-large positions on the Board.

ACLU members may participate in the nominating process in two ways:

1. They may send suggestions for the nominating committee's consideration prior to the September Board meeting (September 14, 2006). 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.

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**VOTE NO ON PROP 83 THIS NOVEMBER: FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE 9**

# A SUCCESSFUL MOVING DAY: NEW HEADQUARTERS OFFER ACLU-NC EXPANDED OPPORTUNITIES

By Jeff Vessels

Imagine an efficient, modern office with conference rooms and meeting spaces bustling with media representatives, activists from social justice organizations, volunteers, board members, interns, and staff. Imagine traveling only a block or two from the Embarcadero MUNI or BART station or the San Francisco ferry or bus terminal to attend an ACLU meeting or event.

Welcome to the ACLU of Northern California's new headquarters at 39 Drumm Street. After 26 years at 1663 Mission, the ACLU-NC moved to its new downtown San Francisco location on May 22.

It is the first headquarters the ACLU-NC intends to own. This milestone move returns us to our historic roots, near the site of the 1934 General Strike that gave birth to our organization.

Our new office has already proven to offer a strategic advantage. Within days of our arrival, we hosted a news conference announcing our lawsuit against telecommunications giants AT&T and Verizon (see story on page 1). Members of the media told us that it is now easier to cover ACLU stories owing to our location (Drumm Street is near many news organizations) and technologically up-to-date

facilities. The office also provided a gathering point for the ACLU contingent in the Gay Pride Parade, which started just a block from 39 Drumm.

Drumm Street was also home to the first meeting of the reconvened Campaign for Teen Safety. Coalition partners in the continuing fight against parental notification laws, most recently defeated in last year's Proposition 73, chose ACLU-NC headquarters for its large and well-equipped conference rooms and easy-to-reach location. Ample space and an accessible location will be vital for the growing numbers of volunteers needed to win this battle—again (see story on page 1).

Watch your mailbox for your opportunity to help make 39 Drumm Street the ACLU-NC's permanent home! ■

**THIS MILESTONE MOVE  
RETURNS US TO OUR  
HISTORIC ROOTS, NEAR  
THE SITE OF THE 1934  
GENERAL STRIKE THAT  
GAVE BIRTH TO OUR  
ORGANIZATION.**

## AWARD RECOGNIZES GENERAL COUNSEL'S DECADES OF SERVICE



MICHAEL WOOLSEY

At the 2006 Benefactor Dinner, an annual appreciation event for some of the ACLU-NC's most generous donors that was held March 28, Stephen V. Bomse was given an award recognizing his decades of service to the ACLU-NC as General Counsel. The award conveys the ACLU-NC's thanks to Mr. Bomse and his firm, Heller Ehrman LLP, for their unwavering and inspiring commitment to protecting civil liberties. ■

## JOIN THE ACLU LEGACY CHALLENGE

Envision providing for the ACLU's current and future financial needs with one simple act. You can do just that by including the ACLU as a beneficiary in your will or living trust before December 31, 2006. If you do so, New York philanthropist Robert W. Wilson will make a donation to the ACLU Foundation matching 10 percent of your bequest intention (or \$10,000, whichever is less).

In 2005, 54 Northern Californians participated in this unique "Legacy Challenge" program. These ACLU supporters generated over \$169,000 in matching grants and informed us of over \$5.4 million in future gifts through their estate plans.

If you have intended to include a bequest to the ACLU of Northern California in your will or living trust, now is the time to act. Take advantage of this "Legacy Challenge."

Qualifying your bequest for a "Legacy Challenge" matching grant is easy. Just name the ACLU as a beneficiary in your will or living trust, and then let us know you have done so. We'll send you a simple form to complete and return. That's it.

The "Legacy Challenge" ends on December 31, 2006. To generate even more funding for the ACLU through your generosity, you'll want to start your planning and paperwork now.

For information on the "Legacy Challenge," please contact Stan Yogi at (415) 621-2493 or visit [www.aclu.org/legacy](http://www.aclu.org/legacy). ■

## CARD CARRYING AND PROUD



ILANA PARMER

By Ilana Parmer

On Sunday, June 25, San Francisco's Market Street displayed a rainbow of flags and faces as hundreds of thousands of people united for the 36th annual San Francisco Gay Pride Parade. Members of the ACLU of Northern California, along with hundreds of other organizations and groups, followed the mile-long procession celebrating the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex community.

Headed by the emblematic "Statue of Liberty," the ACLU-NC's band of staff, board members, interns, youth, and volunteers marched with the banner "Card Carrying and Proud." The crew was clad in pink "Don't Spy on Me" shirts, linking LGBT issues, such as the freedom to marry, to the topic of government intrusion into the private sphere.

Twenty-year-old Jordan Green, an ACLU Friedman Youth Project staff member, rallied onlookers with cheers such as "Gay, straight, black, white; marriage is a civil right." The crowd cheered and responded with abundant support. Many reached out for ACLU-NC email action alert sign-up cards. One parade-goer waved a sign reading "ACLU, We Love You." ■

## ACLUnews

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Membership (\$20 and up) includes a subscription to the *ACLU News*. For membership information call (415) 621-2493 or visit [www.aclunc.org/join.html](http://www.aclunc.org/join.html).

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NOT A CARD-CARRYING MEMBER? JOIN ONLINE AT [WWW.ACLUNC.ORG](http://WWW.ACLUNC.ORG)

# ACLU-NC LEADERSHIP HEADS TO NATIONAL

By Suzanne Samuel

The national ACLU has tapped ACLU-NC Executive Director Dorothy Ehrlich to be the organization's first Deputy Executive Director. Ehrlich moves to national headquarters in New York later this fall after 28 years as Executive Director of the ACLU-NC.

As the national ACLU's Deputy Executive Director, Ehrlich will work directly with Executive Director Anthony Romero and the senior management team to help coordinate the legal, legislative, and public education work that has become even more critical in the post-9/11 period. The national ACLU's staff has more than doubled, to nearly 400 full-time employees. Ehrlich will help manage this expanding force for civil liberties as well as working with the national board and the 53 state affiliates.



Dorothy Ehrlich

Ehrlich explained that although the move to leave her beloved affiliate was difficult to make, "It was made easier by the fact that I'll still be in the ACLU family and will be able to continue working with many of the same people whose commitment and energy have collectively made this the strongest ACLU affiliate in the country."

In Ehrlich's nearly three decades as Executive Director of the ACLU-NC, the affiliate has more than doubled its membership, to 55,000 members, and tripled its professional staff—creating, as ACLU-NC Board of Directors Chair M. Quinn Delaney described, "a civil liberties fighting force that's the envy of every affiliate."

Ehrlich expects to make the transition to the national office later this fall. She leaves behind a talented team of professionals who will continue to steer the work of the organization while the ACLU-NC Board of Directors conducts a nationwide search for a new executive director.

"There's so much I will miss about my tenure here at the ACLU-NC," Ehrlich continued. "From the joy of collaborating with the staff on a strategy to fight back against some brazen new injustice, to the clients who are willing to bravely stand up to protect all of our rights, and finally to the inspiring commitment of our Board, all these experiences have touched and humbled me. But I will leave knowing that with the continued support of our members, donors, and activists, the ACLU of Northern California will remain the region's premier guardian of civil rights and civil liberties in the years to come."

Ehrlich will be honored with the Chief Justice Earl Warren Civil Liberties Award at the Bill of Rights Day celebration held December 10 at Herbst Theatre in San Francisco. Mark your calendars to attend this annual celebration of civil liberties and Dorothy Ehrlich's remarkable contributions to the ACLU-NC. ■

## NEW ACLU-NC WEB SITE LAUNCHES THIS FALL

This fall, the ACLU of Northern California will launch a brand new Web site at the same Web address: [WWW.ACLUNC.ORG](http://WWW.ACLUNC.ORG). The new site will offer even more opportunities for online activism, as well as in-depth and up-to-the-minute information on the issues you care about most.

### NEW WEBSITE FEATURES INCLUDE:

- Chapter pages with ACLU-NC activities in your local area
- A new youth section for high school students and educators
- In-depth analysis of civil liberties issues

- Podcasts from recent ACLU-NC events
- A blog by our technology and civil liberties policy director
- RSS feeds that ensure regular updates on civil liberties issues

VISIT [WWW.ACLUNC.ORG](http://WWW.ACLUNC.ORG) THIS SUMMER!

## BOARD ELECTION NOTICE CONTINUED

2. They may 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 of Directors by October 4, 2006 (twenty 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 (and 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.

### REVISED ACLU-NC BY-LAWS

**Article VI, Section 3: Presentation of Nominations and Additional Nominations.** The final report of the committee to nominate members-at-large to the Board shall be presented at the September Board meeting. Members of the Board may propose additional nominations. If no additional nominations are proposed by Board members, the Board by a majority of those present and voting, shall adopt the nominating commit-

tee report. If additional nominations are proposed, the Board shall, by written ballot, elect a slate of nominees with each member being entitled to cast a number of votes equal to the vacancies to be filled; the persons nominated by the Board shall be those persons, equal in number to the vacancies to be filled, who have received the greatest number of votes. The list of nominees to be placed before the membership of the Union for election shall be those persons nominated by the Board as herein provided, together with those persons nominated by petition as hereinafter provided in Section 4.

**Article VI, Section 4: Recommendations and Nominations by Members of the Union.** Any fifteen or more members of the Union in good standing may themselves submit a nomination to be included among those voted upon by the general membership by submitting a written petition to the Board not later than twenty days after the adoption by the Board of the slate of Board nominees. No member of the Union 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 the By-Laws shall be printed in the first page of the summer issue of the ACLU News together with an article advising members of their rights in the nominating process. ■

## SAVE THE DATE!

Bill of Rights Day 2006  
*honoring*  
DOROTHY EHRLICH

Sunday, December 10  
Herbst Theatre  
San Francisco

NOT A CARD-CARRYING MEMBER? JOIN ONLINE AT [WWW.ACLUNC.ORG](http://WWW.ACLUNC.ORG)

# ESTEEMED LAWYERS HONORED FOR 30 YEARS WITH THE ACLU-NC

By Emily Browne

Staff Attorney Margaret Crosby and Legal Director Alan Schlosser were honored for their remarkable advocacy on behalf of civil liberties at their shared 30-year ACLU-NC career milestone. The April 18 celebration allowed 200 staff, board members, donors, attorneys, coalition members, and friends to honor the extraordinary contributions Crosby and Schlosser have made to civil liberties.

Crosby, a staff attorney since 1976, is known nationally for her work on issues of reproductive freedom and religious freedom. She argued cases before the California Supreme

Court that protected the reproductive rights of poor women, overturned restrictions on Medi-Cal funding of abortion, and struck down a state law requiring teenagers to obtain parental or court consent for abortion. Crosby litigated one of the first cases barring prayer from public school graduations and challenged San Francisco's Mt. Davidson cross. She has received the California Women Lawyers Fay Stender award and "Women Making History" recognition by Senator Barbara Boxer.

Schlosser joined the ACLU-NC as Staff Counsel in 1976. He served as Managing Attorney from 1994 to 2000, becoming Legal Director in 2001. He currently directs a team of six ACLU-NC staff attorneys. Schlosser has litigated civil rights and civil liberties cases on vital issues including free speech, privacy, and the rights of welfare recipients and the homeless. His victories include cases protecting tenants'



Staff Attorney Margaret Crosby has spent 30 years with the ACLU-NC paving the way for reproductive freedom legislation.



Legal Director and Honoree Alan Schlosser speaks at the April 18 celebration, while Executive Director Dorothy Ehrlich and Federal Magistrate Judge Ed Chen look on.

free speech rights and the rights of the press and public to witness executions. Schlosser has taught at several prestigious law schools, including Columbia and Harvard.

**"FOR 30 YEARS, BOTH MAGGIE AND ALAN HAVE MENTORED AND INSPIRED YOUNG LAWYERS WITH THEIR PASSION AND EXPERTISE."**

**—ACLU-NC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DOROTHY EHRLICH**

"For 30 years, both Maggie and Alan have mentored and inspired young lawyers with their passion and expertise. They have spent much of their lives fighting the legal battles that protect our civil liberties," said ACLU-NC Executive Director Dorothy Ehrlich. "As Alan and Maggie continue to provide indispensable advocacy and invaluable leadership, the ACLU-NC is thrilled to honor them at this milestone." ■

## LEGAL BRIEFS

By Emily Browne and Stella Richardson

### WIRELESS INTERNET INITIATIVES MUST CONSIDER PRIVACY AND FREE SPEECH RIGHTS

In selecting a provider for a metropolitan area's wireless Internet network, local residents' privacy and free speech rights must be taken into account. So urged the ACLU-NC, Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), and Electronic Privacy Information's West Coast office (EPIC West) in a joint letter sent to the Wireless Silicon Valley Task Force.

The April 17, 2006 letter to the group, which is selecting a vendor for a 36-city Silicon Valley-area WiFi network, raises civil liberties concerns at issue for any regional wireless network. The coalition of technology and civil liberties groups sent a similar letter to the city of San Francisco last October when they began constructing their municipal network.

"Silicon Valley residents have the right to a network that respects privacy and autonomy, allowing users to explore what the Internet has to offer, including information about medical conditions and the use of online banking, without fear of surveillance or intrusion," wrote the three groups.

The groups strongly support the regional wireless initiative but stress the importance of integrating privacy and free speech issues into the Request for Proposal (RFP) process. A vendor's attention to these issues should be a key factor in the task force's selection of Silicon Valley's wireless provider. The RFP for the municipal WiFi network, which would extend from San Mateo to Gilroy, was released at a public forum on April 28.

The privacy groups raised these issues with the city of San Francisco when Google and Earthlink were chosen as San Francisco's WiFi providers. At the city's request, both companies have responded to the letter's concerns.

### PROTECTING LGBT YOUTH FROM HARASSMENT

The ACLU recently announced a \$625,000 settlement in the first case addressing the mistreatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth in correctional facilities.

The June 15 settlement marks the end of a lawsuit filed last September on behalf of three Hawaii juveniles who were subjected to severe anti-gay harassment from their staff and peers at the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF).

In the settlement, the state of Hawaii agreed to pay \$625,000 to the three plaintiffs and their attorneys. The court also ordered the youth facility to hire a court-appointed consultant to train staff, help craft new policies to protect LGBT youth, and create a functioning grievance system for reporting abuses.

In February, a federal judge agreed with the ACLU in finding a "relentless campaign of harassment" at the Hawaii facility. A preliminary injunction was ordered to immediately halt the abuse.

"If other states don't take decisive action to stop anti-gay and anti-transgender abuse and harassment, then they can expect to have to answer for it in court as well," said Tamara Lange, a staff attorney with the ACLU's Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Project. "What happened in Hawaii should put juvenile systems nationwide on notice."

### SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE WITHDRAWS "U.S. CITIZENS ONLY" AD

"Candidates must have two years of related experience and U.S. citizenship to enter" stated a San Francisco Chronicle ad for the June 7 San Francisco Technology and Professional Career Expo.

The ACLU-NC, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, and ACLU Immigrants Right Project responded by sending a letter to the Chronicle, SFGate.com, and job fair organizer Expo Experts. The June 5 letter urged the Chronicle and SFGate to retract the ad promoting the job fair, which was held at San Francisco's Fort Mason.

"Restricting job opportunities to U.S. citizens, unless justified by a specific national security requirement or other legal exception, violate a number of federal and state anti-discrimination laws. Organizations and individuals who violate these laws are subject to damages and civil penalties," the groups' letter stated.

Job fair organizers attempted to justify the restriction by saying that many of the employers recruiting for engineering, technology, and security positions at the event seek candidates with active security clearances, which generally require U.S. citizenship.

As a result of the civil liberties groups' letter, the SF Chronicle and SFGate agreed to withdraw the ad. They published a new ad that did not include the U.S. citizenship requirement. The event organizers also agreed not to ask people entering the job fair whether they are U.S. citizens. ■

TAKE ACTION ONLINE TO PROTECT CIVIL LIBERTIES: SIGN UP AT [WWW.ACLUNC.ORG](http://WWW.ACLUNC.ORG)

# VOTE “NO” ON PROP 85 IN NOVEMBER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In an obvious effort to conceal the purpose of the initiative—restricting abortion—proponents deleted Prop 73’s loaded definition of abortion: “causing the death of the unborn child.” Prop 85 also modifies, but by no means eliminates, the burdensome reporting requirements imposed on doctors and judges.

Even when teenagers obtain judges’ permission for abortion, the court option is a stressful, humiliating process that delays teens’ access to counseling and treatment. Pregnant teenagers from unhappy homes who cannot navigate a crowded court system must travel out of state for medical care, or turn in desperation to dangerous illegal abortions.

**PROPOSITION 85 ON THE NOVEMBER 2006 BALLOT IS ALMOST IDENTICAL TO PROPOSITION 73, THE PARENTAL NOTIFICATION MEASURE THAT VOTERS DEFEATED LAST NOVEMBER.**

American Academy of Pediatrics, the California Medical Association, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and Planned Parenthood. Every court ruled that the parental consent law was unconstitutional. Although they may sound benign, every court concluded, these laws put teenagers in danger.

Evidence continues to mount that parental involvement laws harm rather than help teenagers. Studies show that minors have a higher rate of second trimester abortions in states with parental involvement laws.

The *New England Journal of Medicine* reported this year that the percentage of second-trimester abortions also spiked among 18 year olds when a parental notification law was enforced, because pregnant 17 year olds waited until their 18th birthday to obtain an abortion. Delay substantially increases the risk of complications. Public health policy consistently encourages early access to counseling and care.

“Judicial bypass” is the only legal way a pregnant teenager can obtain access to abortion without notifying her parents in most states with parental involvement laws. A survey of Pennsylvania court clerks found that teens received accurate information about the bypass system in only 8 of 60 counties. In Texas and Alabama, when asked by teens how to get permission for an abortion, court clerks sometimes replied, “Honey, I have no idea.” Other clerks advised pregnant teens to go to crisis pregnancy centers or hire lawyers; some gave unsolicited lectures about the immorality of abortion.

California’s teen pregnancy rate, the highest in the country when the ACLU-NC first challenged parental consent in 1987, has plummeted. California now claims the steepest decline in teen births of any state in the nation.

Prop 73 has returned in the guise of Prop 85 just months after voters rejected it because one wealthy, fervently anti-choice man—the proponent of Prop 73—spent more than \$2 million to put it back on the ballot. It is critical that we once again defeat this measure.

According to the 2000 census, 1 in 8 American adolescents lives in California. The consequences of amending the California Constitution to restrict teenagers’ access to reproductive health will be devastating. ■

*To learn what you can do to protect teen health and defeat Prop 85, visit [www.aclunc.org](http://www.aclunc.org).*

*Margaret Crosby is an ACLU-NC staff attorney.*

**LIKE PROP 73, PROP 85 WOULD AMEND THE CALIFORNIA CONSTITUTION TO RESTRICT YOUNG WOMEN’S ACCESS TO ABORTION.**

## SACRAMENTO REPORT

By Vivek Malhotra

For the first time in six years, the legislature and the governor agreed on a budget before the end of the fiscal year on June 30, and lawmakers adjourned for summer recess. Despite a few notable setbacks, many of the ACLU’s highest priority bills are still alive, and they face make-or-break votes between August 7, when state lawmakers return to the capitol, and August 31, the last day of the current session.

**AB 651.** The movement for end-of-life choices in California faced a considerable blow at the end of June when “California Compassionate Choices Act” failed to get out of the Senate Judiciary Committee by a single vote. The measure was modeled after Oregon’s eight-year old “Death With Dignity” law. Rooted in the constitutional right to privacy, the bill would have allowed terminally-ill patients, with less than six months to live, to request and obtain a medical prescription to end their lives on their own terms. The defeat of **AB 651** marked the end of a two-year effort by Assembly members Patty Berg (D-Eureka) and Lloyd Levine (D-Van Nuys) to make California the second state in the nation to decriminalize physician aid-in-dying, with various provisions to ensure that a patient’s choice is informed, voluntary, and free of any duress.

It wasn’t all bad for privacy rights, however. Key policy committees voted out two important bills to restrict the encroachment of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags in government issued identity cards. Both were introduced by Bay Area Senator Joe Simitian (D-Palo Alto) and co-sponsored by the ACLU. RFID devices can be used by bad actors to forge identification, commit identity fraud, and track people’s movements.

**SB 433** prohibits the California Department of Motor Vehicles from issuing drivers’ licenses with RFID chips that can remotely broadcast personal information. The first of the RFID bills, the measure cleared two important policy committees in the Assembly, where it garnered strong bipartisan support. It now moves on to the Assembly Appropriation Committee. It is expected to reach the Assembly floor for a vote by the end of August.

**SB 1078** preserves the privacy and safety of kids in California’s public schools by prohibiting the use of RFID devices issued to K-12 students to track, monitor, or record their presence at public schools around the state. That bill also cleared two Assembly policy committees. It must move to the Assembly Appropriations Committee before it can reach the floor.

**SB 768** is a third RFID bill from Senator Simitian. It would establish interim standards for RFID technology in government issued identity documents until the legislature adopts permanent standards based on the California Research Bureau’s anticipated study and recommendations. This bill, an ACLU holdover from last year, is also expected to move to the Assembly in August.

**SB 1471** represented a victory for reproductive health when the bill won the support of the Assembly Health Committee. The “California Community Sexual Health Education Act” was introduced by Senator Sheila Kuehl (D-Santa Monica) and co-sponsored by the ACLU. It requires state-funded sex education programs to be medically accurate, bias-free, and age appropriate. The bill also requires that instructors be appropriately trained, programs not teach or promote religious doctrine, and programs be culturally and linguistically appropriate. SB 1471 must clear the Assembly Appropriations Committee in August before it can move to the Assembly floor.

**SB 1745** protects victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking against employment discrimination. The bill, also introduced by Senator Kuehl, was passed by the Assembly Judiciary Committee. It moves on to the Assembly Appropriations Committee in August before it can reach the floor.

Two important bills that provide protection for innocent persons accused of crimes remain active. Both bills incorporate recent recommendations made by the California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice, which was created by the state Senate.

**SB 1544** requires law enforcement to adopt policies and procedures to improve the eyewitness identification process in order to increase the accuracy and reliability of eyewitness evidence and decrease the likelihood of wrongful identifications. The bill, authored by Senator Carole Migden (D-San Francisco) and sponsored by the ACLU, cleared the Assembly Public Safety Committee. The bill is pending in the Assembly Appropriations Committee, which will vote on it in August.

**SB 171** is a holdover from last year. This bill requires the electronic recording of interrogations of persons accused of violent felonies when in police custody. The legislation, sponsored by the ACLU and authored by Senator Elaine Alquist (D-San Jose), will help decrease the likelihood of false confessions—protecting the innocent while providing the best evidence against the guilty. Because of fiscal concerns, the bill has been held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee since last year. The ACLU is pushing for this bill to move to the floor for a vote in August.

In addition to the key priorities identified above, this legislative session the ACLU has fought hard against bills attacking immigrants. In stark contrast to the rhetorical assaults coming out of Congress, anti-immigrant legislation failed consistently in the California legislature this year.

The ACLU also championed a number of measures protecting the rights of LGBT communities, defending reproductive rights, and promoting language access in our schools and the civil court system for the over 40 percent of Californians who have limited English proficiency. ■

*Visit the ACLU of Northern California’s “Take Action” web site to see what you can do to support the ACLU’s bills and protect civil liberties in California: [www.aclunc.org/takeaction.html](http://www.aclunc.org/takeaction.html).*

*Vivek Malhotra is a legislative advocate for the ACLU’s California affiliates.*

TAKE ACTION ONLINE TO PROTECT CIVIL LIBERTIES: SIGN UP AT [WWW.ACLUNC.ORG](http://WWW.ACLUNC.ORG)

# NEW REPORT EXPOSES COVERT GOVERNMENT MONITORING OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY

By Suzanne Samuel

California law enforcement has overstepped its bounds in monitoring political activity, raising serious constitutional concerns, according to a major new report released by the ACLU-NC last month. “The State of Surveillance: Government Monitoring of Political Activity in Northern and Central California” was authored by ACLU-NC Police Practices Policy Director Mark Schlosberg.

The report tells the stories of individuals and organizations that have been targets of surveillance, analyzes current law enforcement policy, and recommends specific policy reforms to safeguard Californians’ rights to privacy and free speech.

Law enforcement at all levels—federal, state, and local—has received extensive funding for expanded intelligence activities, including surveillance. Inadequate regulation and an insufficient understanding of the protections afforded to protest and dissent have led Northern and Central California law enforcement to monitor political activity inappropriately.

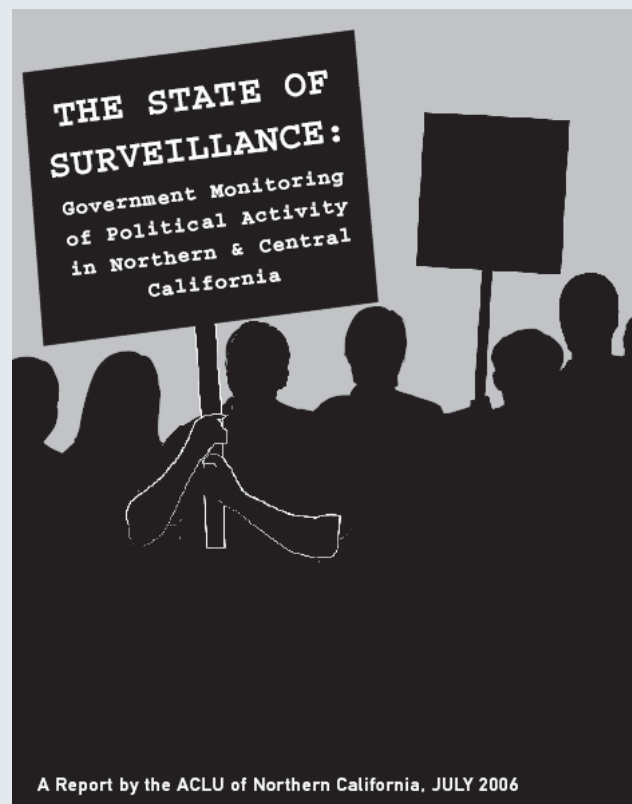
The stories documented in the surveillance report were discovered largely by happenstance. If history is any guide,

**IF HISTORY IS ANY GUIDE, THESE INCIDENTS REPRESENT ONLY THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG.**

these incidents represent only the tip of the iceberg.

California’s constitutional right to privacy prohibits law enforcement from monitoring or compiling information on individuals or organizations engaged in activity protected by the First Amendment unless there is reasonable suspicion of a crime. Yet, from local participation in federal FBI programs, to the state Office of Homeland Security, to county sheriffs, state and local law enforcement agencies in Northern and Central California have been inappropriately gathering information on individuals and organizations engaged in political activity.

In the last five years, political gatherings of all types have been targeted by surveillance operations. Entirely law-abiding protesters have been videotaped without cause or suspicion.



A Report by the ACLU of Northern California, JULY 2006

Demonstrations have been called crime scenes. Undercover officers have posed as organization members, even leaders, to gather information and influence decisions. Law enforcement has equated protest with terrorism. State agencies have instructed local officials to monitor and report on citizens’ peaceful, lawful participation in the democratic process.

**ENTIRELY LAW-ABIDING PROTESTERS HAVE BEEN VIDEOTAPED WITHOUT CAUSE OR SUSPICION. DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE BEEN CALLED CRIME SCENES.**

“The State of Surveillance” recommends specific policies be enacted to protect Californians’ privacy and free speech rights. These include guidelines issued by the state attorney general on surveillance limitations and privacy rights; regulation of surveillance by the National Guard, California’s Office of Homeland Security, and other agencies; required reporting by police and sheriff’s departments on their policies and surveillance activities; and the creation of local law enforcement policies restricting surveillance of individuals and organizations participating in lawful protest activity.

Investigating terrorism and prosecuting criminals does not require sacrificing core civil liberties. Intelligence activities must be undertaken responsibly, in a manner that ensures we are both safe and free. ■

Read the full report at [www.aclunc.org/surveillance\\_report](http://www.aclunc.org/surveillance_report).

## OAKLAND POLICE CLAIM INFILTRATION OF PROTEST AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY

Excerpted from “The State of Surveillance”

On April 7, 2003, members of Direct Action to Stop the War staged a protest at the Port of Oakland against the war in Iraq.

The group’s Web site specifically stated that the protest was not a “civil disobedience” action and that the purpose of the protest was “to maintain the picket line not to get arrested.”

The demonstration began as planned. However, with little warning, police moved in to disperse the protest. Departing from traditional crowd-control practices, Oakland Police fired “less-lethal” wooden dowels, shot filled beanbags, and threw sting-ball grenades at the crowd.

Over 50 people were injured, including 9 dockworkers, members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), who were not involved in the protest.

The police action sparked outrage. To “stand up to police brutality and to affirm the constitutionally protected rights of free speech and assembly,” community members and others returned to the Port of Oakland on May 12, 2003 for a demonstration against the earlier police response.

Approximately 400 protesters marched from the West Oakland BART station to the Port. There was no police interference and there were no arrests.

Both protesters and the Oakland Police Department concurred that the May demonstration was a success, a validation of proactive communication strategies. “We definitely learned from April 7,” said OPD spokesperson Daniel Ashford.

**However, what the Oakland Police Department did not tell the press, was that the protest had been infiltrated by members of the Oakland Police Department posing as demonstrators. Documents obtained by the ACLU-NC during litigation over the original April 7 incident revealed Deputy Chief Howard Jordan’s claims of infiltration and influence of the protest route.**

While Direct Action members doubt Jordan’s claims of influence, in a statement to the Oakland Police Department’s Board of Review hearing on the April 7 incident, Jordan espoused the benefits of police infiltration: “So if you put people in there from the beginning, I think we’d be able to gather the information and maybe even direct them to do something that we want them to do.”

Jordan continued, “I think we need to have a group of officers available at all times, any time of the day, so if this information becomes available they can follow up on it. We could get people there in advance. They advertise that stuff on the Internet. It’s not that difficult. San Francisco does it, Seattle, a lot of large agencies do it. And we need to make sure that the next time something like this happens, that we’re way ahead of the curve—that we’re in there.”

This approach to protest activity would constitute a wholesale violation of the state constitutional right to privacy. California law prohibits police infiltration or monitoring in the absence of reasonable suspicion of criminal activity.

Unfortunately, the use of undercover officers to monitor activist groups is increasingly widespread. Jurisdictions throughout the state lack policies restricting surveillance to cases where officers have reasonable suspicion of a crime, as required by California law. ■

Read more about this incident and others like it in “The State of Surveillance.”



MIKE RHODES

Ruth Obel-Jorgenson and other Cal State Fresno students protested undercover surveillance of their campus group’s lecture on the benefits of a vegan diet.

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# ACLU SUES PHONE COMPANIES CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

release of personal calling information without a subscriber's written consent.

The ACLU is asking the court to enjoin AT&T and Verizon from providing any customer calling records to the NSA or any other organization without a customer's written consent or a valid court order or other form of legal authorization. The suit also seeks an order requiring the telecommunications companies to disclose to each customer what files or records were shared with any third party, including the dates and recipients of the information, and a declaration that the phone companies have violated the rights of Californians.

Although Verizon has denied the allegations, its denials have been equivocal. AT&T has said that it can neither confirm nor deny the charges that it has turned over

telephone records to the NSA. Several members of Congress have confirmed that AT&T and MCI, which Verizon acquired in January, have provided calling records to the NSA.

Nationally, AT&T has 49 million customers; Verizon has 100 million wireless and land-line customers in 28 states. The 17 plaintiffs, all Verizon or AT&T customers, include a former Republican congressman, a nationally syndicated journalist, psychiatrists, members of the clergy, and a pediatrician specializing in adolescent medicine (see sidebar).

"What all of these plaintiffs have in common is the professional and personal need to know that the identity of the people they speak to on the telephone will remain private and confidential," said Ann Brick, ACLU-NC staff attorney.

"When telephone companies voluntarily give this information to the government, it is more than a breach of the law; it is a breach of trust with their customers."

"No one is above the law—not the government and not the telephone companies," said ACLU cooperating attorney Laurence Pulgram, from the law firm of Fenwick & West. "This lawsuit simply seeks to make sure that the telephone companies honor their obligations to keep customers' calling records private." Pulgram, Jennifer Kelley, Candace Morey, and Saina Shamilov at the law firm of Fenwick & West are cooperating attorneys in both cases.

Nationwide, 20 other ACLU affiliates have filed complaints with local Public Utility Commissions, state attorneys general, and other officials demanding investigations into whether local telecommunications companies allowed the NSA to spy on their customers.

"With the help of the telephone companies, the NSA is assembling a massive database that can be used to spy on all of us," said Nicole Ozer, ACLU-NC Technology and Civil Liberties Policy Director. The NSA's database is reportedly shared with the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Intelligence, and the Drug Enforcement Administration. ■

*For more information on the lawsuit against the phone companies and the national ACLU "Don't Spy on Me" campaign, visit [www.aclunc.org](http://www.aclunc.org) and [www.aclu.org/safefree](http://www.aclu.org/safefree).*



SIGI PANDIAN

*Plaintiff Margaret Russell at the May 26 press conference on the lawsuit against two major phone companies.*

## MEET THE PLAINTIFFS: California Citizens File Suit Against Phone Companies

All of the 17 plaintiffs in the California ACLU case against the phone companies need to ensure that phone calls in and out of their homes remain confidential. Here are a few of their stories.

**TOM CAMPBELL** is a former member of Congress and a former California State Senator who lives in Santa Clara County. He objects to the disclosure of his customer calling records without his consent or a legal process.

**GEORGE MAIN** is a Sacramento computer consultant and former linguist for the Army Security Agency, which reported directly to the National Security Agency. President of Sacramento Veterans for Peace, his recent anti-war activity was listed in the Pentagon's secret TALON database.

**SANDRA RICHARDS** is a minister at the United Methodist Church of Los Angeles. She speaks with her parishioners on her residential phone, advising them on a range of private issues.

**DENNIS RIORDAN** is a criminal appellate lawyer in San Francisco. He often receives calls from clients or potential clients at home when immediate legal advice is needed. These calls are protected by attorney-client privilege.

**MARGARET RUSSELL** is Professor of Constitutional Law at Santa Clara Law School. As a law professor and board member of several legal nonprofit groups, she uses her Oakland home phone to talk about private issues and counsel students.

**ROBERT SCHEER** is a nationally syndicated columnist and journalist at the San Francisco Chronicle. He writes frequently about the war in Iraq and national security issues. He uses his Berkeley residence phone to make calls to confidential sources.

**CURREN WARF** is a Los Angeles pediatrician specializing in adolescent medicine. He often counsels his patients from home on highly personal issues.

# FEDERAL JUDGE ORDERS PENTAGON TO TURN OVER INFORMATION ON GOVERNMENT SPYING

By Stella Richardson

A federal judge ordered the Department of Defense (DOD) to expedite a Freedom of Information Act Request (FOIA) seeking details on the DOD's efforts to monitor the anti-war activities of students at UC Berkeley and UC Santa Cruz.

U.S. District Court Judge William Alsup's order, issued on May 25, 2006, requires the Defense Department to expedite an ACLU-NC FOIA request for information on the UC students contained in the DOD's Threat and Local Observation Notice (TALON) database.

"The public has a right to know the extent to which the Defense Department is spying on political protest," said ACLU cooperating attorney Amitai Schwartz. "On May 25, the Court moved us one step closer to finding out the facts about what really happened."

Last December, MSNBC reported that the DOD had been gathering information on political protests as part of the TALON system. According to the news organization, over 40 anti-war gatherings were documented over six months, including student anti-war protests at UC Berkeley and UC Santa Cruz.

In granting summary judgment in the case this May, the Court found "there was a compelling need for the information" and the information requested was "of significant importance to public in policy and public protest."

The Pentagon must decide whether to turn over all relevant

surveillance records or provide a list of classified documents and explain why each one has been withheld.

On January 31, 2006, the ACLU and the San Francisco Bay Guardian filed FOIA requests on behalf of UC Santa Cruz Students Against War and UC Berkeley's Stop the War Coalition. The ACLU and Bay Guardian sought expedited processing because of the timeliness of the issue and concern that information may be purged from the database.

The information requests were made to the Department of Defense and several of its components. With the exception of the Defense Intelligence Agency and the Department of the Army, expedited processing was denied by the DOD. On March 7, the ACLU-NC filed suit to receive expedited processing.

UC Berkeley Chancellor Robert J. Birgeneau strongly supports the students' efforts to expose information about them contained in the government terrorism database. "Government surveillance of legitimate political activity on a college campus can have a chilling effect on free speech and is contrary to the principles of academic freedom," Birgeneau said in a May 24 statement.

Other ACLU affiliates are also pressing the Defense Department to reveal the truth about the contents of its spy database. On June 14, the national ACLU and affiliates in Florida, Georgia, Rhode Island, Maine, Pennsylvania, and Washington filed suit in a Pennsylvania U.S. district court. The lawsuit charges that the Defense Department is refusing to comply with FOIA requests for records on the ACLU, the American Friends Service Committee, Greenpeace, Veterans for Peace, United for Peace and Justice, and 26 local groups and activists.

"The U.S. military should not be in the business of maintaining secret databases about lawful First Amendment activities," said ACLU attorney Ben Wizner. "It is an abuse of power and an abuse of trust for the military to play any role in monitoring critics of administration policies." ■

*Learn more about the latest in government spying and actions you can take to stand up against it at [aclunc.org](http://aclunc.org) and [www.aclu.org/safefree](http://www.aclu.org/safefree).*

# “I COULD BE WRONGFULLY CONVICTED OF MURDER, AND SO COULD YOU”: A STUDENT EXAMINES THE DEATH PENALTY

By Oneida Rodriguez

During my senior year at Irvington High School in Fremont, I had an opportunity that not many high school students get. I participated in a program called QUEST (Question, Understand, Experience, Service, Testimony), designed by my school. Through research, service, and our own experiences, QUEST students seek to answer an original question about an issue, and then we present what we learn to our peers, parents, and teachers.

While my classmates chose topics such as cheerleading or firefighting, I wanted to research something that no Irvington High senior had ever done for QUEST—the death penalty. I chose the death penalty because I wanted to embark on something I would want to continue learning about even after the project was over.

Eveline Chang, the Friedman Youth Project Director at the ACLU of Northern California, served as my project consultant. She introduced me to the Youth Activist Committee of the Friedman Education Project.

Being a part of the Youth Activist Committee gave me incredible opportunities. The experiences that I have had throughout my QUEST project greatly changed the

way I see things. I now appreciate life more, and I’ve developed respect for the people who seek justice and try to reform the criminal justice system in California.

As part of my exploration of criminal justice issues related to the death penalty, I had the amazing opportunity to meet four exonerees who were wrongfully convicted for crimes they did not commit and put in jail for years. Hearing their stories about what had occurred and how the legal system affected their lives opened my mind to the possibility that innocent people are being executed. As David Quindt, one of the exonerees, said, “What happened to us could happen to anyone.”

I do not understand why people who are actually convicted of a crime get help from the government and individuals who are wrongfully convicted do not. Exonerees, like the ones I met, do not receive any governmental assistance. Instead, non-profit organizations help them start their lives all over.

As part of my project, I attended the death penalty vigil outside of San Quentin State Prison on the night of Stanley “Tookie” Williams’s execution. Before I arrived at the prison I was scared and did not know what to expect. I knew there would be people who would want Stanley Williams dead. On the way to the prison I saw a sign that said “Burn in hell Tookie.” I thought there would be a lot of that kind of feeling there, but it turned out that most of the people who attended the vigil thought Stanley should have been granted clemency.

We stood outside the prison for five hours, until 12:35 a.m.,

when we received news that the execution was complete. Because the Stanley Williams case was high profile, there was a lot of attention from the national and international media.

The goal of my QUEST project was to find out how recent news about innocent people being executed has changed the public’s perception of the death penalty. This experience helped me answer my essential question because I had the chance to see how the media affects what people know.

Going to death penalty vigils is a way to let the government know how you feel about certain issues. When assembly members see a certain problem, they write bills. That is exactly what California State Assembly Members

Paul Koretz and Sally Lieber did when they introduced AB 1121, the Death Penalty Moratorium bill.

With the Friedman Project, I attended the hearing for AB 1121, a bill to “ensure that no innocent person is ever executed in the state of California and that the death penalty is not applied in an unjust or arbitrary manner.” After the hearing, we proceeded to lobby for the assembly bill. Through this experience, I found out that even government officials want to put a hold on executions to ensure that we are not ending the lives of innocent people.

My project taught me that no human being is perfect, and that we are prone to making mistakes. Because of that, we can never expect our legal system to be perfect; there will always be the possibility of executing innocent people.

The experience that impacted me most was attending the “Faces of Wrongful Conviction” conference in Los Angeles. The objective of the conference was to dramatize the flaws in the state’s criminal justice system. I attended at least seven workshops about the death penalty and heard several informative and inspiring speakers. The speaker who had the biggest impact on me was Stanford Law Professor Lawrence Marshall, who said, “It’s time for California to be humbled by its capacity for error in its criminal justice system.”

The ACLU made all of the experiences throughout my project possible. I have developed great admiration for the people who attempt to restore order to the criminal justice system. They have inspired me to continue this experience and become a criminal defense lawyer.

The death penalty is a real and critical issue that we all have to worry about. I could be wrongfully convicted of murder—and so could you. ■

*Oneida Rodriguez is a former member of the Friedman Youth Activist Committee, current ACLU-NC Death Penalty Project Intern, and an incoming freshman at Ohlone College this fall.*



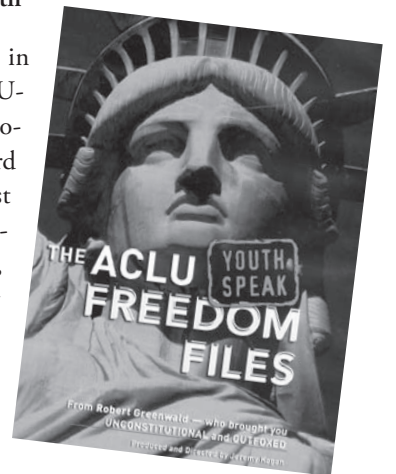
*Oneida Rodriguez (center) at San Quentin State Prison for the death penalty vigil for Stanley “Tookie” Williams with fellow Youth Activist Committee (YAC) members Silvia Wu and Dinah Handel, and YAC staff member Jordan Green.*

**MY PROJECT TAUGHT ME THAT NO HUMAN BEING IS PERFECT, AND THAT WE ARE PRONE TO MAKING MISTAKES. BECAUSE OF THAT, WE CAN NEVER EXPECT OUR LEGAL SYSTEM TO BE PERFECT; THERE WILL ALWAYS BE THE POSSIBILITY OF EXECUTING INNOCENT PEOPLE.**

## FRIEDMAN PROJECT YOUTH FEATURED IN ACLU TV SERIES

By Ameya Ananth

Participants in the ACLU-NC’s youth program, the Howard A. Friedman First Amendment Education Project, were recently featured in the “Youth Speak” episode of the “ACLU Freedom Files,”



a new national television series that focuses on civil liberties issues around the country.

The “Youth Speak” episode celebrates young people who have become active in civil liberties. Current participants in the Friedman Youth Project spoke of their endeavors to better understand the juvenile justice system in this “Freedom Files” episode.

After visiting facilities such as the Los Angeles Juvenile Hall, Friedman Youth Activist Committee members, including Samantha Johnson, Chris Morales, and Kiran Savage-Sangwan, described their realizations that youth in correctional facilities are not necessarily “criminals,” and that educational and socioeconomic factors impact their circumstances.

Other youth activists featured in the episode include California resident Alondra Jones. Even after graduation, Jones dedicated herself to *Williams v. California*, the lawsuit against the state that acquired millions of dollars for California public schools lacking textbooks, adequate heating, and more.

The “ACLU Freedom Files” airs weekly on Court TV, Link TV and Zilo TV. ■

*For more information and to view episodes, visit [www.aclu.tv](http://www.aclu.tv).*

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# LOS ALTOS COMMUNITY REVERSES BAN ON GAY PROCLAMATIONS

By Sanjeev Bery

The Los Altos City Council has rescinded a ban on city proclamations having anything to do with sexual orientation. The city council passed the original ban in February, after the Los Altos High School Gay Straight Alliance asked the council to proclaim a Los Altos Gay Pride Day.

The July 25 reversal followed an extensive campaign by a diverse coalition of Los Altos residents, students, business owners, and supporters of LGBT equality. Community members worked closely with the ACLU and attorneys Amy Todd and Tamara Fisher of Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati.

The council ban discriminated against gay and lesbian members of the Los Altos community by stating that proclamations “pertaining to sexual orientation (such as Gay Pride Day or similar occasions) will not be considered.” As a result, LGBT Los Altos residents were singled out and barred from having their interests considered.

Students and other concerned residents organized to oppose the ban, aided by ACLU support. About 40 Los Altos citizens attended the July 11 and July 25 city council meetings, wearing red “Proclaim Equality Los Altos” T-shirts.

The city council’s decision also followed the implied threat of a lawsuit when the ACLU and Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati filed a Public Records Act request for city council documents related to the

proclamation process.

Members of the Los Altos High School Gay Straight Alliance played a key role in the campaign. Los Altos High School junior Tony Zhukovskiy, 15, said joining the school’s Gay/Straight Alliance was important to him because nothing like it existed in his home country of Russia.

Speaking at the July 25 city council meeting, Zhukovskiy told the council he was “crestfallen” when the Los Altos City Council treated gay people in the same way he would have expected in Russia. “Here, I thought everyone was supposed to be equal under the law,” Zhukovskiy said.

Los Altos physician Robert Frascino told the council, “This anti-gay rule may have passed when a lot of us weren’t paying attention. But I just want to let you all know—you’ve got our attention now.”

Over 50 local business owners petitioned the council to end the “embarrassing” rule. The petition was organized by Los Altos business owner and ACLU-NC board member Peter Yessne.

**“THIS ANTI-GAY RULE MAY HAVE PASSED WHEN A LOT OF US WEREN’T PAYING ATTENTION. BUT I JUST WANT TO LET YOU ALL KNOW—YOU’VE GOT OUR ATTENTION NOW.”**

**—ROBERT FRASCINO,  
LOS ALTOS PHYSICIAN**



Los Altos business owner and ACLU-NC board member Peter Yessne, shown here speaking at the press conference, organized the petition from the Los Altos business owners.

The original discriminatory rule had passed on a 3-2 vote. Councilmembers Curtis Cole and Val Carpenter opposed the rule. Mayor Ron Packard and Councilmembers David Casas and Kurt Colehower voted for the ban.

Responding to the community campaign, the Los Altos City Council voted unanimously to reverse itself. The new rule simply says the mayor can issue any proclamation to a local resident, organization, or event without formal action of the council, though proclamation requests can be referred to the council for a vote at the mayor’s discretion.

Under the new rule, the Los Altos High School Gay/Straight Alliance is free to ask for a Gay Pride Day proclamation again next year, and they expect to do so.

The Los Altos community has been energized by these events. Though encouraged by the city council’s reversal of its discriminatory rule, the community will continue to raise awareness of LGBT issues and be advocates for achieving full acceptance for Los Altos’s gay and lesbian residents.

Tamara Lange, ACLU-NC Staff Attorney, added, “We are pleased with the council’s decision. But we’re going to be watching to make sure the new rule is applied equally.” ■

Sanjeev Bery is Director of the ACLU-NC’s San Jose office.

# NO ON PROP 83: INITIATIVE TRAMPLES CIVIL LIBERTIES AND CREATES BAD PUBLIC POLICY

By Michael Risher

This November, voters will be faced with yet another poorly-drafted, overbroad criminal justice initiative: Proposition 83, entitled “Sex Offenders. Sexually Violent Predators. Punishment, Residence Restrictions and Monitoring.” The ACLU-NC urges a “NO” vote on this sweeping initiative.

Prop 83 tramples on civil liberties and is simply bad public policy. At a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars, it places lifetime restrictions on past offenders, regardless of whether they pose any ongoing threat. (Contrary to popular belief, only a small percentage of sex offenders ever commit another sex offense.) Prop 83 diverts scarce law enforcement resources from more effective protective measures. Furthermore, given Iowa’s experience with a similar law, Prop 83 could ultimately undermine public safety goals.

Much of the initiative is devoted to increasing the already harsh penalties for existing crimes. Prop 83 also creates a new crime of communicating with a minor with the intent to commit a sex offense.

The most troubling provisions in Prop 83 impose residency restrictions and lifetime government tracking. Section 21 of the initiative—the so-called “Jessica’s Law”—would ban virtually anybody ever convicted of a sex-related crime from living within 2000 feet (just under half a mile) of a school or park.

The prohibition applies regardless of whether the person has ever committed a violent crime or a crime involving a minor. It contains no exception that would allow people with long-ago convictions to continue living in their homes. For example, under Prop 83, a person convicted of indecent exposure many years ago could be forced to move out of the home and community in which he and his family have been living without incident for years.

The scope of the residency restriction would make housing in the state’s urban areas virtually off-limits to anyone ever convicted of a sex crime, forcing many offenders into rural areas with smaller police forces. It could also drive the most serious offenders underground.

This was the experience in Iowa, which currently has a 2000-foot residency restriction in effect. According to the Iowa County Attorneys Association, “Law enforcement has observed that the residency restriction is causing offenders to become homeless, to change residences without notifying authorities of their new locations, to register false addresses or to simply disappear. If they do not register, law enforcement and the public do not know where they are living. The resulting damage to the reliability of the sex offender registry does not serve the interests of public safety.” The Association has called on the Iowa Legislature and governor to replace the restriction with a more effective protective measure.

Prop 83 also mandates lifetime Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) monitoring for anyone “who has been convicted for any felony violation of a ‘registerable sex offense’...and who is committed to prison and released on parole.”

There are approximately 60,000 registrants in California who are no longer incarcerated. Many of these individuals will be subject to costly lifetime GPS monitoring, regardless of whether or not they pose any risk to the public. The State

Legislative Analyst predicts that this provision alone would cost California \$100 million per year by 2016.

Finally, Prop 83 raises serious due process concerns. The initiative eliminates the right of individuals confined under the “sexually violent predator” law (which provides for civil confinement of certain sex offenders upon their release from prison) to periodic judicial review.

Under current law, confined individuals have the right to a trial every two years; they must be released unless the government can prove that they pose an ongoing threat to the public. Prop 83 replaces this process with limited judicial review that allows for release only if a hospital director certifies that a confined individual’s mental health has improved. It also expands the definition of a sexual predator, applying the law to someone who has committed only one crime instead of two as defined by current law.

Protect civil liberties and preserve due process. Vote no on Prop 83. ■

The full text of the initiative can be found at [www.caag.state.ca.us/initiatives/pdf/sa2005rf0092.pdf](http://www.caag.state.ca.us/initiatives/pdf/sa2005rf0092.pdf). The Legislative Analyst’s report is available at [www.lao.ca.gov/ballot/2006/83\\_11\\_2006.pdf](http://www.lao.ca.gov/ballot/2006/83_11_2006.pdf).

Michael Risher is an ACLU-NC staff attorney.

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# WRONGFUL CONVICTION CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS INJUSTICES IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

By Evonne Silva

Incarcerated for years of their lives because of mistakes in the criminal justice system, 22 Californians who were wrongfully convicted of crimes they did not commit stood in unifying stillness at the first Faces of Wrongful Conviction Conference in April of this year. To inaugurate the conference, the audience observed one second of silence for each year stolen from the 21 men and one woman by the state of California. The silence lasted five minutes, symbolizing over 300 lost years.

Representing the largest gathering of people wrongfully convicted in California, the three-day conference, held at the UCLA School of Law, brought together nearly 500 experts, exonerees, activists, former prosecutors, family members of murder victims, and students from across the nation. Attendees discussed the most pressing issues surrounding wrongful conviction, the death penalty, and the problems with California's criminal justice system.

The conference was organized by the ACLU's Northern and Southern California affiliates, Death Penalty Focus, the California Innocence Project, the Life After Exoneration Program, Amnesty International, California People of Faith Working Against the Death Penalty, exonerees, and law professors.

"This conference comes as California's criminal justice system reaches a critical juncture," said Natasha Minsker, Death Penalty Policy Director for the ACLU-NC. "We spend hundreds of millions of dollars on a system that is failing us in the most basic ways. The death penalty in particular has failed to deliver on any of its promises. This conference asked, 'What do we need to do to create a criminal justice system that will protect the innocent, convict the guilty, and treat all Californians equally?'"

Exoneree Ernest "Shujaa" Graham's story highlighted the errors in the criminal justice system. Graham spent eight years on California's death row for a murder he did not commit. He received a standing ovation after he spoke of his own experience with the racial disparity that plagues our criminal justice system.

"Horrendous and appalling" were the words Gloria Killian used to depict the 18 years she served in prison for a robbery and murder she did not commit. "I feel bound and driven to help the people I left behind. I got out alive, and now I have the opportunity to do that for them," said Killian. "I have to do that for them."

Following the conference, the exonerees organized as the Western Conference of the Wrongfully Convicted, a group to help exonerees speak out and advocate for change.

Speaking on the panel "Executing the Innocent: Compelling New Evidence in Three Execution Cases," former Texas prosecutor Sam Millsap introduced himself as the man "who is at least partially responsible for the execution of the first innocent man in the state of Texas," Ruben Cantu. Millsap said he took "full and personal responsibility" for his deadly



**"WE SPEND HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS ON A SYSTEM THAT IS FAILING US IN THE MOST BASIC WAYS. THE DEATH PENALTY IN PARTICULAR HAS FAILED TO DELIVER ON ANY OF ITS PROMISES. THIS CONFERENCE ASKED, 'WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO TO CREATE A CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM THAT WILL PROTECT THE INNOCENT, CONVICT THE GUILTY, AND TREAT ALL CALIFORNIANS EQUALLY?'"**

**—ACLU-NC DEATH PENALTY POLICY DIRECTOR  
NATASHA MINSKER**

error. When asked how he would prevent such mistakes in the future, Millsap, who has prosecuted eight men who have been executed, said that a prosecutor should not have the power to make life-and-death decisions.

This capacity for error has led the California State Senate to create the California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice. The blue-ribbon commission is charged with reviewing the causes of wrongful conviction and wrongful

execution in California. The commission will make recommendations and proposals to ensure that the administration of criminal justice in California is just, fair, and accurate. Its findings are expected by December 2007.

Several of the commissioners attended the conference, including the commission chairman, former California Attorney General John Van de Kamp; vice chairman, San Francisco attorney Jon Streeter; executive director, Santa Clara University law professor Gerald Uelman; and Kathleen Ridolfi, Director of the Northern California Innocence Project.

The commission held its first public hearing only weeks before the April conference, which was attended by several of the commissioners. The commission's first set of recommendations, on standards for eyewitness identification, was issued just days after the conference took place.

Conference speakers included Barry Scheck, co-director of New York's Innocence Project, which has helped free more than 100 people through DNA evidence; nationally acclaimed death penalty attorneys Stephen Bright and Bryan Stevenson; and state Sen. Gloria Romero, legislative liaison to the California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice.

During the weekend, conference attendees took immediate action at the ACLU "Action Center." Participants wrote more than 3000 postcards to legislators supporting bills to reform eyewitness identification procedures, require electronic recording of interrogations, and provide services and compensation to exonerees.

The ACLU-NC, along with conference coalition partners, has created a Faces of Wrongful Conviction Speakers Series Toolkit, to bring the voices of exonerees and other conference participants to communities across California. The toolkit contains everything necessary to host an event about wrongful convictions: lists of speakers and films, discussion guides, fliers, email announcements, and instructions. Request a toolkit from the ACLU-NC, 415-621-2493 or download it from [www.aclunc.org/faces.html](http://www.aclunc.org/faces.html), or [www.stopwrongfulconvictions.org](http://www.stopwrongfulconvictions.org).

To watch or listen to conference sessions, visit [www.stopwrongfulconvictions.org](http://www.stopwrongfulconvictions.org) or [www.aclunc.org](http://www.aclunc.org), where you can view videotapes and listen to podcasts. ■

*Evonne Silva is on the Death Penalty Program staff.*



*A handful of the faces of the wrongfully convicted: (l-r) Kenneth Marsh, Ernest "Shujaa" Graham, and Gloria Killian.*

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# CHAPTER EVENTS

## BARK + PLUS CHAPTER

The BARK (Berkeley, Albany, Richmond, Kensington) + Plus Chapter's annual meeting will take place **Saturday, October 7, 2006, 3-5 p.m.**, at the DoubleTree Hotel, 200 Marina Blvd. Berkeley Marina. The program will feature "Elections: Two Views," with Andrew Gumbel & Mark Crispin Miller. For information, contact Philomena Burkhardt at (510) 525-9223.

## PAUL ROBESON CHAPTER

The Paul Robeson (Oakland) Chapter presents "The Right to Dissent," an evening with Grand Lake Theater owner Allen Michaan. **Monday, August 28, 7:30-9 p.m.** Learn what events politicized this voting rights activist to creatively exercise his First Amendment right to free speech. A great opportunity to get to know your fellow chapter members in the intimate setting of beautifully-restored "Theatre By The Bay" in Alameda. 2700 Saratoga, Alameda Point, Alameda (former Naval Air Station). Reception with light refreshments. FREE. For more information call (510) 869-4195.

## SANTA CLARA VALLEY CHAPTER

The ACLU Santa Clara Valley (SCV) annual meeting will be held on **Thursday, September 21, 2006 at 7 p.m.** at the Friends Meeting House, 1051 Morse Street, San Jose. Call Peter Yessne, Secretary/Recruiting Chair, at (408) 257-3413 if you are an ACLU SCV member who would like to be nominated for a seat on the ACLU SCV Board of Directors. Directors will be elected at the meeting.

ACLU SCV will also co-sponsor with the San Jose Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library a four-part discussion series based on four of the ACLU's "Freedom Files" programs. All discussions will be held in the second floor meeting room area of the San Jose-SJSU Library at 4<sup>th</sup> Street & San Fernando in downtown San Jose.

### TOPICS AND DATES:

- Right to Dissent, discussion with Ed Steinman, Tuesday Sept. 12 - 1-3 p.m.
- Racial Profiling, discussion with Marina Hsieh, Tuesday Sept. 19 - 1-3 p.m.
- Gay & Lesbian Rights, discussion with Margalynne Armstrong, Wednesday Sept. 27 - 1-3 p.m.
- Voting Rights, discussion with Margaret Russell, Wednesday Oct. 4 - 3-5 p.m.

## STANISLAUS COUNTY CHAPTER

The Stanislaus County Chapter annual meeting will be held on **Wednesday, September 20, 2006** at Stanislaus State University in Turlock. For more information contact the chapter at (209) 522-0154 or [stanaclu@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stanaclu@sbcglobal.net).

# DEFENDING THE BILL OF RIGHTS ON INDEPENDENCE DAY

By Emily Browne

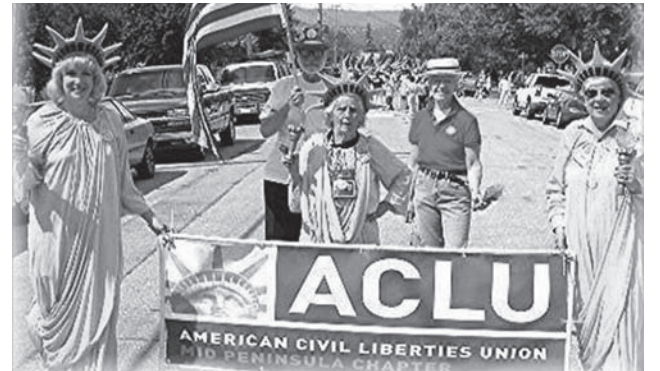
On July 4<sup>th</sup>, ACLU chapters throughout Northern California participated in local festivities and an op-ed by ACLU-NC Executive Director Dorothy Ehrlich was featured in the San Francisco Chronicle. What could be more patriotic than defending the Bill of Rights?

The Mt. Diablo chapter participated in three local parades. They carried banners in Orinda, Danville, and Concord and handed out literature to the crowds. "It was very easy to see who was clapping specifically for the ACLU," said Lee Lawrence, Mt. Diablo chapter board member. "We'd run right over and give them information on becoming a member and receiving e-mail alerts."

The Stanislaus County chapter marched in a Modesto parade. The chapter's red, white, and blue "Defenders of the Bill of Rights" float was decorated with posters and phrases illustrating core ACLU values.

The Mid-Peninsula chapter marked the day by participating in the Redwood City Independence Day Parade (shown below). Participating member Dawn Abel said they received a warm reception from the crowd.

Ehrlich's op-ed, "A Day to Reflect upon the Values of a Free Nation," marks the second year in a row she has been featured in the Chronicle's July 4<sup>th</sup> issue. You can read her article at [www.aclunc.org](http://www.aclunc.org). ■



# ACLU-NC CHAPTER MEETING SCHEDULE

**B.A.R.K.+ PLUS CHAPTER MEETING:** Third Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. Contact Roberta Spieckerman for more information: (510) 233-3316 or [rspieckerman@earthlink.net](mailto:rspieckerman@earthlink.net).

**MT. DIABLO CHAPTER MEETING:** Regular meetings. Contact Lee Lawrence for more information: (925) 376-9000 or [leehelenalawrence@yahoo.com](mailto:leehelenalawrence@yahoo.com). All ACLU members in central and eastern Contra Costa County are invited to participate.

**MARIN COUNTY CHAPTER MEETING:** Third Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the West End Café, 1131 4<sup>th</sup> Street, San Rafael. Contact Aref Ahmadi for more information: (415) 454-1424. Or call the Marin Chapter complaint hotline at (415) 456-0137.

**MID-PENINSULA CHAPTER MEETING:** First Wednesday of each month from 7-9:30 p.m. All meetings are at conference room of Community Activities Building in Red Morton Community Park at 1400 Roosevelt Avenue, Redwood City. Contact Harry Anisgard for more information: (650) 856-9186.

**MONTEREY COUNTY CHAPTER MEETING:** Third Tuesday of the month (Except August, December, and January) at 7:15 p.m. at the Monterey Public Library. 625 Pacific Street, Monterey. Contact Elliot Ruchowitz-Roberts for more information: (831) 624-1180 or visit [www.aclumontereycounty.org](http://www.aclumontereycounty.org). To report a civil liberties concern, call Monterey's complaint line: (831) 622-9894 (Spanish translation available).

**NORTH PENINSULA (DALY CITY TO SAN CARLOS) CHAPTER MEETING:** Third Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Contact chapter hotline for more information: (650) 579-1789 or [npenaclu@comcast.net](mailto:npenaclu@comcast.net).

**PAUL ROBESON (OAKLAND) CHAPTER MEETING:** Fourth Monday of each month at the Rockridge Library (corner of Manila and College Ave.), Oakland. For more information contact: (510) 869-4195.

**REDWOOD (HUMBOLDT COUNTY) CHAPTER MEETING:** Fourth Monday of each month at 6 p.m. 917 Third Street, Eureka. For more information: (707) 215-5385.

**SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY CHAPTER MEETING:** Third Tuesday of each month. Contact Joel Blum for more information: (415) 931-3400 or [joel@aclusf.org](mailto:joel@aclusf.org).

**SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY CHAPTER MEETING:** Regular meetings. Contact John Schick for more information: (209) 941-4422 or [jcschick@earthlink.net](mailto:jcschick@earthlink.net).

**SANTA CLARA VALLEY CHAPTER MEETING:** First Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at 1051 Morse Street (at Newhall), San Jose. For more information contact [acluscv@hotmail.com](mailto:acluscv@hotmail.com) or visit [www.acluscv.org](http://www.acluscv.org).

**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CHAPTER BOARD MEETING:** Last Monday of every month at 7 p.m. at 260 High Street, Santa Cruz. For more information contact [info@aclusantacruz.org](mailto:info@aclusantacruz.org) or visit [www.aclusantacruz.org](http://www.aclusantacruz.org).

**SONOMA COUNTY CHAPTER MEETING:** Third Tuesday of each month, at 7 p.m. at the Peace and Justice Center, 467 Sebastopol Avenue, Santa Rosa (one block west of Santa Rosa Avenue). Contact chapter hotline for more information: (707) 765-5005 or visit [www.aclusonoma.org](http://www.aclusonoma.org).

**STANISLAUS COUNTY CHAPTER MEETING:** Third Wednesday of every month from 7-9:30 p.m. at the Modesto Peace/Life Center, 720 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Modesto. Contact chapter hotline for more information: (209) 522-0154 or [stanaclu@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stanaclu@sbcglobal.net).

**YOLO COUNTY CHAPTER MEETING:** Fourth Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. Contact Natalie Wormeli for meeting location: (530) 756-1900.

## NEW CHAPTERS ORGANIZING

**CHICO AND NORTH VALLEY CHAPTER:** Regular meetings. Contact Laura Ainsworth for more information: (530) 894-6895 or email [chair@chicoaclu.com](mailto:chair@chicoaclu.com).

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY CHAPTER MEETING:** Regular meetings. Contact Mutahir Kazmi for more information: (916) 686-8365.

**SOLANO COUNTY:** Contact Don Halper for more information: (707) 864-8248.

## CAMPUS CLUBS

**BERKELEY CAMPUS ACLU:** Every Tuesday from 7-8 p.m. at 121 Wheeler Hall. For more information, visit [www.berkeleyaclu.com](http://www.berkeleyaclu.com) or contact Ashley Morris: [ashley@berkeleyaclu.org](mailto:ashley@berkeleyaclu.org).

**DAVIS CAMPUS ACLU:** Contact Jason Rifkind for more information: [grendel8383@yahoo.com](mailto:grendel8383@yahoo.com).

**SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY LAW:** Contact Allison Hendrix for more information: [hendrixallison@gmail.com](mailto:hendrixallison@gmail.com).

**ACLU-SCA (STUDENT CALL TO ACTION) AT UC SANTA CRUZ:** For more information, visit [www.aclu-sca.org](http://www.aclu-sca.org) or contact Heidi Briones: [heidibriones@aclu-sca.org](mailto:heidibriones@aclu-sca.org).

# ASK THE EXPERTS! ILLEGAL SPYING AND PROP 85 AN ACLU-NC ACTIVISM UPDATE

## WHAT ARE KEY CIVIL LIBERTIES ISSUES RIGHT NOW THAT WE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT?

The two issues of greatest concern to the ACLU-NC this summer and fall are illegal spying (see stories on pages 1, 6 and 7) and the new parental notification initiative, Prop 85 (see story on page 1).

Illegal spying is abusive government power on a grand scale. It's AT&T and Verizon handing over customers' telephone records to the federal government. It's local police spying on protesters. We want people to really understand what the government can and can't do, when surveillance is a violation of civil liberties.

The second key issue is the return of the parental notification initiative. Last November we successfully defeated Prop 73, which would have restricted teens' access to abortion and put California's most vulnerable teens in danger. This November, unfortunately, we will see almost exactly the same issue on the ballot as Prop 85. So, once again, we are mobilizing to protect teen safety.

## WHAT NEW STRATEGIES ARE YOU USING TO MOBILIZE ACLU-NC MEMBERS?

Communicating with our members is vital to ACLU activism. Because email is the most cost-effective and efficient way to reach our membership, we are asking members to sign up for e-mail action alerts at [www.aclunc.org](http://www.aclunc.org).

Another key part of our strategy is education. We are working with chapters and partner organizations to inform people about domestic spying and Prop 85. In late August and early September we will offer trainings for the campaign to defeat Prop 85. For the fight against government spying and surveillance, we have created a toolkit for members with talking points, questions to ask candidates and elected officials, and a "Stop the Abuse of Power" video (see below).

**W**ith government spying on the rise and a parental notification initiative back on the ballot, engaging and mobilizing our members and activists is more important than ever. Justine Sarver, the new Organizing Director for the ACLU of Northern California (ACLU-NC), brings us up to date on the latest civil liberties battles in Northern California—and where your voice and your activism can make the most difference.

If you are interested in either the surveillance toolkit or the Prop 85 campaign, contact our Field Coordinator, Shayna Gelender, at [sgelender@aclunc.org](mailto:sgelender@aclunc.org) or (415) 621-2493 x384.

We are also working to organize younger and diverse communities across Northern California. The next generation of activists has proven they can mobilize effectively and in great numbers, especially online. We are very excited that our chapters are initiating campus clubs throughout the region.

The Web is a vital tool for all our issues. Our new Web site launches later this summer at [www.aclunc.org](http://www.aclunc.org).

## LAST YEAR, AS POLITICAL DIRECTOR AT PLANNED PARENTHOOD, YOU HELPED DEFEAT PROP 73. FACING PROP 85, WHAT'S THE GAME PLAN?

None of us are happy that we have to repeat our efforts to defeat Prop 85 this year. But we are encouraged by our coalition, which is stronger than ever. We mobilized thousands of activists last year, and they are ready to fight again. We are also organizing college students to talk to voters about how Prop 85 jeopardizes teen health.

Currently, the most important activity is fundraising. This will enable us to communicate with large numbers of California voters effectively, letting them know how dangerous Prop 85 is.

your local paper about why Prop 85 is so dangerous to teen health.

Most importantly, check our Web site regularly: [www.aclunc.org](http://www.aclunc.org). It's where we post the most up-to-date information and calls to action. On the Web site you can always find out where your voice is needed most.

ACLU-NC chapters, members, activists, and coalition partners are invaluable resources in the fight to protect civil liberties. Together, we will achieve great victories for civil liberties. Let's get to work! ■



Justine Sarver

*Justine Sarver joined the ACLU-NC as Organizing Director this spring. The ACLU-NC had the pleasure of working with Sarver previously when she was Vice President and Political Director for Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California. Sarver has extensive experience developing political campaigns and working with activists, lobbyists, candidates, and elected officials. Before working for Planned Parenthood, she was the Political Director for the San Diego AFL-CIO.*

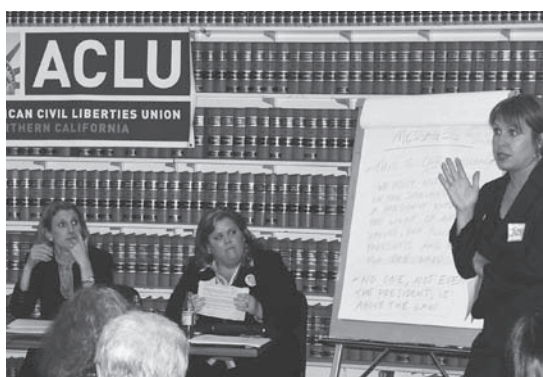
## ACLU-NC COMMENCES "STOP ABUSE OF POWER" CAMPAIGN

By Shayna Lewis

The timing was perfect for the May 11 kick-off event for the ACLU-NC's "Stop the Abuse of Power" campaign. News broke that morning that the National Security Agency (NSA) had been collecting the personal phone records of millions of Americans.

"We wanted not only to educate our leaders and activists within the ACLU-NC, but also to bring in people not previously connected to the ACLU who are concerned about the enormous increase in surveillance in our communities," explained ACLU-NC Organizing Director Justine Sarver, who planned the event.

The kick-off event featured ACLU National Legislative Office Director Caroline Fredrickson as well as National Field Director Jeani Murray (shown above with Sarver). Various speakers discussed the emerging surveillance is-



issues and ways activists can get involved. "The idea was to frame the array of abuse of power issues included in the campaign and get people actively participating," said ACLU-NC Field Coordinator Shayna Gelender.

"Stop the Abuse of Power," which is modeled on a national ACLU campaign, is dedicated to ending illegal spying. The campaign focuses on a range of

government abuses, including privacy concerns with "free" wireless Internet, video surveillance cameras, national identification cards, and Radio Frequency Identification Devices (RFIDs).

You too can help stop the abuse of power. Visit [www.aclunc.org](http://www.aclunc.org) for the latest news and to sign up for action alerts, or contact the ACLU-NC Field and Organizing Department at (415) 621-2493. ■

## ACLU FORUM

The ACLU Forum is the place where you, our readers and members, can ask questions of our experts and share your comments with us. In each issue, we will focus on one or two specific topics.

### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We encourage you to send letters to the editor on any of the subjects we cover, though we cannot print every letter or answer every question.

Letters should not exceed 200 words.

Send your questions and comments to [gpdian@aclunc.org](mailto:gpdian@aclunc.org) or  
Letter to the Editor  
39 Drumm Street  
San Francisco, CA 94111