



# 2023 Impact Report

A Message to Our Supporters



As our nation and state experience challenges because of a United States Supreme Court that continues to undermine civil liberties and civil rights alongside a movement nationally and statewide to undermine these same precious values the work of the ACLU of Nevada is critical. From school boards to city councils, from state executive offices to the state legislature, from district courts to federal courts, our work in 2023 was important, but that work wouldn't be possible without you. This report isn't simply a highlight of what we've done. It's a small thank you and a reminder that your support makes a difference and your investment into our work changes lives.

We've made incredible strides in the last several years and 2023 was a milestone year for our affiliate. In the fight against systemic injustice in Nevada, our organization has become the foremost leader over the last three years. We have consistently filed and won challenges against violations of civil liberties and civil rights across the state and I am confident that our track record outshines that of any other, thanks to the collective hard work of our team. This success is attributed to the tireless efforts of our dedicated staff, board, partners, and volunteers. It's also because of supporters like you.

**Athar Haseebullah, Esq.**  
**Executive Director**

**ACLU**  
Nevada

# OUR APPROACH



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The ACLU of Nevada works to educate Nevadans about their civil liberties and civil rights. Through expanded staffing for digital communications and community events, our organization is more present in our communities than ever before.



## POLICY ADVOCACY

The ACLU of Nevada monitors all levels of government to ensure we support policies that expand and protect individual civil liberties and civil rights, and prevent policies that don't.



## IMPACT LITIGATION

ACLU lawyers have been at the center of one history-making court case after another. Our legal department focuses on establishing case law and policy precedents that protect and expand civil rights. ACLU of Nevada's litigation work continues to be at the forefront of systemic change.

# PRIORITIES

-  **First Amendment**
-  **Smart Justice**
-  **Health Equity**
-  **Voting Rights**
-  **Education Equity**
-  **Economic Justice**

**140**  
COMMUNITY EVENTS ATTENDED

**2.3K**  
MEDIA MENTIONS

**\$36.6M**  
MEDIA COVERAGE VALUE

**652.6K**  
SOCIAL MEDIA VIEWS

# FIRST AMENDMENT

ACLU of Nevada protects free speech, free press, religious liberty, and the right to assembly.

## Defending the Right to Protest

Jail time should never be used to punish community members for engaging in peaceful protest. In 2023, we took on representation of two respected Clark County School District educators and union members who were prosecuted for protesting at a school board meeting.

The right to protest is important in protecting against government intrusion, and even if some find a speaker disagreeable, it lies at the foundation of the First Amendment.

## 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

### **ORDER-OUT IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL**

Clark County and the City of Las Vegas adopted policies allowing courts to forbid people accused or convicted of any misdemeanor from being on certain public streets. We opposed both measures publicly, submitted an amicus brief opposing one of the two measures, and will be challenging the other measure in court.

### **JOURNALISTS HAVE A RIGHT TO REPORT ON COURTS**

We fought to protect the right of our client, Our Nevada Judges, a nonprofit news organization, to access courtrooms and bring greater transparency and public accountability to our courts and elected judges. The Nevada Supreme Court ruled in our favor.

## Safer Traffic Stops for People with Communications Needs

We led the charge and worked with political allies to make traffic stops safer by creating a voluntary DMV designation that advises police at the start of a traffic stop that the driver has communication needs.

## Transparency from School Police

When CCSD refused to release public records about a viral video of a CCSD police officer slamming a Durango High School student to the ground, we were forced to step in. ACLUNV successfully led a yearlong legal fight to get bodycam footage.



Sponsor Assemblyman C.H. Miller and Athar Haseebullah present AB161 in Carson City. (Nevada Legislature)



ACLUNV Emerging Leaders stand behind Haseebullah at a press conference at the courthouse. (Michelle Almonte/ACLU)

## 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

### **FIGHTING REGRESSIVE DRUG POLICIES**

Mass incarceration policies have never helped our community, but the failed War on Drugs still pops up in Nevada politics. When the Legislature tried to pass a draconian fentanyl bill, we fought tirelessly to minimize harm to people who need help.

### **FIGHTING DISCRIMINATORY POLICE PRACTICES**

Ongoing litigation against the LVMPD has exposed serious constitutional issues with the ways in which the department adds people to its “gang database” based on arbitrary characteristics and with no due process. We remain committed to fighting these unjust actions.

## FIGHTING FOR THE SAFETY OF INCARCERATED FIREFIGHTERS

Our clients were badly burned while working for the Nevada Department of Corrections and Nevada Division of Forestry fighting wildland fires. The soles on one of our plaintiff's boots literally melted off, and in response, a supervisor taped them back on and gave an order to get back to work.

The state agreed to more than a dozen important policy updates protecting incarcerated firefighters as part of a sweeping settlement that included damages for our injured clients.

“**To have the ACLU pick up this case and fight for us, I felt important again. Human and worth something.**”

**- Rebecca Leavitt  
ACLU of Nevada Client,  
Formerly Incarcerated  
Firefighter**

(Jordyn Chamizo/ACLU)

## 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

### **SOLITARY CONFINEMENT REFORM**

We have been working for more than a decade to bring awareness to this issue and to create change. In 2023, we launched a new communications campaign alongside Senator Pat Spearman and finally convinced the Legislature to update the state's isolation policies.

### **DIGNITY FOR INCARCERATED WOMEN**

Before we championed this bill, state laws and regulations did not provide for women's specific needs, including gynecological exams, menstrual products, and more. We also filed a lawsuit to ensure prisoners are protected from sexual abuse after a chaplain at the womens' prison was charged with sexual assault.

# VOTING RIGHTS

ACLU of Nevada works to expand and protect access to the ballot box.

## Protecting Access for Those Who Haven't Lost Voting Rights

Nevada law says a person who has been convicted of a felony and is currently in prison cannot vote. People in a local jail who are waiting for their day in court — and have not been found guilty — still have voting rights, but for most detainees, access to the ballot box is not easy to come by. Alongside one of our organizational partners, Silver State Voices, we successfully advocated for Assembly Bill 286, sponsored by Assemblywoman Brittney Miller, which requires local jail administrators to draft policies for assisting these voters.



ACLUNV staffers Athar Haseebullah, Suzanne Lara and Sadmira Ramic join Nevada Gov. Joe Lombardo and coalition partners at the bill signing ceremony for AB286 (Courtesy).

## 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

### SECURITY AND TRANSPARENCY FOR ELECTION WORKERS

Election workers shouldn't face harassment and threats, but we also have to protect transparency in our democratic process. Our subject matter experts were able to bridge the gap between these needs, and we were able to work with Nevada Secretary of State Cisco Aguilar to craft a legislative solution that will bolster protections for election workers and civilian poll monitors.

### NEVADA VOTING RIGHTS TEAM LEADING BATTLEGROUND STATES

Our voting rights team's prowess in litigation work, policy advocacy, and communications make us a leader among ACLU affiliates, and we have the only nonpartisan voting rights attorney in the state of Nevada.

# HEALTH EQUITY

ACLU of Nevada defends the right to access safe and equitable medical care.

## Medical Cannabis in Our Constitution

Medical cannabis has been in our state Constitution for decades, yet the Nevada Board of Pharmacy still lists it as a Schedule I Controlled Substance, a category reserved for the most dangerous drugs that have no medical value. A Clark County judge agreed with us that the scheduling is unconstitutional, and we continue to defend the ruling on appeal.



Athar Haseebullah speaking with press alongside member of client-organization Cannabis Equity and Inclusion Community (Jordyn Chamizo/ACLU).

## Preventing Discrimination Pursuant to the ERA

A right that depends on what's in your wallet to exercise is no right at all. That's why we're challenging Nevada's ban on state Medicaid coverage for abortion as a violation of the Nevada Equal Rights Amendment. Abortion care should be treated like any other medical procedure covered by the state for those that need assistance.



## 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

### REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS IN OUR CONSTITUTION

We joined other advocates for abortion rights and bodily autonomy to create the Nevadans for Reproductive Freedom campaign to place a reproductive freedom constitutional amendment on the Nevada 2024 general election ballot.

### ADDRESSING FEDERAL CANNABIS REGULATIONS

While we're tackling the state's Schedule 1 classification for cannabis, we also prompted the Nevada Legislature to send a message to Congress to tell them to follow our lead at the federal level too.

“Having a strong organization support us in this movement gives us the leveraging power of the positiveness of the ACLU and all the good work they've done in our state.”

- Marya Shegog  
ACLU of Nevada Client,  
Silver State Hope Fund

(Jordyn Chamizo/ACLU)



# EDUCATION EQUITY

Students have the right to quality education in a safe and respectful learning environment.

## Preventing Attacks on LGBTQ+ Students

When the Douglas County School Board proposed banning transgender and gender-diverse students from using the proper facilities or playing sports, we fought back. Such policies would be a blatant violation of Nevada's Equal Rights Amendment. We won't let anti-trans groups drag us backward.



“

**The transgender community is keenly aware of ongoing attacks on trans rights across the country.”**

**- Ryan Vortisch  
ACLUNV Intern**

# ECONOMIC JUSTICE

We move the state forward by ensuring all Nevadans can access housing, jobs, and workforce development opportunities free from discrimination.

## Occupational Licensing Hurdles Limit Opportunities

Along with allied legislators, we sought to reform the guidelines for licensing boards in order to remove stigma, bias, and discrimination from the equation. Our bill died in committee but we'll keep fighting to make sure all Nevadans have equal access to jobs and opportunities.

“

**This bill is an opportunity to get our Nevadans back to work and participate as contributing members of society.”**

**- Assemblywoman  
Brittney Miller**



## TRIBAL REGALIA AT GRADUATION

After multiple attempts by Nevada schools to block Indigenous students from wearing ceremonial tribal regalia at graduation, we took the issue to the Legislature to make it clear that this is a right.

## HEALTH INSURANCE FOR FULLTIME SUBS

Nevada's teacher shortages have led districts to rely on substitute teachers, but they get less pay and no benefits — including no health care coverage. Our bill to fix this issue was vetoed, but we're going to keep fighting for greater equity for teachers, too!

# BUILDING POWER

ACLU of Nevada is at the forefront of advancing tomorrow's leaders.

## Emerging Leaders

This year we introduced our newest youth leadership program, Emerging Leaders. This innovative program is devoted to giving young adults, ages 16 - 24, the opportunity to promote social change and raise awareness about civil rights issues while cultivating their leadership and professional skills.



# FOR TOMORROW

## UNLV People Power

UNLV People Power is a nonpartisan student collective that works with the ACLU of Nevada to empower students to advocate for civil rights and liberties for themselves and others. They host events including Know Your Rights workshops, trainings, student mixers and movie nights.



# CELEBRATION OF CIVIL RIGHTS

## Congratulations to Our Award Winners

### **Civil Rights Leadership Award for Advocacy for People Impacted by Discrimination**

*Congressman Steven Horsford*

### **Civil Rights Leadership Award for First Amendment Advocacy**

*Our Nevada Judges*

### **Civil Rights Leadership Award for Economic Justice Advocacy**

*Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada*

### **Civil Rights Leadership Award for Voting Rights Advocacy**

*Indivisible Prickly Pears Nye County*

### **Freedom of the Press Award**

*Tiffany Lane*

### **Rich Siegel Liberty in Government Award**

*Assemblywoman Brittney Miller*

### **Corporate Leader of the Year**

*Piper Overstreet-White*

### **Robert Chester Civil Rights Leadership Award**

*Michelle Maese*

### **Emilie Wanderer Civil Libertarian of the Year Award**

*John Piro*

### **Activism Through Service Honorees**

*Mandy Cordia, Brandon Summers-Armstrong,  
John Krieger, Kelly Fitzpatrick*



# OUR TEAM

## STAFF

**Athar Haseebullah, Esq.**  
*Executive Director*

**West Juhl**  
*Director of Communications  
and Campaigns*

**Christopher Peterson, Esq.**  
*Legal Director*

**Geneviève Gutierrez Lynch**  
*Development Manager*

**Sadmira Ramic, Esq.**  
*Voting Rights Attorney*

**Jordyn Chamizo**  
*Digital Communications  
Manager*

**Suzanne Lara**  
*Legal Department Coordinator*

**Jacob Smith, Esq.**  
*Staff Attorney*

**Tatiana Smith, Esq.**  
*Policy Counsel*

**Jessica Garcia Herrera**  
*Executive Assistant*

**Derrica Daniel**  
*Admin and Finance Coordinator,  
President of Emerging Leaders*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Robert Langford, Esq.**  
*Board President*

**Dwayne McClinton**  
*Board Vice President*

**Lisa Rasmussen**  
*Board Treasurer*

**Stephanie Rosol**  
*Executive Board Member  
at Large*

**Sylvia Allen**  
*Executive Board Member  
at Large*

**Elizabeth Mercedes Krause**  
*Board Member*

**John Krieger**  
*Board Member*

**Janae Cobb**  
*Board Secretary*

**Zarinah Washington**  
*Board Member*

**Sondra Cosgrove**  
*Board Member*

**Annie Burns**  
*Board Member*

**Angela M. Cook, Esq.**  
*Board Member*



**Frank Nemeč**  
*Board Member*

**Ken Evans**  
*Board Member*

## 2023 - 2024 INTERNS

**Danielle Bennett**  
*Social Work Practicum  
Student*

**Michelle Almonte**  
*Legal Intern*

**Ryan Vortisch**  
*Legislative Reporter*

**Bridget Warlea**  
*Legal Extern*

**Scarlett Park**  
*Legal Intern*

**Emerald Lucas**  
*Legal Intern*

**Kate Lim-Shim**  
*Policy Intern*

**Zachary Nemeč**  
*Research Intern*

**Jessica Velazquez**  
*Legal Intern*

**Alexis Marin**  
*Fundraising and  
Research Intern*

# HELP US PROTECT CIVIL LIBERTIES

## Annual Gift

Become a supporter of the ACLU of Nevada by making an annual gift.

## Major Giving

Make impactful gifts to the ACLU of Nevada.

## Shared Expertise / In-Kind Giving

As an expertise in your field, end your insight to the work we do together at the ACLU of Nevada and/or provide an in-kind gift of goods or materials.

## Alternative Giving

Give to the ACLU of Nevada through alternative methods such as a donor advised fund, planned giving, shares giving, and/or via community fund.

## Fundraising

Support fundraising through event hosting and networking.

## Fiscal Year 2023

FY 2023 Revenue: \$1,536,532

FY 2023 Expenditures: \$1,373,675

## Projected Fiscal Year 2024

FY 2024 Projected Revenue: \$1,549,000

FY 2024 Projected Expenditures: \$1,543,335

**Make a one time donation to the ACLU of Nevada Foundation.**



**Become a member of the ACLU of Nevada.**



**Mail a Check:**

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North Las Vegas, NV 89032

    @aclunv

in  ACLU of Nevada

