12,000
Doors knocked by ACLU of Michigan volunteers with the Reproductive Freedom for All Campaign

102
Number of bills the ACLU of Michigan has lobbied so far this session

$4,891,451
The value of time donated by 131 volunteer attorneys this past year

56
Communities organizing with the ACLU of Michigan to protect voting rights across the state

2023 IMPACT REPORT

The clock turned back decades when the U.S. Supreme Court eviscerated the right to abortion in 2022. But ACLU of Michigan supporters were ready to fight back. Thanks to your partnership, we made an impact when we launched the Reproductive Freedom for All campaign, putting the country's first proactive constitutional amendment protecting all decisions related to pregnancy on the ballot. Voters in every corner of the state overwhelmingly supported the measure, safeguarding the right to abortion for generations to come and making Michigan a model for other states.

THIS IS THE POWER OF THE ACLU. ALONGSIDE OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS, VOLUNTEERS, ACTIVISTS, AND DONORS LIKE YOU, WE MAKE REAL CHANGE — IN THE COURTS, AT THE CAPITOL, AND IN COMMUNITIES.

IN THE COURTS

People who cannot afford to hire legal counsel often rely on pro bono attorneys to seek justice. Their ability to bring civil rights cases, particularly under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), was threatened by a state court ruling saying lawyers who bring these cases can recover only a fraction of their costs. The Michigan Supreme Court agreed with the ACLU in Woodman v Department of Corrections that slashing attorney fees would drastically disincentivize pro bono work and encourage public bodies to violate FOIA and civil rights with near impunity. This decision will have state and national impact.

Until now, children born into families headed by unmarried same-sex couples risked losing the love and financial support of their non-biological parent if the relationship ended. This is fundamentally unfair to LGBTQ families unconstitutionally denied the right to marry. Following the ACLU of Michigan's friend-of-the-court brief and argument in Pueblo v Haas, the Michigan Supreme Court agreed that parents like Carrie Pueblo have the right to maintain their role as parents of the children they helped raise.

In Andary v USA Casualty Insurance Company, the Michigan Supreme Court agreed that changes to Michigan's no-fault insurance law cannot be applied to catastrophic accident survivors injured before 2019. More than 18,000 people with disabilities will see their insurance coverage restored, providing them with essential services needed to live safely and independently. The ACLU of Michigan's friend-of-the-court brief on behalf of disability rights organizations raised several critical issues the Court would not otherwise have considered.

IN THE CAPITOL

For decades, the ACLU of Michigan has played a leading role in advancing legal protections for the LGBTQ community. Thanks to years of coalition building, public education, lobbying, and litigation, Michigan's Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act now explicitly bans discrimination against LGBTQ people in employment, housing, public accommodations, and education. This win comes at an especially important time as the U.S. Supreme Court attempts to narrow protections for LGBTQ people.

Voting is the cornerstone of our democracy and the fundamental right on which all our civil liberties rest. We played a key role in shaping legislation to implement new voting measures under Proposal 2, the constitutional amendment supported by the ACLU of Michigan and approved by voters in November. Michigan now requires nine days of early in-person voting, state-funded ballot drop boxes, postage-paid absentee ballots and ballot applications, and more, giving every Michigander a voice in our collective future.

Our efforts alongside allies resulted in the repeal of Michigan's 90-year-old felony abortion ban in April. But our work is not done. We are advocating for a statewide Reproductive Health Act that would remove dozens of restrictions on abortion that have pushed this critical healthcare out of reach for our most vulnerable communities for years. With abortion access under threat nationwide, the time is now for Michigan legislators to repeal medically unnecessary restrictions to ensure that everyone has the ability to obtain the care they need.

IN THE COMMUNITY

Book banning is un-American, infringes on our freedoms, and damages our democracy. We stepped in when the Lapeer County Prosecutor threatened criminal charges against the county librarian over her refusal to remove an LGBTQ-themed book from the shelves. Our widely publicized letter to the prosecutor serves as a warning to other officials who consider this type of government overreach. In Grand Rapids, we've requested a local school district investigate the removal of several books, including The Handmaid's Tale, from libraries and continue to respond to similar issues around the state.

We are building relationships with election officials in more than 50 communities with the goal of expanding access to the ballot, stomping out misinformation and disinformation, and engaging in election protection ahead of the 2024 elections. The ACLU of Michigan's Clerk Engagement Program has been praised by voters and clerks as a tremendous resource for understanding and implementing new laws that make voting more accessible for all Michiganders but especially voters who have historically been pushed out of the process.

Facial recognition is a flawed technology with a disturbing record of racial bias against people of color. Robert Williams is fighting back to stop the use of face recognition in Michigan, with his impact spreading as far away as California. Mr. Williams recently testified before the California legislature about his experience being wrongly detained by Detroit police due to a false facial recognition match. His testimony led to the legislature killing a bad bill before them. In 2019, the ACLU of Michigan filed a federal lawsuit on Mr. Williams' behalf, demanding the Detroit Police Department halt the abuse of face recognition technology.

ACLU
Michigan

WE THANK YOU FOR INVESTING IN A SHARED VISION OF EQUALITY AND FREEDOM FOR ALL

Inspired by the words of the late U.S. Congressman and civil rights leader John Lewis, Detroit artist Dèsirèe Kelly created the adjoining artwork for the ACLU of Michigan.