

A Letter from the Executive Director



Devon Chaffee

In 2026, the ACLU has unleashed our full firepower. Nationwide, we have filed roughly 160 lawsuits against the Trump Administration's illegal and unconstitutional actions—**roughly 20% of those here, in New Hampshire**—and we're not slowing down now.

We're clear-eyed about the current assault on our civil rights and liberties, but we also see what's happening in our streets, our communities, and our courtrooms.

We see Granite Staters standing up for their rights and their neighbors. We see an administration caving under the

pressure of immense opposition. And we see that when we fight back together, we can win.

Like in February, when our collective efforts stopped an ICE human warehouse from being built in Merrimack. And, when the Trump Administration backed down on its effort to censor schools, due to our lawsuit, and when the state legislature decisively rejected reinstating the death penalty in New Hampshire.

Or in March, when no town in our state affirmatively voted to support their local police officers being deputized as ICE agents, or when the greater New Hampshire community came together for the third (and largest) No Kings National Day of Action.

Or on the very first day of April, when we joined colleagues and people from across the nation in Washington D.C. for the New Hampshire-filed birthright citizenship case being heard before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Despite the grave threats to our civil rights and liberties, when we the people fight back to protect and defend our constitution, we can—and we do—win.

Thanks to the support of our community, the ACLU of NH has invested in critical growth for our team in court, in community and in the State House. Inside, meet the three new staff members who are fighting to protect our civil liberties.



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SPRING 2026

At the State House, this year's legislative session hasn't yet come to a close and your voice will matter more than ever. As of mid-April, lawmakers have moved forward bills that could soon hit Governor Ayotte's desk on banning books and flags in schools, restricting transgender people from public life, and creating a new abortion restriction.

(If you haven't emailed your elected representatives yet on these bills, raise your voice to protect our schools and our neighbors at aclu-nh.org/actions.)

In just these first few months of 2026, we can already see what is possible when We the People work together.



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Advocates, Residents Foil Plan for ICE Warehouse in Merrimack

Through protest, letter writing, phone calls, and more, Granite Staters made their voices overwhelmingly clear: "No ICE human detention warehouse in Merrimack." And our federal, state, and local lawmakers listened, acted, and ultimately prevented such a facility from being created in New Hampshire.

A late December report from the Washington Post identified the town of Merrimack as a potential location for a horrifying proposed ICE human warehouse. On February 3, the ACLU of NH unveiled state documents that confirmed detailed plans for an ICE human warehouse in town and sparked a whirlwind of media controversy around the Governor Ayotte's position on the project.

Between the rumors, confirmation, and eventual cancellation of the facility plans, the ACLU of NH team facilitated thousands of emails to the Governor, filed public records requests, conducted deep legal research, and worked closely with lawmakers and community members on oppositional tactics.

From Minneapolis to Fort Bliss, to "Alligator Alcatraz," we have seen the devastating and inhumane conditions that an increased ICE presence creates in communities across our country, and we know that we must prevent that here.

This is a huge victory, and we will continue to fight against any effort to bring such facilities to our state.



Our message to lawmakers: Do Not Disturb Our Bodily Autonomy

As legislators filed into the State House on February 19 for a deadline day of votes, they could hear our chants and saw our 10-foot tall signs: Do Not Disturb Our Private Health Care Decisions. Do Not Disturb Our Health Care Access.

Do Not Disturb Our Bodily Autonomy.

Real quotes from real Granite Staters adorned the signs across the State House lawn. The event was a collaboration with NH Outright, Planned Parenthood and the Center for Justice and Equity.

This has been a traumatizing and difficult session for bodily autonomy at the State House, but in coalition with our allies, we were able to defeat an attempt to criminalize abortions at 20 weeks as a Class B felony.

Our work for the remainder of this session will focus on defeating attempts to roll back the rights of transgender Granite Staters, and a bill that would outlaw the posting of almost any flag or banner in a classroom.

Keep your eyes out for our installation at community gatherings and Pride festivals around the state this summer.

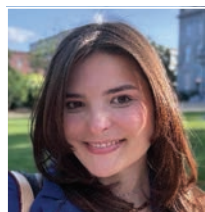
Comings and Goings



Caroline Meade joined the ACLU of NH last fall as an immigration legal fellow.

Caroline interned with our office during law school, after which she served three years as an immigration attorney with the Northeast Justice Center. She will focus on immigrants detained at the federal prison

in Berlin, NH and collaborating with our allies.



of the aisle. Rachel received her J.D. from Syracuse University College of Law in December 2025.

Rachel Potter joined the ACLU of NH's policy advocacy team in January. Rachel comes to us with eight years of experience at the NH House of Representatives as a legislative policy aid, where she became an expert in state legislative processes and built strong relationships on both sides



Maria Savarese joined the ACLU of NH in April after six years experience as a public defender. She has experience suing police departments and prisons in rural Florida before attending Boston University Law School where she graduated Magna Cum Laude.

Amplifying Local Voices Against Immigration Abuses

During town elections this spring, five towns voted on petitions opposing their local law enforcement's participation in federal immigration enforcement through 287(g) agreements. The results? **Not one town voted to support** having their local police partner with ICE, and **three outright rejected this type of ICE collaboration.**

The ACLU of New Hampshire was active in Carroll, Gorham, and Ossipee to support the proposals, including through community organizing, literature, and hosting informational sessions with community members. We are proud to have played a small part alongside local community members in advocating for these warrant articles. We join these towns in rejecting ICE's deadly,

harmful, and fear-inducing immigration enforcement tactics from being used in our communities.

Recent polling from the UNH Survey Center indicated that 52% of Granite Staters think ICE's actions under the Trump Administration have made the country less safe, and 49% of Granite Staters support abolishing ICE entirely.

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Collaborations to Protect Our Immigrant Neighbors

Alongside its attack on birthright citizenship, the federal government has pursued an aggressive campaign to deport people—even those who have legal status as immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers. This process includes arresting and detaining people, often hours away from their community, for weeks and in some cases, months.

Our Immigrants' Rights Project has secured the release of 17 people from detention in New Hampshire, reuniting them with their families and providing them with a chance to fight their cases in court. ACLU of NH attorneys have also taken a leadership role in a project that connects people who have been wrongly detained with volunteer attorneys or law students. Our legal team assisted with more than 50 cases in 2025, assessing each case and, if needed, mentoring a volunteer attorney.

We also supported our nationwide ACLU colleagues this year, helping ACLU of Vermont establish a similar project, and training ACLU of Montana and their volunteer attorneys on these types of cases, as well.

Additionally, we worked closely with the ACLU of Maine in the early weeks of 2026 after federal officials said they aimed to target as many as 1,400 people in Lewiston, mostly in Somali and Somali-American communities.

New Hampshire lives without the death penalty!

New Hampshire repealed the death penalty in 2019 because it is fundamentally racist and error-prone. This year, we worked with allies and partners from across the state and across the country to fight—and defeat—four separate legislative proposals to force New Hampshire back to this archaic and unjust practice.

The Ongoing Fights for Free Speech in Our Classrooms

In February 2025, the Trump Administration threatened to defund any school—K-12, college or university—that used programming supporting diversity, equity or inclusion.

The ACLU of NH filed a suit in collaboration with local teachers, teachers' unions, school districts and the Center for Black Educator Development. We quickly obtained an injunction, and this spring, learned the administration was abandoning their policy.

Every student, both in the Granite State and across the country, deserves to feel seen, heard, and connected in school—and that can't happen when classroom censorship laws and policies are allowed to stand.

We also filed suit and obtained an injunction last year against a similar state proposal. Our teachers are protected statewide under the injunction, and we will continue to fight against this censorship in court and in the State House.

As of mid-April, our classrooms are again under attack at the State House, by a bill that would ban nearly all flags and banners at our public schools, from a happy birthday banner, to a college flag or flags celebrating graduates, to flags representing students' ancestry and pride flags, mental health awareness or bullying prevention month banners, and much more.

Our First Amendment rights to free speech and expression do not simply disappear at the front doors of our schools. To tell your state senator to stop this classroom censorship, visit aclu-nh.org/actions/



ACLU of NH at the Highest Court



NH immigrants' rights advocates including Eva (left) and Angy (center), and ACLU of NH Organizing Director Ed (right) outside the U.S. Supreme Court.

On day one of this administration, the ACLU of NH, in close partnership with other advocacy groups, filed a lawsuit challenging President Trump's unconstitutional executive order seeking to dismantle birthright citizenship.

And on April 1, we were in Washington, D.C. as the United States Supreme Court heard our New Hampshire-originated case, *Trump v. Barbara*.

It was a warm, sunny day and the crowd began to gather early in the morning. We stood inside the court and outside on the court steps with attorneys, allies, and partners from New Hampshire and across the country.

Birthright citizenship is enshrined in the 14th Amendment and has long been one of the clearest expressions of the American promise: that anyone born here is part of our national community.

Ending birthright citizenship would upend the law and the lives of hundreds of thousands of families, by denying citizenship to people in the only country they've ever called home—people who would be left in a permanent subclass of U.S.-born children who are denied their rights as Americans.

It would also invite and embolden discrimination, opening the door to widespread questioning of people's citizenship—particularly people of color. This kind of government-engineered exclusion is both unconstitutional and morally indefensible.

President Trump's attempt to end birthright citizenship is a profound misuse of executive power and part of a broader strategy to reshape who is recognized as fully belonging in this country. But the Constitution, not the president, defines who is a citizen.

We're using the full firepower of the ACLU in court to defend the integrity of our Constitution and ensure birthright citizenship is protected for every generation to come. The Supreme Court is expected to rule this summer.

