

ACLUNews

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION of NEW HAMPSHIRE



THE PERCEPTION OF VOTER FRAUD

State lawmakers and government officials have asserted before and since the 2016 election that New Hampshire has a voting problem. They say the problem is not voter fraud, but the perception of voter fraud. However, our Secretary of State has publicly stated that there is no widespread voter fraud in New Hampshire.

Perception, Not Fact

Alleged as fact by President Trump, the perception is that thousands of voters from Massachusetts were bused in on election day, exploiting our voting laws.

But there have been few documented cases of voter fraud in New Hampshire. So, state lawmakers, pivoting from fact to perception as justification, introduced multiple bills this session to tighten voting restrictions. The effect of these bills is to suppress voter turnout, particularly among low income voters and college students.

The ACLU of NH testified against these proposals at every committee hearing this year. We wrote letters to the editor, spoke to legislators at length, and co-sponsored a protest march to the state capital on April 2. Despite our efforts, one voter suppression bill, SB 3, has advanced with the support of Governor Sununu.

What is Senate Bill 3

SB 3, as adopted by the Senate, takes aim at the issue of domicile. Under this bill, a voter domiciled here must collect documentation of the specific acts he/she has taken to carry out his/her intent to establish a New Hampshire domicile. The voter must then submit this documentation to their local clerk's office within 10 days following an election, or within 30 days in towns where the clerk's office is open fewer than 20 hours weekly.

This might sound simple, but for many people it's not. Low-income voters are more transient and college students move just weeks before an election. Therefore, many of these voters may not have documentary proof, such as a lease, a utility bill or obtained an updated driver's license by election day.

SB 3 Criminalizes Legitimate Voters

SB 3, as passed by the NH Senate, would subject voters domiciled in New Hampshire, but without the required documentation, to a fine of up to \$5,000 for having committed wrongful voting/voter fraud and they would be removed from the voter rolls. Enacting this piece of legislation will have a disenfranchising effect on college students and other vulnerable populations and ultimately reward the political party at the polls which has the most to gain from this false perception.

As of this writing, SB 3 was passed in the Senate but has not been scheduled for a floor vote in the House. Tell your legislator you oppose this bill and why.

ACLU News, Spring 2017

ACLU of New Hampshire
18 Low Avenue, Concord
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MARCHING FOR VOTING RIGHTS

On April 2, more than 300 people marched through the streets of Concord before holding a rally on the State House lawn in support of what they called a strong and fair election system. The rally came as state legislators were considering scores of bills that would curtail voting rights. Gilles Bissonnette, (pictured above) ACLU of NH Legal Director, was one of the speakers.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In recent months, we have seen an impressive surge in nationwide social and political action to counter the Trump administration's sweeping attacks on civil liberties. Throughout New Hampshire and the country, people are creating neighborhood living room forums, turning book clubs into take-action sessions, and running for local office for the first time. We are grateful that many of these newly minted activists have joined the work of the ACLU.

Since the election, the ACLU of NH has gone from approximately 3,000 members to close to 8,000 today. Nationally, the ACLU has gone from 400,000 members to 1.6 million members. This groundswell of interest has transformed our organization's ability, not only to bring impactful lawsuits, but also to organize, train, and engage talented activists across the state.

The ACLU of NH is committed to ensuring Granite Staters have the tools they need to take meaningful action. On May 4, we trained over 130 volunteers to spread the word on the rights of immigrants. In January, we helped to train approximately 200 activists on actions to protect reproductive rights. Two weeks after the election, we sponsored a Transgender Health Equity Forum that trained 165 transgender individuals and allies to combat gender identity discrimination.

Over the course of this legislative session, we created numerous opportunities for people to put their new skills to work. We connected hundreds of activists with their legislators, successfully defeating attacks on a woman's right to choose. Hundreds of Granite Staters turned out to the State House in opposition to efforts to erode the fundamental right to vote. And thanks to a massive wave of public pressure, we came within eight votes of advancing gender identity protections in the NH House, progress we can build on next year.

The support of activists has also helped us advance proactive reforms, such as bills to end debtor prison practices in our state and to adopt sensible marijuana policy reform, both of which are on their way to the Governor's desk.

Individual actions are making a difference. And with your help, the ACLU of NH will continue to cultivate this new crop of inspired Constitutional advocates to protect and advance our fundamental freedoms in the months and years ahead.

Thank you for standing beside us, fighting with us, and supporting us.

Devon Chaffee



Government Didn't Respond to Our Request about its Muslim Ban, So We Sued

In April, the ACLU of NH and five other New England ACLU affiliates filed a lawsuit demanding government documents about the on-the-ground implementation of President Trump's Muslim bans. ACLU of NH Legal Director Gilles Bissonnette says, "The public has a right to know how federal immigration officials have handled the implementation of the Muslim bans, especially after multiple federal courts have blocked various aspects of these executive orders."

Since the government has failed to substantively respond, the ACLU sued to enforce the request. This action includes 13 lawsuits across the country. Each lawsuit seeks unique local information regarding how Customs and Border Patrol implemented the executive orders at specific airports and ports of entry in the midst of rapidly developing and sometimes conflicting government guidance.

ACLU IN THE COMMUNITY

Mr. President: Women's Rights are Human Rights



Sen. Maggie Hassan at the Concord Women's March

"We are half of the world's population, so you better learn how to treat us right." This was the warning Linn Duvall Harwell, 94, of New London delivered to President Trump at the Women's March in Concord on January 21. Her message was echoed by thousands of women, men and children in towns and cities around the country who participated in this nationwide rally.

Five thousand people from across the state joined Ms. Harwell on the steps of Concord's State House that day. Every speaker, from U.S. Senators Jeanne Shaheen and Maggie Hassan to author Jody Picoult to New Hampshire Representative Carolyn Alicea and her son Samuel, roundly criticized the Trump administration for its attacks on women's rights, affordable health care, reproductive rights, pay equity, racial justice, and LGBT freedoms. The ACLU of NH was a sponsor and organizer of this event.

After the rally, 200 people gathered for an activist organizing training sponsored by the ACLU of NH and Planned Parenthood NH Action Fund. Men and women who had never been politically active were given the tools to channel their enthusiasm into concrete acts of civic engagement such as getting to know their elected officials, attending hearings, and being politically active at the local level.

Standing up for Roe v Wade

A few days after this historic nationwide march, the ACLU of NH celebrated another landmark: the 44th anniversary of the Roe v Wade U.S. Supreme Court decision. The event was hosted by the NH Reproductive Rights Initiative Advisory Council.

Executive Director Devon Chaffee thanked everyone who contributed and attended this benefit. She noted that "your support is very important to us this year, as we're seeing an unprecedented number of assaults on women's reproductive rights this session."

Ms. Chaffee recognized Susan Arnold for her longtime staunch commitment to this fight and her vibrant leadership as chair of the NH Reproductive Rights Initiative Advisory Council.



Devon Chaffee, keynote speaker U.S. Congresswoman Ann McLane Kuster, and Susan Arnold, Chair of the Reproductive Rights Advisory Council, at the Roe v Wade Celebration.



18 Low Ave Concord NH 03301

**Save
the Date**

**Bill of Rights
Awards
Celebration**

**Sunday
October 15**

Photo by Shepard Fairey



Supporting Immigrant Communities with Train the Trainer Session

The fight for immigrants' rights has gotten harder and the demand for lawyers and advocates is outpacing existing resources in New Hampshire, according to ACLU of NH's executive director Devon Chaffee. "The legal services community around the country has been on high alert since President Trump's Muslim travel ban and Executive Orders ramping up immigration enforcement," she noted.

FACT: In the Granite State, between 90 and 100 immigrants are detained at the Strafford County Jail each day awaiting ICE hearings and/or deportations

On May 4th the ACLU of NH, American Friends Service Committee, Abramson Immigration+ Solutions and Catholic Charities sponsored a Train the Trainer session at UNH School of Law in Concord. Over 130 lawyers, service providers, and community members participated in the workshop on the rights of immigrants and steps that immigrants can take to keep them and their families safe.