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## ACLU of Maine Annual Report (2016)

ACLU of Maine Staff

*ACLU of Maine*

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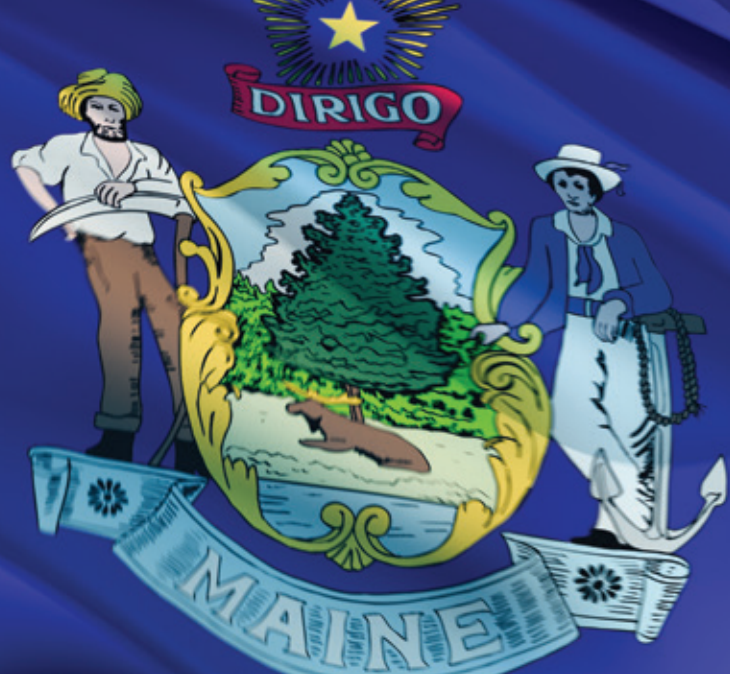
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# ACLU OF MAINE ANNUAL REPORT

2015 – 2016





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# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear friends,

THE ACLU OF MAINE works to ensure fundamental rights for all Mainers. That includes the right to equal treatment no matter who you are or where you come from, and the right to fair play in encounters with the government. We're proud of our work and excited to share this report with you.

Over the last few years, we've spent a lot of time standing up to the current Administration: whether it's challenging misguided approaches to criminal justice and drug addiction; speaking out against the endless efforts to shame and stigmatize poor people, people of color and immigrants; or going to court for the reproductive rights of every woman.

And while it may not always feel like it, we have been winning. Time and time again we

defeat the bad proposals, strengthen the good ones, and turn out overwhelming support for our neighbors.

Never has this work felt more urgent in Maine than it does today.

The next two years of the LePage Administration represent a critical moment for our state. Maine can either be a divided state that rejects progress and makes policy based on fear, or it can be a state that embraces difference and stands up for the rights of all people regardless of who they are.

The ACLU of Maine has been, and will continue to be, on the forefront of this discussion. Whether it's an op-ed, a lawsuit, or legislation, we will call out inequality and fight back against the idea that immigrants, the poor, communities of color, and LGBT folks



are somehow "other." Our success is a credit to the talent and dedication of our staff, Board of Directors and volunteer attorneys. And it is thanks to you – we couldn't do it without your support. Together, we'll keep fighting for all of us.

**ALISON BEYEA**  
Executive Director


# ACLU OF MAINE / A YEAR IN REVIEW

ACLU launches major criminal justice reform initiative in the Legislature

Legislature enacts ban on shackling pregnant women

ACLU takes lead in rejecting governor's "pocket veto" claims

ACLU endorses Accountable Elections referendum



Federal appeals court finds median ban unconstitutional

ACLU files lawsuit to restore MaineCare coverage of abortion

Maine voters pass Accountable Elections referendum

ACLU gives Roger Baldwin Award to 7 high school students who stood up for free speech

2015

SUMMER

FALL


2016

WINTER

SPRING

SUMMER

Supreme Court rules in ACLU case that state bans on same-sex marriage are unconstitutional—a culmination of decades of strategic ACLU cases and advocacy



Congress passes first reforms in decades to limit government spying, after a landmark victory in our lawsuit challenging dragnet surveillance by the NSA

ACLU helps expose drinking water crisis in Flint, Michigan; sues city and state over violations of Safe Drinking Water Act



ACLU sides with Apple in fight over government access to private information

ACLU sues to end federal detention of immigrants for being too poor to pay bail

ACLU files lawsuit to stop North Carolina's extreme anti-LGBT law

CIA releases over 50 documents detailing torture program in response to ACLU lawsuit

Supreme Court issues most important ruling on reproductive rights in decades, striking down Texas law



ACLU successfully advocates for Mohamedou Slahi to be cleared for release from Guantánamo after 14 years without charge or trial



ACLU sues Baton Rouge Police Department for using excessive force and violating the First Amendment rights of peaceful protestors

Delaware Supreme Court strikes down state death penalty



ACLU gives Scolnik Award to Deirdre Smith for her commitment to justice

Legislature rejects bill to incarcerate patients with mental illness

Legislature passes bill to start fixing broken fine and bail policies

Legislature passes key drug law reform bill championed by the ACLU

ACLU coordinates defense of 18 arrested Black Lives Matter protestors

Portland approves trans-inclusive health care policy



# NATIONAL MILESTONES & EVENTS

# STANDING AGAINST RACISM.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

**“Survey contradicts governor’s racial stereotypes, says ACLU”**

**After governor’s comments, ACLU asks for Maine black, Hispanic arrest records**

“Upholding those great American values requires the constant vigilance of the people – we all have an obligation to hold our elected officials to the highest account,” said Beyea.

“GOVERNOR’S COMMENTS are racist, consistent with historical prejudices, **Maine ACLU says**”

“Rights group the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) said it had filed a freedom of information request”

**ACLU: LEPAGE CAN’T JUST BRUSH OFF RACIST COMMENTS AS IF THEY DON’T MATTER**



Victoria Morris spent 120 nights in jail because she couldn't afford to pay hundreds of dollars in restitution.

# SMART JUSTICE, FAIR JUSTICE.

The ACLU has launched a nationwide campaign for criminal justice reform. For too long, the system has torn apart families and wasted valuable resources on methods that do not work. In Maine, we are working to:

## END THE WAR ON DRUGS

As the opiate crisis continues, we're facing off against a governor who seems hell-bent on ramping up the failed "war on drugs." If we truly want to address addiction, we should treat it as a public health problem – not a criminal justice problem. Our first step was to convince the Legislature to pass a bill reducing some low-level drug possession charges from felonies to misdemeanors. Locking up fewer people for non-violent drug offenses will free up resources that can be better spent on treatment and prevention. And removing barriers to education, employment and housing that are created by felony convictions will make it easier for people to get the help they need.

## STOP DEBTORS' PRISONS

After we published a report revealing thousands of people spend time in Maine jails each year because they are too poor to pay their fines and restitution, we were named to a state task force to study the issue. The task force recommendations ultimately became law, and now fewer poor Mainers will languish in jail under the weight of their fines.

## DEMAND TRANSPARENCY

After we testified that a Department of Corrections policy restricting prisoners' ability to publish in news outlets violated the First Amendment, the DOC changed course and dropped the policy. Prisoners have a right to communicate with the outside world, and the public has a right to know how our government is treating those behind bars.



Alison Bates is the Clinical Coordinator of Abortion Care at Planned Parenthood of Northern New England.

# YOUR BODY, YOUR RIGHTS.

The ACLU fights for the rights of all people – and that includes the right to make important decisions about our own bodies, free from government intrusion. In Maine, we are fighting to:

## **PRESERVE ABORTION RIGHTS**

We went to court to ensure poor women can exercise their fundamental right to have an abortion. Currently, MaineCare covers pregnancy-related care for women who choose to carry a pregnancy to term, but bans abortion coverage for eligible women. Along with the national ACLU and Planned Parenthood Federation of America, we've filed a lawsuit to remove this barrier and restore abortion coverage for women who qualify for MaineCare.

## **END HEALTH CARE DISCRIMINATION**

Along with our partners at Equality Maine, Maine TransNet, and Consumers for Affordable Health Care, we convinced the Portland City Council to approve a transgender-inclusive health care policy for city employees. At our urging, Portland became the first Maine city to proactively guarantee equal health coverage for transgender employees and ensure they can get the health care they need. Most Maine cities still discriminate against trans employees in their health care policies, and we look forward to working with them to right this wrong.



Shammah Gahomera of Westbrook called the ACLU Summer Advocacy Institute one of the best experiences he's ever had.

# TOMORROW'S LEADERS.

Our rights are only useful if we know what they are. The ACLU is educating the next generation of social justice advocates so they can continue the vital work of standing up for the rights of every person.

## SUMMER INSTITUTE

The ACLU Summer Institute opened its doors to hundreds of high school students from around the country to learn directly from lawyers, lobbyists, community activists, journalists, and other experts working to defend the civil rights and liberties critical to a free and open society.



## KING FELLOWS

We have been thrilled to work with Portland's King Fellows, a youth-led advocacy group working to advance racial equity and social justice in Maine. Together, we are developing "Know Your Rights" workshops and materials to help young people better understand how the Constitution applies in their modern lives.





# FEATURED SUPPORTER

**Stephanie Cotsirilos,**  
*Portland*

**I was raised in a family of lawyers to care deeply about civil rights and the equal application of the law for all people.** We have to remember that things like official segregation are not so far in our past – I witnessed them in my own lifetime, as a child in the 1950s visiting the Jim Crow South.

60 years later, we've worked together to move things in a better direction, but we still need to recognize and eliminate systemic racism. For instance, people still experience the justice system differently based on their personal circumstances – whether it be their economic status or the color of their skin.

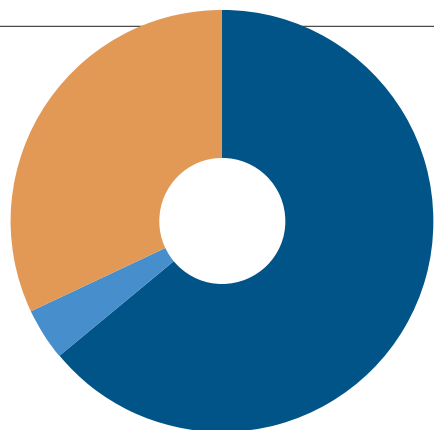
I have a multiracial family, so this is very personal to me. The ACLU has been doing this important work for as long I can remember. Their efforts span the issues I care most about, as a lawyer and as a

parent – racial and gender equity, fixing the justice system, voting rights – all of which have a common denominator of social justice. In all of those areas, the ACLU is uniquely positioned to make a difference.

*60 years later, we've worked together to move things in a better direction, but we still need to recognize and eliminate systemic racism.*

## Support and Revenue

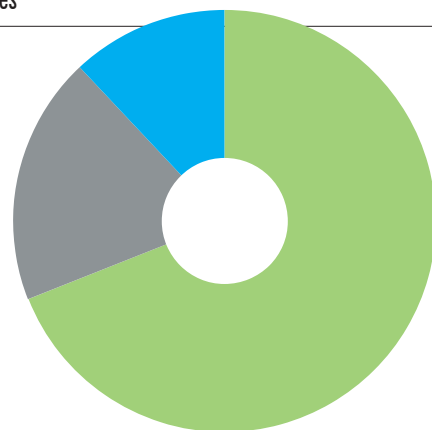
Donations, Grants & Membership	\$490,459
Bequests	\$27,269
National ACLU	\$243,415
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$761,143</b>



## Expenses

Consolidated audited statement of activities for the ACLU of Maine and the ACLU of Maine Foundation, Fiscal Year 2016 (April 1, 2015-March 31, 2016)

Programs	\$481,843
Management & General	\$133,801
Fundraising	\$86,682
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$702,326</b>



## Other Changes in Net Assets

Investment Income	\$29,193
Realized & Unrealized Gains (Losses)	(\$75,779)
Legal Expenses Awarded & Other Income	\$146,580

# HOW TO SUPPORT THE ACLU OF MAINE

*Take a stand now to protect freedom, justice, and equality.*

### MAKE A GIFT TODAY

Make a tax-deductible gift to the ACLU of Maine Foundation online at [www.aclumaine.org](http://www.aclumaine.org) by clicking "DONATE" or mail your gift to:

ACLU of Maine  
121 Middle Street, Suite 303  
Portland, ME 04101

### MAKE A GIFT THROUGH YOUR WILL

Join a special group of supporters who have made civil liberties their personal legacy by including the ACLU of Maine in their wills.

For more information about making a gift through your will, trust, or retirement plan, or for any other questions, contact Ned Kane, Director of Development, at [nkane@aclumaine.org](mailto:nkane@aclumaine.org) or (207) 619-6222.

### TAKE ACTION

Make your voice heard through our online action network and protect civil liberties in your community and across the country. Sign up today [aclu.org/action](http://aclu.org/action).

### JOIN THE CONVERSATION

- FACEBOOK: [facebook.com/aclumaine](https://facebook.com/aclumaine)
- TWITTER: [@aclumaine](https://twitter.com/aclumaine)
- INSTAGRAM: [@aclumaine](https://instagram.com/aclumaine)



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