



EXAMPLES of ACLU of ALABAMA MAJOR INITIATIVES

In Mental Health Reform through landmark litigation establishing constitutional rights for the mentally ill in state mental health facilities (Wyatt v. Stickney)

In Child Welfare Reform by creating a bill of rights for children in state custody and sweeping reform of the child welfare system through systemic reform litigation (R. C. v. Petelos) resulting in a child welfare system now viewed as a model for the nation

In Education Reform by seeking an equitable and adequate education for all children in Alabama, especially poor and minority children, through a class action lawsuit (Harper v. Siegleman) and protecting the rights of racial minority students through school desegregation litigation (Lee v. Macon (Pickens County Board of Education))

Keeping Church and State Separate through major litigation challenging four successive school prayer laws and a variety of religious practices in public schools (Chandler v. Dekalb County Board of Education), state sponsored prayer in courts and displays of the Ten Commandments (Alabama Freethought Association v. Moore, James v. ACLU, Glassroth v. Moore), censorship of public school textbooks by the Religious Right (Smith v. Mobile) and coercing prisoners to participate in explicitly religious drug rehabilitation programs or face serious consequences (Twarog v. Campbell)

Making the right to vote meaningful for African-Americans in Alabama through successful challenges to at-large voting systems throughout the state (Dillard v. Crenshaw I and II and dozens of other cases)

In Prison Reform through landmark litigation establishing constitutional rights for prisoners and overhauling the state's prisons (Newman v. Alabama) (Pugh v. Locke)

Advocating for privacy rights by challenging the state's prohibition on the sale and distribution of sex toys (Williams v. Pryor)

Advocating for the rights of immigrants by providing counsel for Muslims of Middle Eastern and South Asian descent targeted by the FBI and "know Your Rights" presentations to immigrant communities throughout the state

Safeguarding free speech and assembly by protecting the rights of individuals to peacefully protest, demonstrate and freely assemble through numerous small lawsuits and interventions with local governments annually

Advocating for the rights of gay and lesbian Alabamians through direct litigation in child custody and visitation cases as well as assistance to attorneys in the private bar, and through litigation on behalf of students seeking to form student clubs on college campuses throughout the state (Auburn University v. Auburn Gay and Lesbian Alliance) (Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Association v. Sessions and the University of South Alabama)

Preserving religious liberty by protecting the rights of Native American prisoners to practice their religion while incarcerated in Alabama's prison system (Knight v. Thompson), and by representing Jewish children in public school compelled to participate in Christian observances and prohibited from observing their religion (Herring v. Key)

Protecting the right to safe and legal abortions for all women by monitoring the legislature and fighting anti-choice measures

Fighting discrimination against persons with HIV by:

- Seeking rights to adequate medical care, mental health care, privacy and access to rehabilitation programs for Alabama inmates who are HIV+ (Oneisha v. Haley)
- Getting the Department of Corrections to overturn its policy of segregating HIV+ prisoners from the general population for participation in vocational, educational and early release programs, thereby causing them to serve longer and harder time because they are ill.
- Securing AZT from the Alabama Medicaid Agency for HIV+ persons
- Representing HIV+ inmates prohibited from appearing in court and forced to enter pleas from jail
- Curtailing the practice by the Montgomery Police Department of keeping an "AIDS list" used to target gay and HIV+ persons and deprive them of police protection.

Restoring the right to vote to persons convicted of crimes by challenging the prohibition aimed at African-Americans that prevented persons convicted of misdemeanors considered crimes of moral turpitude from voting (Hunter v. Underwood) and getting a law passed which provides a simple fair re-enfranchisement process for the vast majority of ex-felons who have done their time and paid their fines

Updated Fall 2006