



ACLU OF ALABAMA STRATEGIC PLAN

VISION 2030



ACLU
Alabama

EMILY
EQUALS
FREEDOM



WE DEMAND
EQUAL RIGHTS
NOW!

WE MARCH
FOR
INTEGRATED
SCHOOLS
NOW!

WE DEMAND
AN END
TO
POLICE
BRUTALITY
NOW!

WE MARCH
FOR
EFFECTIVE
CIVIL RIGHTS
LAWS
NOW!

WE DEMAND
AN END TO
POLICE BRUTALITY
AND
INTEGRATED
SCHOOLS
NOW!

WE MARCH
FOR
FIRST CLASS
CITIZENSHIP
NOW!

CIVIL RIGHTS
FULL
EMPLOYMENT
FREEDOM

WE DEMAND
AN END
TO
POLICE
BRUTALITY
NOW!



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A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

JaTaune Bosby Gilchrist



When I first joined the ACLU of Alabama nearly a decade ago, the organization looked completely different. A small but mighty office of four full-time staff members, the work of our affiliate was the massive task of defending Alabamians' rights in the Courts and Statehouse. On my first day on staff, I never could have imagined the size to which our affiliate would grow and the reach we would have, not only within the courts or the Statehouse, but within our communities across multiple issue areas. Our growth and influence are a testament to the vision of those leaders who paved the way for progress, the strength of our affiliate's values, and the tireless work of our team.

I strongly believe that progress is dependent on the foundational work of those who came before us. In the same way that I felt personally called to study, work, and ultimately build a life in my ancestral state of Alabama, our affiliate owes its success to the Civil Rights leaders who wrote our blueprint for activism. The history of Alabama is not an easy one. It is both violent and hopeful, a demonstration of the worst and the best that humanity has to offer. While extreme, it is in many ways a microcosm of the paradox that is the American Dream—which is why Alabama continues to be a nationwide leader on issues of equity and racial justice. We recognize that we stand on the shoulders of past leaders and honor them through the integrity and vision of our work.

While the shape of our affiliate has changed, the values that define it have not. The ACLU of Alabama was founded as a watchdog organization, here to fight for and to defend our democracy, regardless of the power structures that seek to crush the most vulnerable among us. These values have guided our expansion into programmatic and legislative work, and the growth of our staff to 22 full-time employees. I am incredibly proud, not only of our staff's expertise, which I would hold up to any national organization, but of our diversity. We are a reflection of the communities we serve and an embodiment of representative leadership.

I feel humbled, inspired, and prepared as we look towards the future. We have been laying the foundation of Vision 2030, not only over the past three years of concentrated effort, but over my last decade with the affiliate, and throughout its 60 years of existence. We are ready. We have the talent, the vision, the strategy, and the integrity to accomplish our ambitious goals and we will not stop until we have succeeded in making Alabama a fairer and more equitable place for all. My family left Alabama in the hopes of providing the next generation with better opportunities. Through our work over the years to come, it is my dream that no one will feel the need to leave Alabama because every opportunity will be available here and for generations to come.

A LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Glory McLaughlin



This spring, the ACLU of Alabama will celebrate sixty years since its founding during the apex of the Civil Rights Movement. Established to defend against the State's assaults on civil rights and liberties, it has upheld this legacy while evolving to meet contemporary challenges. As we look toward the future, the Board of Directors is confident that the affiliate has the tools, expertise, and leadership to accomplish the ambitious goals set forward in this Strategic Plan.

Having served on this Board for more than ten years, I can attest to the affiliate's commitment to fighting for civil rights and civil liberties. I can also speak to its tremendous growth, both in size and influence, under its current Executive Director, JaTaune Bosby Gilchrist. JaTaune's leadership is nothing short of visionary. She is guided by strong internal values that shape every aspect of the organization, from determining the affiliate's priorities to creating mindful hiring practices and policies. Perhaps most importantly, she is deeply rooted in the work of community-building, recognizing that lasting change can only come from collective work and commitment. It is in this spirit that the ACLU is prepared to face our current and future challenges.

This is crucial, because in Alabama, we are never short on challenges. Luckily, the affiliate is never short on creative solutions.

After the fall of Roe, the ACLU of Alabama quickly pivoted its reproductive rights efforts and sued the State to lift a de facto ban on freestanding birthing centers, opening access to healthcare for women across Alabama. While the State Legislature set out to build the most expensive mega-prison in world history, the affiliate's legal team built out direct services to people seeking parole, including representation, education, and advocacy.

One of the affiliate's most visible and impactful wins came in the area of voting rights, after a years-long battle that ended up at the U.S. Supreme Court. The ACLU and its partners secured a second minority opportunity legislative district in Alabama, despite the state's relentless attempts at gerrymandering. Today, in a state notorious for its racist and anti-democratic voting practices, Black voters have a fair opportunity to elect a second Congressional Representative of their choosing.

The role of a Board is not to manage the day-to-day work of an organization, but to ensure that its leadership remains strong and its direction steady. In both respects, this Board has taken these obligations seriously. There are no better stewards for this work than JaTaune and the remarkable team that she has built. Their vision is matched only by their commitment, planning, and work ethic. As a Board, we place our full confidence in Vision 2030 and look forward to celebrating its milestones in the months and years to come.



MISSION STATEMENT

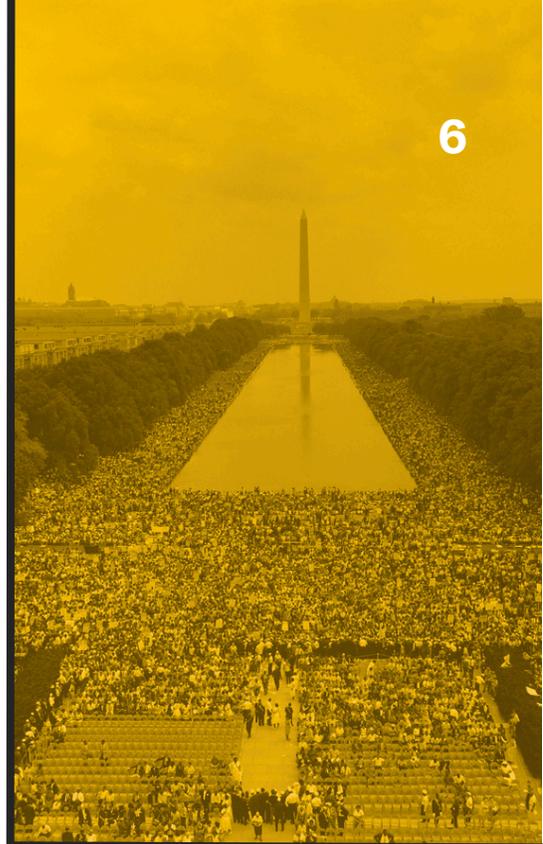
Our mission is to preserve and protect the civil liberties and civil rights guaranteed by the U. S. Constitution, specifically those principles contained in the Bill of Rights.

VALUES STATEMENT

Our values are rooted in our desire to create a better future for Alabama by implementing a vision for progress grounded in equity and justice.

OUR NORTH STAR

The work of the ACLU of Alabama is anchored in our state's history of both oppression and progress. We draw inspiration from our proximity to the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement, where community organizing and activism laid the foundation for a more just and inclusive democracy. Racial justice is the lens through which we do our work and have established our core priorities. The legacy of the Civil Rights Movement serves as our foundation, guiding principle, and North Star, even as we incorporate the best contemporary advances in the field.



OUR VALUES

EQUITY

We fight to ensure the rights of every Alabamian, from voting to bodily autonomy, are met with respect and understanding. Through cultural competency and a deep grasp of history, we tailor our efforts to address systemic inequalities, whether advocating externally on issues like Criminal Legal Reform or internally ensuring equitable practices that reflect the true diversity and needs of our communities.

JUSTICE

Justice is the cornerstone of our mission. Justice work demands courage, innovation, and an understanding that the existing systems often work in contradiction to their stated goals. Through the collective action of amplifying disenfranchised voices and dismantling systemic barriers, we work to right historic wrongs. By honoring the power of our communities to define and achieve justice on their own terms, we commit to bold advocacy and creative resistance. We recognize that true justice is not restricted by legal confines, but exists within equitable societal transformation.

COMMUNITY

We believe in the transformative power of community. We recognize that diversity of thought and experience strengthens our collective resolve. Informed by the voices and needs of various communities in Alabama, we are committed to fostering an inclusive society where every member is respected as an expert in shaping a just future.

INTENTION

All of our work is implemented with intention, thought, discipline, and awareness of impact. By consciously aligning our efforts with our talents, capacity, and resources, we are able to meet the complexities of this work with integrity, always striving to be informed by and responsive to our communities' needs.

INTEGRITY

Integrity is at the core of our organization, defining our staff and the selection of our work. Integrity guides us to make difficult decisions in defense of universal rights, even in the face of controversy or opposition. Our commitment to doing what is right transcends the pursuit of popularity. We recognize that true integrity involves accountability, discipline, and unwavering dedication, standards we rigorously work to uphold.



OUR INTENDED IMPACT & THEORY OF CHANGE

The ACLU of Alabama’s Vision 2030 is grounded in equity, justice, and representation, three time-tested principles of the Civil Rights Movement. We believe fundamentally in partnering with and listening to the communities we serve, understanding that those who have been impacted by specific issues are the true experts.

We elevate our work by taking the time to build trust and expertise. This allows us to be statewide leaders in our core priority areas: Voting Rights, Gender Justice, and Criminal Legal Reform. Our approach is integrated, enabling us to reduce silos and gaps, and create a greater collective impact across all of our work.



OUR INTENDED IMPACT

VOTING RIGHTS

GENDER JUSTICE

CRIMINAL LEGAL REFORM

OUR ULTIMATE GOALS ARE TO:

Uplift and amplify the voices of historically marginalized Black voters.

Ultimately, we want to see consistent Black voter turnout between 55%-60% in the 2028 general election.

We will also flip one Congressional seat to represent Alabama's Black constituency.

Eliminate discriminatory laws and promote medical and bodily autonomy for reproductive care, maternal healthcare, and trans rights.

We envision an Alabama where people can access comprehensive healthcare and have the necessary privacy and support to make informed, healthy decisions about their families.

Ensure that state agencies are held accountable for their actions that impact Alabama's carceral system. We envision a future where individuals and families take an active role in their own advocacy.

These efforts will allow us to establish a statewide public defenders office and to abolish the death penalty in Alabama.

OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS, WE WILL FOCUS ON ACHIEVING THE FOLLOWING OUTCOMES:

Increasing knowledge and awareness of the importance of voting within our Black communities.

Increasing Black voter turnout by 5% in statewide and national elections through the end of the 2026 election cycle.

Expanding Medicaid for the general population and including coverage for midwifery services, out-of-hospital births, and contraception.

Reducing maternal and infant mortality rates by increasing access to prenatal, natal, and postnatal care through comprehensive legislation.

Restoring gender affirming care and abortion access.

Clarify the laws in Alabama for people seeking or providing assistance for abortion and reproductive health care.

Providing direct legal and social services to people seeking parole.

Ensuring that incarcerated people and their loved ones have increased awareness and skills to be successful in parole proceedings and, if granted, while on parole.

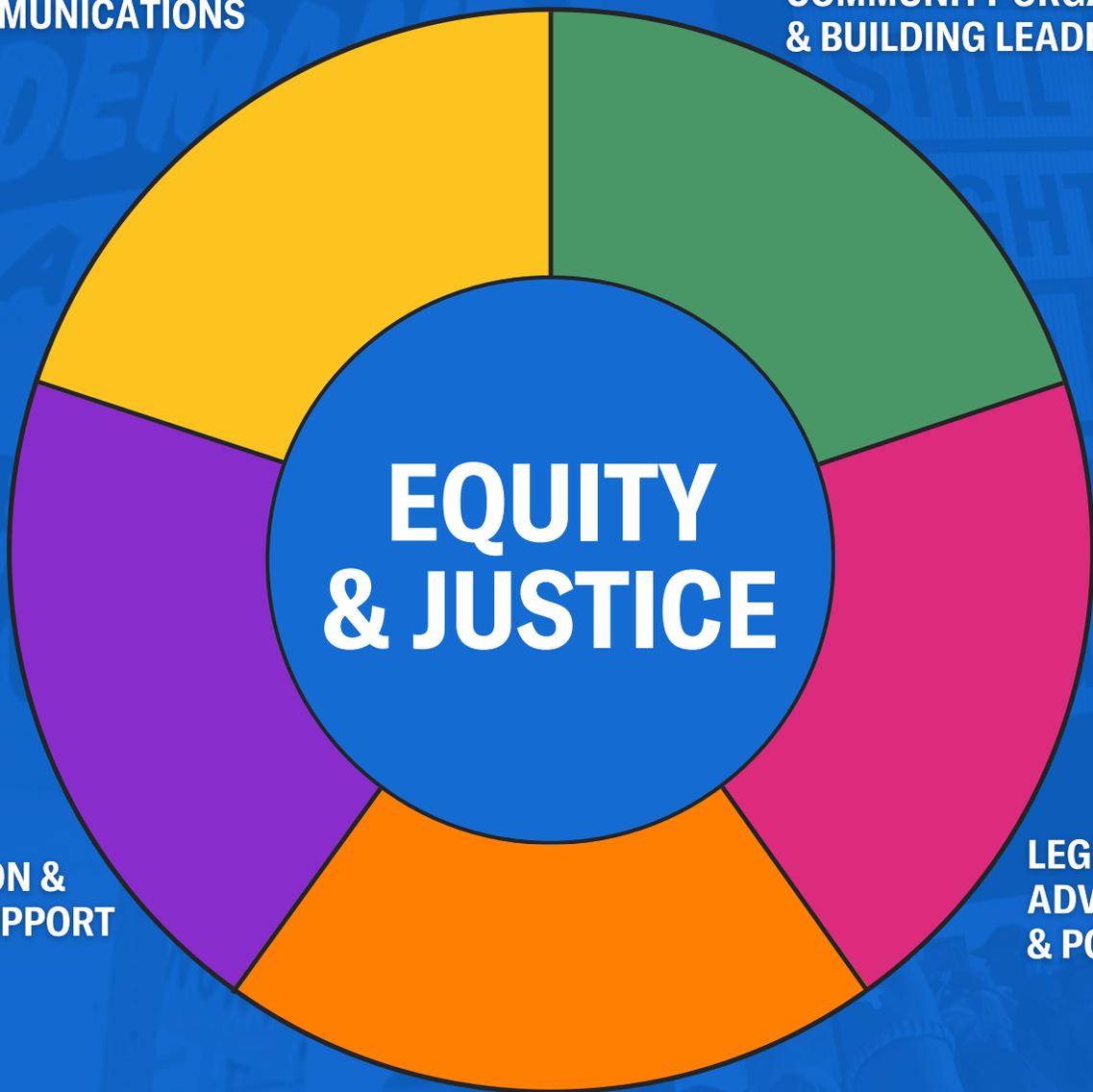
Increasing the number of advocates who will take action to positively influence the Criminal Legal Reform system in Alabama.

Increasing the number of individuals released from prison; and removing 33 people from death row who had jury life verdicts.

THEORY OF CHANGE

COMMUNICATIONS

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING & BUILDING LEADERS



EQUITY & JUSTICE

LITIGATION & LEGAL SUPPORT

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY & POLICY

CIVIL RIGHTS & CIVIL LIBERTIES RAPID RESPONSE

EQUITY & JUSTICE

We are committed to equity and justice in the selection of our work, staff, and partners. Following these guiding principles, we center the voices and experiences of communities who have been historically disenfranchised and are most impacted by our issues, providing them with meaningful, long-term solutions.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING & BUILDING LEADERS

Our mission is to shape the next generation of leaders through our commitment to integrity and our communities. We recognize that those closest to challenges are best suited to inform their solutions. By providing these individuals with organizing and advocacy skills. We will develop a new generation of strong leaders. These organizers, advocates, and volunteers will be equipped to activate change in their communities, using their influence to create a more inclusive and equitable Alabama.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY & POLICY

Advocating for legislation allows us to influence the state's political agenda, disrupt existing systems, and educate communities about their collective power and impact on our state legislature. Fighting for equitable legislation can feel impossible given Alabama's hyper-conservative legislature and the opaque rules that govern it. Our goal is to remind every Alabamian that true power lies with the people. Any individual, regardless of race, gender, or socio-economic class has the right and ability to advocate for fair laws and to remind our elected officials that they work for the people. Our organization is committed to using and sharing the tools at our disposal to ensure the principles of our democracy are put into practice.

LITIGATION & LEGAL SUPPORT

Our aim is to guide our clients through the court process with respect and dignity, putting our clients' needs at the forefront of our approach. We are committed to making complex legal matters easy to understand and accessible for all. We file cases with intentionality, ensuring that they are well-researched and data-driven, and we take a leadership role in guiding the direction of our cases. We strive to be strategic thought partners in every case we participate in. We believe that our clients should have agency in exercising their voice and power.

COMMUNICATIONS & STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Clear communication is crucial for building influence, expertise, and empathy. By amplifying powerful stories, we educate the public on issues affecting our communities and the work we do to address them. Uplifting the voices of people who have been historically marginalized gives power to those who have been most impacted by unjust systems and a better understanding of those systems to the general public. By clearly and transparently sharing our work we increase public awareness of our goals and the ACLU of Alabama's reputation as a statewide leader.

CIVIL RIGHTS & CIVIL LIBERTIES RAPID RESPONSE

We continue to be a responsive and active voice in protecting and advancing civil rights and liberties in the state of Alabama. As critical issues arise we will meet them with the strength of our organization's legacy and expertise, fighting for equity and justice in the courts and our communities.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

As we navigate the next three years of our organization's growth and sustainability, it is time to take bold action. Recognizing the substantial challenges we face both locally and nationally, the ACLU of Alabama has identified critical inflection points that will shape our influence over the next decade. The three codes of conduct outlined below will enable us to achieve our goals over the next three years, strengthening our approach for sustainability and relevance over the next decade.

Sharing data and information through our reports and databases. This ensures our partners, clients, community members, and fellow advocates can share strategies in the statehouse, the courthouse, and organizing spaces across Alabama. By democratizing information, we give people the power to influence their communities and causes.

Remaining engaged and connected to the communities we support. In order to accomplish our long-term goals, we are committed to building sustainable structures and partnerships within the communities we serve. We share our own knowledge and resources to strengthen individuals and organizations on the ground with whom we collectively work to reach our goals

Being about action and creating sustainability by following through on the commitments we make to the communities we serve and recognizing that our goals require sustained effort over time. Too often the individuals and organizations we seek to uplift have been failed or abandoned by systems meant to support them. We are committed to breaking patterns of injustice and failure and committed to the fight for the long haul.

2025

2026

2027

DATA & INFORMATION

Gathering Quantitative and Qualitative Data:

Continue gathering voter data using NGP VAN to create a comprehensive statewide voter file.

Conduct listening sessions, polls, and surveys on maternal and reproductive healthcare.

Track rates of parole and deaths in Alabama's prisons.

Sharing Data:

Internal competence around NGP VAN and county-specific targets for electoral campaigns.

A public launch of our maternal health and abortion access data.

Create dashboards on parole and prison deaths.

Standardizing and Democratizing Information and Data:

Beome a primary resource for data related to our core issue areas, Voting Rights, Gender Justice, and Criminal Legal Reform.

Through effective communications programming, ensure this data is equitably shared with partners and the broader community.

ENGAGEMENT & CONNECTION

Engaging nontraditional partners to drive alignment around equity and build our base:

Connect and engage a targeted base of young voters on HBCU campuses across the state.

Engage healthcare workers, including midwives and doulas, to understand the maternal mortality crisis and impact of Dobbs on quality healthcare.

Connect with businesses around death penalty work, parole, and work release.

Building a solid pipeline of legal practitioners and informed advocates:

Strengthen our internal capacity to support law students through the Southern Legal Internship program, local Black Law Student Association, and summer fellowship programs.

Invest in a legal clinic/practicum around parole and prison deaths.

Establish a voter volunteer base focused on 2026 midterms.

Strong Base and Established National Credibility:

Develop a strong volunteer base across the state, particularly across HBCU campuses.

Establish partnerships with community organizations and research /medical institutions around maternal health and reproductive care.

Ensure our legal pipeline program produces top-notch movement lawyers with strong community connections.

ACTION & SUSTAINABILITY

Establishing Best Practices:

Create norms around data collection and collaboration.

Implement data to inform strategy and build integrated campaigns.

Consistency & National Collaboration:

Create reports, dashboards and data-informed narrative communications that drive advocacy.

Drafting Affirmative Legislation:

Introduce a statewide Voting Rights Act.

Pass comprehensive maternal health "Momnibus" bill.

Pass legislation that increases parole rates and holds the board to its own guidelines.

HOW WE ARE INVESTING

Investing is beyond funds, we commit to a mixture of time, resources and energy. We invest in the people, programs, and strategic tools that will realize our dream for a more equitable Alabama. Our investments are informed by our belief that no individual or organization, even our own, is more important than the collective community.

We operate from a community-centric development model that places value on every form of investment. Whether a volunteer is offering their time, a staff member is devoting their career, an expert is lending their knowledge, or a donor is committing to an investment, we recognize the inherent necessity and value of their contribution. Understanding the trust our partners have placed in us, we only invest in organizations and efforts that share our values and integrity.

Strategic Investments Include:

Direct support for grassroots organizations and initiatives. We believe in coalition building and that begins by investing in trusted community partners with the expertise and relationships to get things done.

Creating a network of movement lawyers, practitioners, and issue-area experts both within our organization and across the state. We are committed to providing professional development opportunities to our staff and programmatically to our communities.

Developing fellowship programs to build the next generation of community leaders with the skills to be effective advocates, mobilizers, and organizers.

Investing in data collection and analysis through polling, qualitative and quantitative information gathering, and reporting so that all of our work is targeted and goal-driven.

Investing in language translation and interpretation services to support and connect with Alabama's expanding Latinx community

Strategically investing in communication efforts to ensure our message reaches the public.



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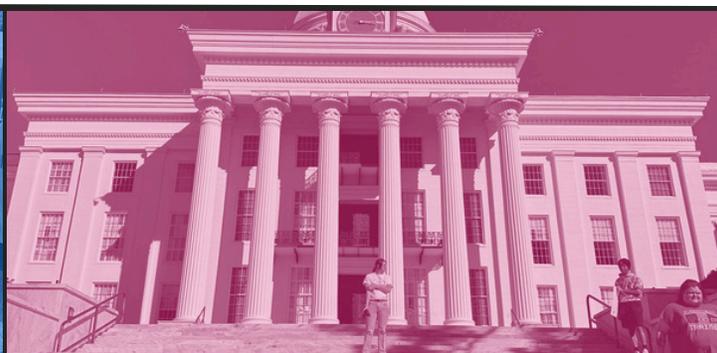
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