



BUILDING THE KANSAS FIREWALL FOR FREEDOM

THE ACLU OF KANSAS'S RESPONSE TO A SECOND TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

During the 2024 campaign, President Donald Trump repeatedly pledged to pursue an agenda of extreme attacks on our constitutional rights. President Trump repeatedly pledged to target democracy, immigrants, reproductive freedom, LGBTQ+ equality, and anyone he perceived as a political opponent. In Kansas, we know that President Trump will have enablers and allies at the state level, chief among them state Attorney General Kris Kobach. Given his pledges—and his 2017-2021 term in office, when the ACLU brought 250 lawsuits and 434 total legal actions against his administration's attacks on civil liberties—we take the president and his legislative allies at their word that they intend to pursue extremism, chaos, and persecution of vulnerable communities.

At the ACLU of Kansas, we refuse to concede to, collaborate with, or conspire in these attacks on any of the residents of Kansas. We will resist every effort by Donald Trump, Kris Kobach, and their extremist allies to strip away our rights. But at the ACLU of Kansas, our response to a second Trump Administration is *not just to defend, but actually expand* freedom and justice in this state. We've been planning for the possibility of a second Trump Administration and our response is informed by a century's worth of experience defending freedom in America.

We will build a “firewall for freedom” right here in the Free State, through three core strategies:

1. WE WILL WIN PROACTIVE VICTORIES FOR VOTING RIGHTS AND REFORM OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM IN KEY CITIES AND COUNTIES THAT ARE SUPPORTIVE OF CIVIL LIBERTIES.

We're committed to *expanding* voting rights and making our legal system *more just*, and we're focused on maximizing the progress that we can make in Kansas jurisdictions with strong civil liberties traditions. We're pursuing proactive, rights-expanding work in these places and on these issues because we believe in pursuing policy changes that make people's lives better. We're also doing it because we know that the best way to build momentum for our values, to encourage local officials to resist collaboration with unconstitutional edicts from Washington or Topeka, and to resist the Trump administration's vision of extremist chaos is to provide Kansans with a viable alternative. This is how we build a strong firewall for freedom.

2. WE WILL MOBILIZE THE MASS MOVEMENT OF KANSANS WHO OPPOSE EXTREMISM TO BLOCK STATE LEGISLATIVE ATTACKS ON OUR RIGHTS AND OUR DEMOCRACY.

We expect an all-out assault on voting rights, the independence of state courts, abortion access, LGBTQ+ equality, and immigration during the 2025 state legislative session. While civil rights retain many champions in Topeka, including Governor Laura Kelly, we will have to mobilize everyday people in unprecedented numbers to resist Trump-inspired attacks and prevent harmful laws being adopted. At the ACLU of Kansas, we have done just that for many years—often against staggering political odds—and we will do so again to prevent state-level actors from chipping away at Kansas's firewall for freedom.

3. WE WILL USE OUR PEERLESS LEGAL ADVOCACY PROGRAM TO RESIST TRUMP AND KOBACH'S UNCONSTITUTIONAL POLICIES IN KANSAS, IN STRATEGIC AND EFFECTIVE WAYS.

Working in concert with our nationwide colleagues in the ACLU, we will identify legal challenges in state and federal courts where Kansas is uniquely situated to delay and/or defeat President Trump's attempts to persecute immigrants, block abortion access, dehumanize LGBTQ+ people, or rupture the institutions of democracy. We will see the extremists in court and build a firewall for freedom by winning court rulings for our shared values.

By building a strong firewall for freedom in our state, we will both respond to this moment in our nation's history and create the conditions for a more free and just Kansas. We will work together to ensure that we can successfully defend freedom in Kansas—from Donald Trump, Kris Kobach, the state legislature, and anyone else who threatens it.