



Defending the Constitution

Civil Liberties Priorities in the 2016 Kansas Legislative Session

The ACLU of Kansas is a non-partisan organization dedicated to protecting and strengthening the civil liberties and civil rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. A non-profit membership organization with over 10,000 supporters in Kansas and 500,000 nationwide, we advance civil liberties and civil rights through litigation, lobbying, and education. We advocate for voting rights, criminal justice reform, free speech, privacy, reproductive freedom, LGBT equality, women's rights, racial justice, immigrants' rights, and religious freedom.

Voting Rights

The ACLU of Kansas supports adoption of a same-day voter registration law, which allows eligible citizens who meet statutory identification requirements to register to vote **and** cast a ballot on election day itself. Eleven other states now have same-day registration laws and have seen significant increases in voter turnout as a result.

Smart Justice Reform

The criminal justice system in Kansas is broken. Our system costs too much, incarcerates too many people for minor offenses even as crime falls to historic lows, and results in communities that are not as strong or safe as they could be. **We support bipartisan reforms that lead to cost savings, fewer incarcerated people, and safer communities.** Reforms include HB 2049, greater use of diversion by local prosecutors, defelonizing drug crimes (as 14 other states, including Utah and South Carolina, have done), requiring a conviction prior to seizing property through civil asset forfeiture, and accepting the recommendations made by the Juvenile Justice Workgroup.

Equal Protection Under the Law

The ACLU of Kansas vigorously opposes bills that deny Kansans their right to equal protection under the law or

that promote discrimination. **We oppose SB 175, which grants college student groups a new right to public funding, even if they discriminate.** We strongly oppose any bill that would allow the use of religion to discriminate against LGBT Kansans, or any other group, and result in the denial of public accommodations or public services.

Reproductive Freedom

The ACLU of Kansas opposes bills that infringe on a woman's constitutional right to make decisions about her own healthcare. **We oppose HB 2417, which bans a safe and often medically necessary abortion procedure.** We also oppose the governor's proposal to defund reproductive healthcare providers.

Immigrants' Rights

The ACLU of Kansas opposes bills that discriminate based on ethnicity, national origin, or alienage. **We strongly oppose HB 2139, which repeals in-state tuition for immigrant students.** We also oppose bills that infringe on local control and local law enforcement policies related to immigration, by banning "sanctuary cities" even though none exist in Kansas.