



505 5th Avenue, Suite 808
Des Moines, IA 50309-2317
515.243.3988
www.aclu-ia.org

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

Iowa

Contact:

Veronica Lorson Fowler, ACLU of Iowa Communications Director
veronica.fowler@aclu-ia.org

MEDIA STATEMENT: ACLU of Iowa Endorses Gov. Reynolds' call for an ex-felon voting constitutional amendment

Mark Stringer, ACLU of Iowa Executive Director:

"The ACLU of Iowa applauds Gov. Reynolds for proposing automatic restoration of voting rights for the more than 60,000 Iowans convicted of a felony. We have been working for years to end Iowa's destructive and draconian disenfranchisement laws. Denying Iowans the right to vote does nothing to keep our communities safer or make our democracy stronger. In fact, it does the opposite. It prevents thousands of Iowans from successfully reintegrating into society and becoming active, invested participants in our communities and our state.

And because of continuing racial disparities in Iowa's criminal justice system, Black people in Iowa have been disproportionately hurt by this wrong-headed law; 1 in 10 voting age African-American Iowans are being denied the right to vote because of a felony conviction."

We endorse a constitutional amendment to permanently right this wrong."

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The ACLU of Iowa is a private, non-partisan organization that fights to advance civil liberties for all. It is the state affiliate of the national American Civil Liberties Union. The ACLU prides itself in upholding everyone's civil liberties, no matter who they are or what they believe. We work to assure the rights of all Iowans – from atheists to devout Christians, from labor unions to businesspeople and more – to make sure the constitutional rights of all are preserved. For more information, please go to www.aclu-ia.org.