



# THE DEFENDER

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Newsletter of the American Civil Liberties Union of Iowa

## Iowa's Racial Disparities in Arrests Among Worst

**A Black person in Iowa is 7 times more likely to be arrested for illicit drug possession, although both Black and white people use at the same rate.**

Iowa has the second-worst rate of racial disparities in arrests for drug possessions in the country, according to a national ACLU/Human Rights Watch study released in October.

A Black person in Iowa is about 7 times more likely to be arrested for drug possession than a white person in the state, even though studies show that the two races use illicit drugs at roughly the same rates. Only Montana had a wider racial disparity.

Nationally, Black people are 2.5 times more likely than white people to be arrested for drug possession.

This most recent study expands on the findings of an earlier ACLU report

that examined only marijuana possession arrests, in which Iowa ranked the worst in the country in terms of racial disparities, with a Black person in Iowa being 8 times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession than a white person.

The report released today, *Every 25 Seconds: The Human Toll of Criminalizing Drug Use in the United States*, looked at illicit drugs in general, including cocaine, heroin,



Through a special arrangement from a film distributor, the ACLU was able to offer a free screening of the Oliver Stone movie about ACLU client Edward Snowden, "Snowden," at the Fleur in Des Moines in September. We had a tremendous response and filled the house, even after moving it to a larger theater after a strong initial response.

methamphetamines and prescription drugs used for non-medical purposes.

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## Lawsuit Filed for Better Juvenile Parole Practices

**The ACLU of Iowa has filed a lawsuit seeking to make the parole process more fair for Iowans who were, as juveniles, sentenced to life.**



Christine Lockheart

In its lawsuit, the ACLU of Iowa is arguing that the Iowa Board of Parole is denying the constitutional rights of two inmates—Christine Lockheart and Julio Bonilla—who were both children at the time of their offenses.

Christine's case is especially compelling. She was just 17 when her 24-year-old boyfriend fatally stabbed a man in the man's Davenport home. Christine didn't participate in the stabbing and stayed in the car.

She was convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison. Now 46, she is eligible for parole.

The ACLU of Iowa maintains that people such as Lockheart and Bonilla should have a more meaningful opportunity to demonstrate their rehabilitation since they were convicted so young. Courts are now recognizing new research that demonstrates that young brains are still developing well into the early 20s, which makes youth more prone to impulsive, risky behavior but also means they have considerable capacity for change.

The filing of the lawsuit is made possible by a recent Iowa Supreme Court decision, *State v. Sweet*, that ruled that sentencing juveniles to life in prison without the possibility of parole is unconstitutional in all cases because it amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. (Both Lockheart and Bonilla had previously been sentenced to life without parole.)

The ACLU is seeking to require the Board to institute changes that would provide certain minimum procedural protections in the parole review process for all inmates convicted as children, specifically:

- Appointment of a lawyer to assist the inmate through the parole process and to competently marshal evidence of the inmate's rehabilitation and development throughout incarceration
- An independent psychological evaluation to better assist the Board of Parole in evaluating whether an inmate is rehabilitated
- An in-person parole hearing, rather than a mere paper-only review
- Ability to present evidence of rehabilitation
- Access to all information that the Board will use in making its decision and the opportunity to challenge the reliability or appropriateness of that information

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## Iowa Arrest Disparities Among the Worst

*Continued from page 1*

The report, based on FBI and other government data, documents the devastating harms of criminalizing personal drug possession in the U.S.

### Also Ranks Poorly on Voting Rights

Iowa also stood out in the report because of the impact that felony-level drug possession can have on a person's voting rights. Iowa is one of only three states that automatically and permanently takes away a person's right to vote after a felony conviction. The only way to get that right back is through an arduous process overseen by the Iowa governor's office.

"This report underscores the need for Iowa policymakers to act with urgency to address the crisis in racial disparities that exists in our criminal justice system and which creates political outcasts of our citizens, especially Black people, through lifetime felony

disenfranchisement from voting rights," said Rita Bettis, ACLU legal director.

"We urge lawmakers to work to reform drug sentences, act to decriminalize possession for personal use, and end felony disenfranchisement in our state," she added.

### Devastating Consequences

Drug charges, of course, can have other consequences, including separating families; excluding people from job opportunities, welfare assistance, public housing, and voting; and exposing them to discrimination and stigma for a lifetime. While more people are arrested for simple drug possession in the U.S. than for any other crime, mainstream discussions of criminal justice reform rarely question whether drug use should be criminalized at all.

To view the full ACLU report on drug arrests, go to [www.aclu-ia.org](http://www.aclu-ia.org) ■

## Better Parole Board Procedures for Juveniles

*Continued from page 1*

• The ability to exclude any information that would support the inmate's continuing incarceration if that information is not verifiable and was not subject to a fact-finding procedure at the time it was obtained

• Appropriate consideration of mitigating factors

• Access to treatment and programming during the inmate's incarceration so that the inmate may work toward rehabilitation

• In the event of a denial, a procedure to ensure a timely, meaningful review in the future.

To be clear: the ACLU's efforts do not advance the right of any particular inmate to actually be paroled; rather, they seek changes in the Board of Parole process used to evaluate inmates who were convicted as children.

### Sentenced to Life at 16

Julio Bonilla was convicted of kidnapping in 2005 for a crime occurring in 2002, when he was only 16. Now 30, Julio has had difficulty getting access to rehabilitative programs necessary for his eventual release. The Board has yet to even interview Julio and provide him with an opportunity to present evidence in support of his release.

Joseph Fraioli, ACLU staff attorney, said, "No child is irredeemable. Case law now recognizes that it violates the constitution and human rights to sentence children to die in prison. Studies show that brains continue to

develop well into early adulthood. Specifically, they show that childhood behavior is not a meaningful indicator of irredeemable culpability or an accurate predictor of a child's long-term ability to be rehabilitated. That's why parole procedures that deny a juvenile offender a meaningful possibility of parole are such a tragedy."

### No Legislative Action

Unfortunately, the Iowa Legislature has yet to enact parole reform for juveniles. The ACLU of Iowa and social justice organizations have been working for several years to get legislators to revise Iowa's harsh and outdated laws. While the Iowa Supreme Court in *Sweet* struck down the option for judges to sentence a juvenile to life without even the possibility of parole, it did not rule on the other unconstitutional aspects of Iowa's juvenile sentencing law.

Specifically, the law fails to provide adequate procedures to ensure juveniles receive a meaningful opportunity for release. It also mandates that judges consider inappropriate factors when sentencing juveniles. This latest action by the ACLU of Iowa seeks to reform parole procedures directly.

Assisting in the challenge to the Board's juvenile parole procedures are Des Moines attorneys Angela Campbell, of the Dickey & Campbell Law Firm, and Gordon Allen. ■

# ACLU Defends Immigrants' Rights in Muscatine Case

**Martha Martinez is authorized to live and work in Iowa. But now, in a terrible bait and switch, she faces criminal charges related to her employment back when she was undocumented.**

When she was just 11, Martha was brought to Iowa from Mexico without authorization by her parents. She grew up in Muscatine County, where she attended school, graduated high school, got a job, and started a family. She is now mother to four children, all American citizens.

In 2013, she was able to receive Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which gave her authorization to live, work, and study in the U.S. DACA required Martha to pass a rigorous background check, fill out a lengthy application, and pay a large application fee.

The purpose of the federal DACA program was to help these extraordinary childhood immigrants to “come out of the shadows.” But when Martha did so, and went to obtain a driver’s license under her real name and newly issued Social Security number, the Iowa Department of Transportation found a driver’s license from when she was in high school and just 17, which she allegedly obtained using the fictitious name.

The Muscatine county prosecutor’s office went into action. With the statute of limitations for the violation (committed when she was 17)

long past, they instead used Martha’s continuing employment as the basis of criminal charges. They argued that the wages she earned in her job were an amount that she “stole” by working with invalid identification—making the offense a felony rather than a misdemeanor. This despite the fact that federal immigration law makes clear that state and local officials, such as the Muscatine county attorney, may not regulate, either civilly or criminally, the employment of non-citizens in that manner.

“At its heart, this case is about human rights in Iowa, and specifically, whether local authorities can create a DACA-free zone through improper prosecution of a noncitizen for employment,” said ACLU of Iowa Legal Director Rita Bettis. “The courts have long recognized that because foreign policy and international humanitarian interests are at play, Congress must speak with one voice, not with 50 separate state voices, and certainly not with more than 3,000 separate county voices.”



ACLU of Iowa Legal Director Rita Bettis is interviewed by the media on the steps of the Iowa Supreme Court building after oral arguments in the *Martinez* immigrants’ rights case.

The ACLU of Iowa is proud to have filed an amicus brief in this important case, *State v. Martinez*. It is also proud that this case is one of only a few times that an amicus curiae has been allowed to present oral arguments to the Court.

Iowa immigration attorney Jack Hathaway from the Omaha law firm Kasaby and Nicholls presented oral argument for the ACLU of Iowa on its amicus brief, coauthored by University of Iowa College of Law Legal Clinic Professor, Bram Elias, and ACLU of Iowa Legal Director, Rita Bettis. Attorney Philip Mears represents Martha Martinez. ■



## BILL OF RIGHTS BRUNCH CELEBRATES ACHIEVEMENTS, HONORS CIVIL LIBERTARIANS



### More than 130 supporters gathered to join forces and show support at the Des Moines Botanical Garden for the ACLU of Iowa’s annual event.

Once a year, supporters of the ACLU of Iowa gather to reflect on the year past and gear up for the year to come. It’s also a time to honor those Iowans who have contributed mightily to protecting our most basic freedoms.

This year, on November 12 we held a Bill of Rights Brunch, complete with mimosas and a bloody Mary bar.

Benjamin Christason of Cedar Falls was honored as the recipient of the Robert Mannheimer Youth Advocacy Award. Ben was the first openly transgender student at Cedar Falls High School and also the first to participate in men’s interscholastic sports, running track.

We also honored long-time civil libertarian Dan Johnston, who passed away

in October, with a memorial cooperating attorney award in his name (see page 6 for more details).

See pages 5 and 6 for more information on other award winners, Polk County Attorney Jamie Fitzgerald and the League of Women Voters of Iowa.

The brunch would not have been possible if not for the generosity of Protector Level Sponsors Mark and Janet Rosenbury; Defender Level Sponsors Jean Basinger and League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) of Iowa; Advocate Level Sponsors Stephanie Enloe, The Eychaner Foundation, First Friday Breakfast Club in memory of David Vittitito, J.P. Greer, and Dian Henslick Schueller.



# Protecting the Vote in Iowa

## We've been working on all fronts to empower voters in Iowa

Last summer, the ACLU of Iowa launched an Election 2016 initiative to educate voters on their voting rights and civil liberties issues through the November elections.

A highlight was a public candidate forum held in Des Moines in October, which brought in candidates from three legislative races to discuss their positions on civil liberties issues.

The ACLU of Iowa also developed considerable printed, electronic, and social media information on a wide variety of voting issues including voting with a criminal conviction in your background, voting with disabilities, voting information for college students, basic registration information, early and absentee voting, voting overseas, and basic information on voting.

Advocacy Coordinator Cristina Kinsella attended candidate forums around the state to pose civil liberties questions and worked with supporters to do the same.

The ACLU of Iowa stands out as one of the few resources in the state for voters who need to know more about their right to vote after a criminal conviction. County auditors have been excellent about sharing ACLU voting rights information, both on their web sites and in their offices. In fact, one county auditor told the ACLU that she keeps a laminated copy of our Know Your Voting Rights After a Criminal Conviction in her office as a reference.

"Voting is a cornerstone of our democracy," said Rita Bettis, ACLU of Iowa Legal Director and Interim Program Director. "Protecting it is one of the most important things we do."



In October, the ACLU of Iowa hosted a forum for Des Moines-area legislative candidates, who outlined their positions on civil liberties issues and took questions from the audience. They are, from left to right, Nate Boulton (D-Senate District 16); Randy Evans, head of the Freedom of Information Council of Iowa and moderator; Brad Zaun (R-Senate District 20); Miyoko Hikiji (D-Senate District 20); and Maridith Morris (D-House District 39).

## Coalition Formed to Work to End Felony Disenfranchisement in Iowa

The ACLU of Iowa has organized 22 groups into a growing coalition to work for legislation and a constitutional amendment.

Iowa has the harshest voting laws in the country, automatically stripping voting rights of any Iowan convicted of a felony. But now a coalition is forming to change that through 1) passage of a bill and 2) an amendment to the Iowa Constitution.

It's an effort that will take years, but the coalition is up for the task. These groups will be working with legislators to pass a bill that states that all nonviolent crimes do not disqualify Iowa citizens from voting. The bill would specify that Iowans would get their right to vote back after they complete their jail or prison sentences, including any probation or parole. The law must also make clear that the right to vote is not contingent on the

payment of outstanding court costs, fines, and fees, which many are unable to pay.

The coalition will also work for a state constitutional amendment to assure voting rights for those with felony convictions. It would require two successive Iowa General Assemblies to vote by simple majority to put a proposed amendment on the statewide ballot.

The growing coalition includes:

- The Iowa-Nebraska NAACP
- League of Women Voters of Iowa
- League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) of Iowa
- Iowa CURE

**More than 50,000 Iowans with felony convictions remain unable to vote even though they have completed their sentences.**

- Iowa Coalition 4 Juvenile Justice
- St. Paul AME Church, Des Moines
- Women at the Well
- Trinity United Methodist Church
- American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
- Immigrants Voice Program
- Iowa CCI Action Fund
- Iowa Justice Action Network
- Las Americas Comunidad de Fe
- Iowa Unitarian Universalist Witness/Advocacy Network
- Iowa Conference United Methodist Church
- Legislative Advocacy Team
- Methodist Federation for Social Action Iowa
- Iowa Catholic Conference
- Quad Cities Interfaith
- Inside Out Reentry Program
- Brennan Center for Justice at the New York University School of Law
- Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence

## Polk County Auditor, League of Women Voters Given ACLU Awards

**Jamie Fitzgerald and the League of Women Voters of Iowa have been staunch defenders of the right to vote.**



**Jamie Fitzgerald**

Polk County Auditor Jamie Fitzgerald has been given the Louise Noun Award for his courageous and principled stand in speaking out for the voting rights of those with felony convictions.

He filed an amicus brief in front of the Iowa Supreme Court in the recent *Griffin v. Pate* case

that the ACLU argued before the Iowa Supreme Court last summer to restore voting rights after a felony conviction.

As part of that lawsuit, two county associations were objecting to automatically restoring voting rights for this group, essentially saying that it create an administrative hassle.

### Voting Rights Are Not a Hassle

But Fitzgerald filed an amicus brief as the auditor of Iowa's largest county, saying it would not be unduly difficult.

As Fitzgerald stated in his amicus brief, "Ease of election administration is not the most important concern of a county auditor.... The most important concern of the auditor

as commissioner of elections is ensuring that qualified Iowa voters can access the ballot."

### The League of Women Voters Honored

The League has been named as the recipient of the Edward S. Allen Award. From ex-felon and racial disenfranchisement to fending off voter ID to clarifying Iowa's voter registration form to better accommodating voters with disabilities, the League is always a stalwart and effective ally, always there to file an amicus brief, sign onto a coalition, provide testimonial to government committees, write guest columns, distribute educational materials, and more. This highly organized group also excels at mobilizing their many members across the state. ■

## Selfies at the Polls are Protected Free Speech

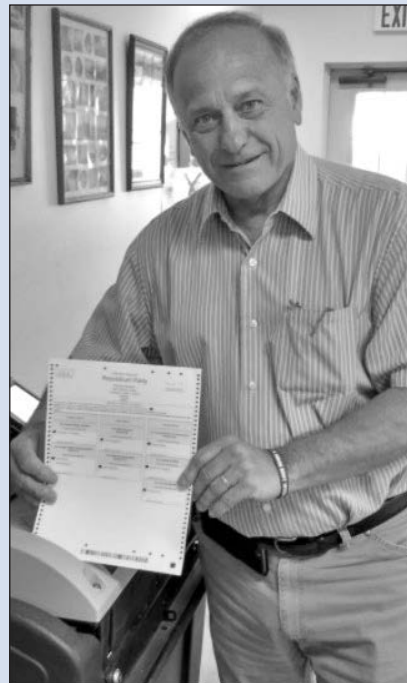
In October, Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate issued a public instruction telling voters not to take selfies of themselves voting at poll booths (though it specified, bewilderingly, that it was okay to post images of you were casting a vote with an absentee ballot). And Linn County Auditor Joel Miller ordered police to arrest a voter for election misconduct in the second degree after the voter, a former political rival, took a ballot selfie.

But such restrictions violate the First Amendment by targeting core political speech. Sharing voting selfies is clearly protected free speech and promotes democracy.

Pate's instruction is especially harmful because posting selfies is a terrific way for young people to promote voting. In fact, even Iowa Congressman Steve King recently posted a photo of his voting. Good for him!

The ACLU of Iowa countered Pate's instruction with a statement of its own, criticizing the Iowa ballot selfie ban as a violation of voters' First Amendment rights. We broadcast the information to mainstream media and also throughout social media networks.

Were you deterred from taking or posting a ballot selfie this year because of legal concerns but would have done so otherwise? We'd love to hear from you. Please email us at [info@aclu-ia.org](mailto:info@aclu-ia.org) or call Rita Bettis at 515-243-3988. ■



**Steve King** @SteveKingIA · Jun 7  
June 7th(TODAY)=primary Election Day-Iowa. Here's the first vote for the Constitutional Conservative in the race.  
[pic.twitter.com/1zOPMuLk1x](https://pic.twitter.com/1zOPMuLk1x)

**Iowa Congressman Steve King tweeted this photo of himself voting, apparently and correctly believing it to be his First Amendment right.**

**Selfie photos while voting were very much in the news right before the election, as celebrities and others took and posted them to encourage others to get out and vote.**

## A Changed Political Landscape in Iowa

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Legislation and litigation is not all we do. The ACLU is especially effective in using an integrated advocacy model that also uses public education, media, and advocacy to build societal and activist support for our positions, and to help people know and assert their rights.

We have been hearing from a lot of people who are scared right now: immigrants, Muslims, Black people, women, LGBT people, and protestors. We are with you!

We'll also stand strong with many allied groups around the state. Individually, we are strong and effective. Together, we're even more so.

Now is the time that we are called upon to work harder and smarter than we ever have. We've been working for change and holding government accountable in Iowa since 1935. We are stronger than ever and are not stopping now. We'll be here every single day.

There has been an outpouring of support for our efforts since the election, and we take that responsibility that seriously.

Join us and let's get to work together. Onward!

**Rita Bettis**

*ACLU of Iowa Interim Program Director*

# Dan Johnston Honored with New Memorial Volunteer Attorney Award

**Dan passed away in October, but his name lives on in a body of work and a new memorial award.**

Dan's legal career started with an ACLU of Iowa lawsuit that became a landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision—*Tinker v. Des Moines Schools*, the Vietnam war student protest black armband case. But *Tinker* was just the opening chapter in a remarkable legal career that spanned decades.

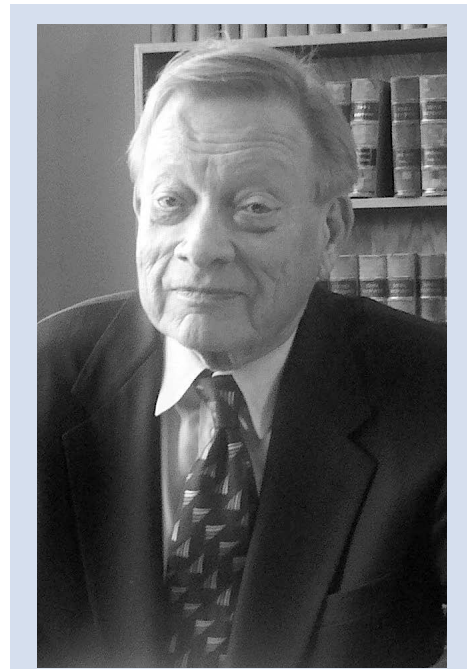
In almost everything Dan did, from his work as an Iowa legislator to serving as General Counsel for the Criminal Justice Subcommittee of the U.S. House Judiciary Committee, to serving as Polk County attorney, Dan worked to defend those who were least able to defend themselves.

And now, at the end of his life, we are proud to create a new award especially in

his honor: The Dan Johnston Cooperating Attorney Award.

The ACLU of Iowa relies on volunteer, cooperating attorneys who give of their time to fight injustices in our state. They are motivated more by personal principle, fidelity to the Constitution, and equal rights than they are financial gain. It is appropriate that the first recipient of the honor is Joseph Glazebrook, a young and highly skilled Des Moines lawyer who was also Dan's longtime friend and colleague in the legal firm of Glazebrook, Moe, and Hurd. Joe has served as a cooperating attorney for the ACLU of Iowa and already has done much to advance civil liberties in Iowa.

In 2014, the ACLU of Iowa gave Dan the Louise Noun Award, named after his friend and fellow Des Moines civil liberties lion. It is our equivalent of a lifetime achievement award. ■



Dan Johnston was just 30 years old when he helped change the free speech rights of students during the Vietnam War.



## ELECTIONS GO ELECTRONIC

### ACLU of Iowa Board Elections Go Electronic in 2017

In early 2017, we will be filling our Board of Directors' at-large seats through electronic balloting.

The decision to move our board election online was made to save time and money in the board election process. That savings can then be used to fund the work of the ACLU of Iowa, which, we know, is the reason you choose to support our organization.

If you are an ACLU member, please watch for a postcard in the mail in late January. The postcard will include a unique voting ID number as well as instructions about when and how to vote. For those members for whom we have email addresses, we'll also be sending a reminder email.

If you have questions about your membership status or other questions about the election process, contact us by sending an email to [ellen.simmons@aclu-ia.org](mailto:ellen.simmons@aclu-ia.org).

# LGBTQ Pioneer Larry Hoch Passes Away

**We lost another civil liberties leader in October with the death of Larry Hoch, husband of David Twombly.**

The two were among the six same-sex couples who were plaintiffs in the landmark *Varnum v. Brien* lawsuit that went before the Iowa Supreme Court.

The ACLU of Iowa is proud to have filed an amicus brief in that case. The resulting

decision in 2009 made Iowa the third state in the country to permit same-sex marriage.

In 2010, the ACLU of Iowa gave the *Varnum* plaintiffs, Larry Hoch included, the Louise Noun award to recognize their bravery and persistence in bringing the lawsuit, which changed the lives of so many people for the better. As David Twombly said about their experience, "I never expected to become the Rosa Parks of gay marriage!" ■



Larry Hoch, left, and David Twombly were able to marry in 2010 after winning the landmark Iowa Supreme Court case, *Varnum v. Brien*,

# Communications Intern and Legal Volunteer Giving Time, Talents

Mackenzie Allison and Jana Fridfinnsdottir both are driven by an interest in civil liberties law and human rights in an effort to make the world a more fair place.

Mackenzie, a native of Duluth, Minnesota, is the fall communications intern. She is a senior in public relations, and law, politics, and society at Drake University.



Mackenzie Allison

“Through my classes, I’ve become interested in how society shapes laws and how those laws may not always be fair to everyone. I am thinking about law school and wanted to have experience in the civil liberties non-profit discipline to help me determine if law school is a viable option for my post-graduate studies. Ideally I would like to graduate with a law degree and put it towards helping civil liberties organizations like the ACLU.”

Jana comes to us from Reykjavik, Iceland, where she studied and practiced law before moving to the U.S. in 2009. She received her J.D. from Penn State Dickinson Law and was a practicing attorney in Pennsylvania. She moved to Iowa this year.



Jana Fridfinnsdottir

She is serving as a volunteer attorney. “I saw the ACLU as an opportunity to use my education and time to volunteer for a well respected non-profit organization that advocates for human rights. I’m specifically interested in women’s rights as well as discrimination and equality matters.” ■



## Defending Improper Flag Flying

In August, a northwest Iowa man, Homer Martz of Calhoun County, was charged under Iowa’s outdated flag desecration laws. He was protesting a pipeline being run through his land, so he flew an American flag upside down under a Chinese flag “because they don’t have rights in China either.” The local sheriff saw a photo of the flag and charged Martz.

The ACLU of Iowa provided a strong statement of rebuke for local and state media. We also found volunteer attorneys to represent Martz and the charges were quickly dropped.

Federal courts have repeatedly held that flag desecration laws are unconstitutional. But the Iowa Legislature has yet to remove its outdated flag desecration laws from the Iowa Code.



### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

After the elections, we’ve had a number of people contact us about what they can do to help the ACLU of Iowa.

- **Donate.** Give to the ACLU Foundation of Iowa (see below) or give online.
- **If you are not a member, join!** We need you to stand strong with us.
- **Sign up for email action alerts.**

They’ll let you know when you need to act quickly to contact a lawmaker.

- **Follow the ACLU of Iowa on Facebook and Twitter.** Then repost and reTweet frequently!
- **Write a letter to the editor or a guest column.** Email us at [editor@aclu-ia.org](mailto:editor@aclu-ia.org) for ideas and guidelines!

### I/We would like to make my year-end tax-deductible gift!

\$250  \$150  \$100  \$\_\_\_\_\_

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I/We will check with my/our employer(s) and submit the proper matching gift paperwork to the ACLU of Iowa office.

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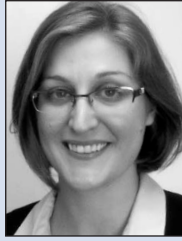
I/We wish to remain anonymous.

**Make your gift online.** Visit [www.aclu-ia.org/donate](http://www.aclu-ia.org/donate).

Contributions to the ACLU Foundation of Iowa, a 501(c)(3) organization, are tax-deductible to the extent of the current tax code.

# The New Realities of a Changed Political Landscape

**A Trump presidency has dominated the conversation, but changes at the Iowa Statehouse pose major challenges as well.**



**Rita Bettis**  
ACLU of Iowa Interim  
Program Director

Trump's electoral upset last month has mobilized the ACLU. Nationally and at the state level, we will be doing everything in our power to block him on key campaign promises. These include massive deportations, targeting people simply because of their religion, restricting a woman's right to abortion services, reauthorizing torture, and changing libel laws and restricting freedom of expression.

The ACLU nationally is focusing its considerable resources and energy on Washington. Here in Iowa, too, we are geared up for the challenge that will come

with a unified government in the legislative and executive branches.

Bills that threaten our equality, fundamental rights and freedoms have already been proposed by incoming legislators. For example, we are concerned about efforts to institute voter ID and to limit women's access to abortion services. In the months and years ahead, we will be facing down attempts to cut back on core rights and freedoms. We know we have our work cut out for us.

## Non-Partisan for a Reason

The ACLU is not aligned with the Democrats, or the Republicans, or the Libertarians, or the Green Party, or any other party. The ACLU makes progress based on the strengths of its convictions and the force of its arguments.

That said, we're also realistic. With legislative plans starting to take shape among incoming legislators, we know that we'll be on the defensive in key areas core to our mission.

Simply put, in many cases, litigation rather than legislation will be our best option. We are

ready for that, and if need be, we'll see them in court.

But there remain important opportunities for progress at the statehouse. Well before the election, the ACLU of Iowa was careful to plan a proactive legislative agenda with potential for success, no matter what the elections' outcome.

We will be looking to take advantage of every opportunity available to advance a proactive legislative agenda that garners support on both sides of the political aisle.

## Legislative Possibilities

That includes legislation to protect pregnant women from employment discrimination as well as reforming civil asset forfeiture, which is nothing more than a system of legal thievery.

Also, because three-fourths of Democrats and Republicans believe that voting rights should be restored following a criminal sentence, we will continue to push hard with our allies to end felony disenfranchisement in Iowa for good.

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since 1935*

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