

ACLU of Idaho History

Pre-Affiliate Idaho Chapter History

1989 – Citizens intent on preserving peoples’ had been active in Idaho for many years, leading to the establishment of the Idaho Chapter of the ACLU supported by the Mountain States Office.

1990 – Intense activity of out-of-state groups resulted in the introduction of more than a dozen anti-abortion bills in the state legislature – four of them aimed to prohibit abortion without exception. The chapter, along with National ACLU and pro-choice advocates defeated all the bills except one, which was vetoed by Governor Cecil Andrus.

1991 – ACLU National President, Nadine Strossen, attended the Idaho Bill of Rights celebration.

ACLU of Idaho Affiliate History

1993 – ACLU of Idaho receives its official affiliate and funding status from the national office.

1994 – ACLU and Planned Parenthood lawsuit expands the availability of abortions to Medicaid eligible women.

1994 – Proposition 1, a ballot initiative grounded in discrimination that would prevent protections for Idaho’s LGBT community was defeated at the polls.

1997 – The Secretary of State attempted to add political messages to ballots. ACLU sued and the Idaho Supreme Court agreed that the law invaded the sanctity of the ballot box by forcing government sponsored speech.

1999 – ACLU and Planned Parenthood lawsuit immediately defeats Idaho law passed that banned “partial birth abortions”

2002 – Following September 11th, the ACLU produced a brochure to help those at risk of becoming innocent targets of the government investigations. The brochure was published in 8 languages and was our most popular brochure to date.

2004 – ACLU opposed bill that would require a ten commandments monument erected in the Capitol rotunda and the proposal was rejected.

2005 – The ACLU and Planned Parenthood joined forces once again fighting back Idaho’s third attempt to enforce an extreme and dangerous abortion law requiring parental consent for teens under 18.

2010 – With our national office, a class action federal lawsuit was filed against Idaho Correctional Center (ICC) and for-profit company Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) charging that officials promote and facilitate a culture of rampant violence. Their failure to protect prisoners and discipline guards led to gross abuse, carnage and suffering.

2011 – A massive advocacy and organizing campaign to pass nondiscrimination ordinances across Idaho was launched. 13 ordinances have since been passed in cities across Idaho.

2012 – Class action lawsuit filed against the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare on behalf of adults with developmental disabilities requesting the department disclose the “trade secret” formula they were using to severely cut funding for services.

2014 – Idaho's constitutional ban on same-sex marriage was declared illegal and in violation of equal protection and finally same sex couples could wed in Idaho.

2015 – Class action lawsuit filed against the State of Idaho for the broken public defense system. The current system deprives thousands of Idahoans their Sixth Amendment right to adequate legal representation and withholds resources needed by public defenders to effectively represent their clients.

2017 – With help from the ACLU, over 600 community members showed up in unity to protest an ICE contract with the Jerome County Jail that would create fear and the deportation of productive, noncriminal immigrants. The contract was dropped.

2019 – Adree Edmo is a transgender woman who is a prisoner in the Idaho Department of Correction. Experts determined it was medically necessary for her to receive gender confirmation surgery. IDOC refused to provide her with this medically necessary surgery. The ACLU of Idaho joined ACLU's National Prison Project and LGBT Project, along with law firm Walden Macht & Haran LLP, in filing a brief of amici curiae in support of Ms. Edmo's lawsuit.

2020 – Governor Brad Little signed HB 500 into law on March 30th, 2020, making Idaho the first state in the nation to impose an outright ban on participation of transgender athletes and the only with a statewide law regulating transgender and intersexed athletes. ACLU National LGBT & HIV Project, ACLU of Idaho, Legal Voice and Cooley, LLP filed on behalf of Lindsay Hecox on April 15th, 2020.

2021 – The Butterfly Migration Project sparked in 2020 after the attacks on DACA, calling to end the program. The community needed a way to be united while being mindful that we were in a pandemic. We asked Idahoans to create paper butterflies and write words of support for fellow Dreamers. Within a month of organizing, we had over 10,000 submissions from across the country. We even received butterflies from Canada, Mexico, and Germany. The 10,000 butterflies were delivered to Congress in Washington D.C.

2023 – The American Civil Liberties Union; the ACLU of Idaho; Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP; and, Groombridge, Wu, Baughman & Stone LLP, represented two Idaho families in asserting in a lawsuit that HB 71, signed into law by Governor Brad Little earlier this year, violates the rights of transgender youth and their parents under the U.S. Constitution.