



ADVANCING EQUALITY: ONE WOMAN'S STORY

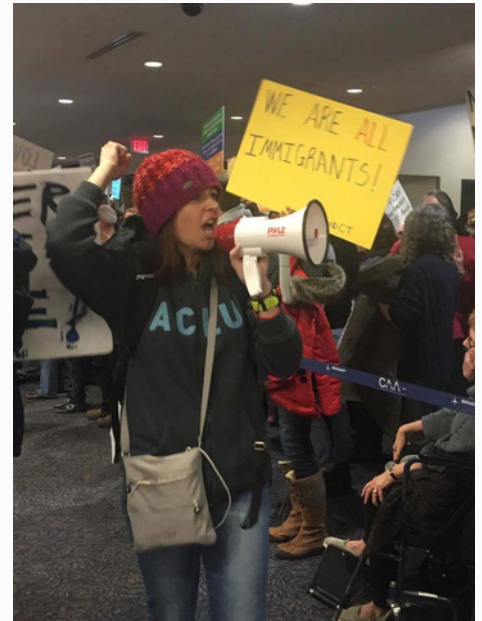
When Cromwell police officer Sarah Alicea found out she was pregnant, she and her husband were thrilled. Their joy, however, soon gave way to worry and frustration. When Sarah told her employer, the Town of Cromwell, about her pregnancy, the Town denied her the chance to keep working and forced her to immediately take unpaid leave.

Previously a police officer in New London, Sarah has worked for four years in the Cromwell department as a patrol officer and during the academic year serves as a school resource officer. Her husband is a combat-wounded veteran, and she is her family's primary breadwinner. When she notified the Cromwell police chief and town manager of her pregnancy and the physical restrictions imposed by her doctor, the Town refused to discuss a temporary alternative job assignment, and instead forced her to take immediate leave without pay. In contrast, the Town assures that officers injured on the job who are not able to perform their usual duties still receive their full salaries.

Forcing a pregnant worker to take immediate unpaid leave is not just

unfair—it is also illegal discrimination. Federal law requires covered employers, including public employers such as police departments, to treat pregnant workers the same way they treat other workers who are "similar in their ability or inability to work," while Connecticut law goes even further, requiring employers to "make a reasonable effort to transfer a pregnant employee to any suitable temporary position which may be available." Sarah proposed numerous law enforcement duties she could have performed safely while pregnant, but the Town rejected those alternatives.

In August, the ACLU-CT and the national ACLU together filed a pregnancy discrimination charge against the town of Cromwell on Sarah's behalf. This case, in addition to seeking justice for Sarah Alicea, is fundamentally about a woman's right to equally participate in society. A woman's employer should never discriminate against her for choosing to grow or start a family. If having a baby means losing a paycheck, the field will never be even for women in the workforce. We are honored to represent Sarah in her quest for justice.



January: The ACLU-CT and nearly 1,000 protesters gathered at Bradley Airport to speak out against the Trump Administration's discriminatory Muslim ban. Two months later, after the Trump Administration announced a second version of the ban, ACLU-CT volunteer Parnian Emami, an Iranian immigrant, shared her story and fears about the ban's potential harms on her family in an opinion piece for the Hartford Courant.

ACLU-CT ADVOCATES PUSH FOR PROGRESS AND DEFEND CIVIL LIBERTIES



If Connecticut values a democracy in which everyone is treated equally, we need strong police accountability laws. After an ACLU-CT investigation found police departments were not following state rules for accepting misconduct complaints, our supporters took action: more than 100 gathered in Hartford to become police accountability advocates, more than 50 submitted testimony to support a bill to fix the police complaint process, and our action network sent more than 3,400 emails for police reform bills. With voices calling for change, we will keep striving for police accountability.



Solitary confinement is ineffective, expensive, and cruel. This year, solitary confinement survivors, family members, faith leaders, the ACLU-CT, and more called on the legislature to stop solitary in our state. Together, we brought a replica prison cell to the capitol building to educate legislators, and solitary survivors bravely spoke at hearings. Although the legislature only passed a portion of what we called for, our work isn't done: we'll keep fighting to stop solitary in Connecticut.



Hundreds of people have stepped up to become new volunteers with the ACLU-CT. After participating in a special training about free speech, protesters' rights, and documenting police practices, some of them became ACLU-CT legal observers. These volunteers protected the First Amendment at protests throughout the state, defending the rights of everyone from workers calling for a \$15 minimum wage, to Bridgeport residents demanding police accountability, to people supporting immigrants' rights.

GUARDING LIBERTY

When police violated two people's rights to protest and freedom from unreasonable searches, we sued.

After a music minister and a protester were illegally searched by police, they both called the ACLU-CT. In 2015, Woody Vereen, a music minister, was driving his young sons to get ice cream after a Little League game when he was pulled over by Bridgeport police. Although he had done nothing wrong and did not consent to a search, police removed him from his car, frisked, and detained him, all in full view of his frightened sons and without his consent. We sued on his behalf, and in July, we reached a settlement with the City of Bridgeport.

"This agreement sent a message that the Fourth Amendment still matters in Connecticut," said Dan Barrett, legal director of the ACLU-CT and the attorney representing Vereen in his case.

"One of the reasons I filed this lawsuit was to show people who feel they don't have a voice, or the means to get help, that it's possible to get justice," Vereen said after the settlement. "No matter who we are, we all have rights, and I am grateful to the ACLU of Connecticut for opening up the avenues of justice for me and my family."

Several months after Bridgeport police trampled on Woodrow Vereen's freedom from unreasonable searches, three Connecticut state police troopers violated Michael Picard's rights to property, protest, and record information--and accidentally filmed themselves in the process.

In September of 2015, Picard was protesting near a police DUI checkpoint in West Hartford. A state police trooper approached him under the pretext of public complaints. The trooper confiscated Picard's legally-carried pistol and pistol permit, wrongfully claimed that filming the police is illegal, and took Picard's camera.

Unbeknownst to the trooper or his two colleagues, the camera was recording when he brought it back to his coworker's cruiser. With the camera rolling, three state police officers recorded themselves discussing a previous protest that Picard had organized at



April: With the ACLU-CT's help, transgender youth rallied to speak out for their rights at the state Supreme Court. One month later, after advocacy from a broad coalition that included the ACLU-CT, Connecticut enacted a new law to protect LGBT children from dangerous conversion "therapy."

the state capitol, and conspiring to fabricate charges against him.

After one trooper announced "we gotta cover our ass," another stated "let's give him something," and the three settled on fabricating two criminal infraction tickets that they issued to Picard. Those bogus criminal charges against Picard were dismissed in the Connecticut Superior Court.

We sued to stand up for Picard's First and Fourth Amendment rights, and his case is moving forward.

"Community members like me have a right to film government officials doing their jobs in public, and we should be able to protest without fearing political retribution from law enforcement," said Picard when his case was filed. "By seeking to hold these three police officers accountable, I hope that I can prevent the same thing from happening to someone else."

PROMOTING JUSTICE: NINE REFORMS
MOVE STATE IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Mass incarceration is a blight on our country and state. It is fraught with racial injustice, and it has failed to live up to our Constitution's promise of equal treatment under the law. With advocacy from the ACLU-CT and more, however, Connecticut is leading the nation on criminal justice reform. These efforts are working: the state's prison population is at its lowest in decades. This year, we pushed Connecticut to keep taking steps to end mass incarceration, honor human rights, and create second chances for people re-entering society after prison. Each step of the way, the ACLU-CT and our supporters were there: we told legislators to stop solitary confinement and place themselves in prisoners' shoes by stepping inside of a replica solitary confinement cell that we brought to the capitol, raised the alarm about civil asset forfeiture, testified about the need for second chances, and lobbied for an end to an unjust bail system.

Ultimately, the state adopted nine new reform laws, including those to prevent discrimination against formerly incarcerated people in their applications for licenses to become barbers and hairdressers, stop solitary confinement of youth under the age of 18, and end cash bail for most people accused of misdemeanor crimes.

These new laws move Connecticut closer to justice, but we still have work to do. Our state is second worst in the country when it comes to disproportionately placing Black men in solitary confinement. Too many barriers remain for people reentering society after prison. Next year, we will keep fighting to end mass incarceration, eliminate racial disparities in our justice system, and create a justice system that lives up to the promises of our Constitution.



More than 900 ACLU-CT activists told their state legislators to step inside the replica solitary confinement cell at the state capitol building.

STOPPING GOVERNMENT ABUSE: CONNECTICUT TAKES A STAND AGAINST CIVIL ASSET FORFEITURE

"Taking innocent people's assets is unacceptable, but it was happening in Connecticut. From 2009 to 2013, there were more than 3,700 civil asset forfeiture cases in our state."

Civil asset forfeiture allows the government to take and sell someone's property without ever charging them with a crime. It incentivizes policing for profit, disproportionately harms innocent people of color, and frequently violates the Constitution.

Taking innocent people's assets is unacceptable, but it was happening in Connecticut. From 2009 to 2013, there were more than 3,700 civil asset forfeiture cases in our state.

This year, we successfully advocated for legislation to fix civil asset forfeiture in our state. Under a proposal signed into law by Governor Malloy and passed on unanimous votes in the state House of Representatives and Senate, law enforcement will only be allowed to take and keep property that was related to a criminal conviction.

With these changes, Connecticut became the third New England state, and the fourteenth state in the country, to require criminal convictions in all or most property forfeiture cases under state law.

Citing the new law's strong support from liberal and conservative legislators alike, ACLU-CT executive director David McGuire called the new law "a welcome sign that people from all sides of the political spectrum will not tolerate policing for profit in our state."

Unfortunately, the federal government can also use civil asset forfeiture. In one high-profile case, the IRS seized tens of thousands of dollars from the owners of Vocatura's Bakery in

Norwich, but never charged them with a crime. U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions has signaled that he wants to ramp up federal asset forfeiture, and a loophole in Connecticut's laws could still allow the state to confiscate innocent people's property through the federal asset forfeiture program.

Next year, we will be fighting to close this gap and prevent state and local law enforcement from making an end-run around the Constitution's protections from unreasonable search and seizure.

NEW LAWS FOR PROGRESS
IN CONNECTICUT



H.B. 7302, SOLITARY CONFINEMENT REFORM



H.B. 7146, CIVIL ASSET FORFEITURE REFORM



H.B. 7044, BAIL REFORM



H.B. 7093, POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY



H.B. 6695, PROTECTING LGBT YOUTH FROM CONVERSION THERAPY



H.B. 7308, POLICE BODY CAMERAS



H.B. 5764, FAIR CHANCE LICENSURE FOR BARBERS & HAIRDRESSERS



H.B. 7291 & H.B. 7256, CELLPHONE PRIVACY



S.B. 981, PREVENTING STRATEGIC LITIGATION AGAINST PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SLAPP)

ACLU-CT:
DEFENDING THE
CONSTITUTION IN
THE CONSTITUTION
STATE SINCE 1948

Organization founded,
later receives official
national affiliation.

1948

Griswold v Connecticut
overturns the state's birth
control ban

Villafone v Manson strikes
down discriminatory jury
selection practices

1965

West v Manson orders the state
to improve conditions for
women prisoners

Doe v Maher ends ban on abortion
coverage for women enrolled in
state Medicaid program

1983

Sheff v O'Neill
requires Hartford to
desegregate its schools

1986

Court orders government to
lift Patriot Act gag order on
"Connecticut Four" librarians

1996

Kerrigan v Commissioner of Public
Health makes Connecticut the 3rd
state to legalize same-sex marriage

2005

Advocacy secures legislative repeal of
the death penalty & an update to the
racial profiling prohibition law

2008

Libertarian Party of CT v Merrill
defends political parties'
free speech rights

2012

2016



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PERMIT No. 3699

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SAY IT AGAIN



"Now more than ever, the protection of the organization that fights to protect the rights of people is needed."

- *The New Haven Register* editorial board writing about the ACLU of Connecticut's 2017 legislative agenda

"We've been impressed with the ACLU's success in fighting for those who need a voice to speak up for them."

- Scott Kluger, president of Hartford Baking Company, following their "Carbs for a Cause" benefit supporting the ACLU of Connecticut

"Organizations like the American Civil Liberties Union and the Council on American-Islamic Relations have reminded me that there are advocates who have my back."

- Parnian Emami, an Iranian immigrant, in an op-ed in *The Hartford Courant*

"Even though I don't have a billion dollars to donate to a political cause, I wanted to do my part to help support people who are willing to do that fighting for me."

- Sam G. of New Haven to *The Hartford Courant* on why he supports the ACLU of Connecticut

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