

2023

Legislative Recap

ACLU
Colorado

Last Fall, we set **three goals** for our reimagined legislative program:

(1) fight for transformational policy in our three issue areas; **(2) deepen relationships** with policymakers and partners across the political spectrum; and **(3) increase the diversity** of activists and ACLU staff working at the Capitol. At the end of my first session leading the ACLU's policy team, I am proud of what our team accomplished together with our ACLU colleagues, community members, and partners. I am excited about the work to come.

ACLU 2022-23 Legislative Goals

In the 2022–2023 legislative session, ACLU of Colorado staff, members, supporters and activists worked shoulder-to-shoulder with **86 allies and partners** across Colorado on **58 bills** that aligned with the key issue areas outlined in *The Road Ahead*: **Smart Justice**, **Systemic Equality**, and **Privacy & Liberty**. We also laid the groundwork for strengthening civil rights protections for data and technology and continued our efforts to codify civil rights and liberties into Colorado state law and the Colorado Constitution to protect against future rollbacks at the federal level.



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Smart Justice

We worked to build **safer and more effective** alternatives to extreme punishment and incarceration — especially for children — and successfully beat back efforts to double down on the failed War on Drugs.

- **Prioritized care over handcuffs for hundreds of children each year** by increasing access to mental and behavioral health resources instead of the juvenile justice system. These bills aim to reduce youth recidivism, suicide, stigma and school drop-out rates. *(HB23-1249 and HB23-1307)*
- **Fought for a public health approach to the overdose crisis** by defeating a bill that would have charged accidental overdoses as homicides. Similar laws in other states have been proven to increase overdoses by up to seven percent instead of reducing drug supply because they discourage people from calling for help. *(SB23-109)*



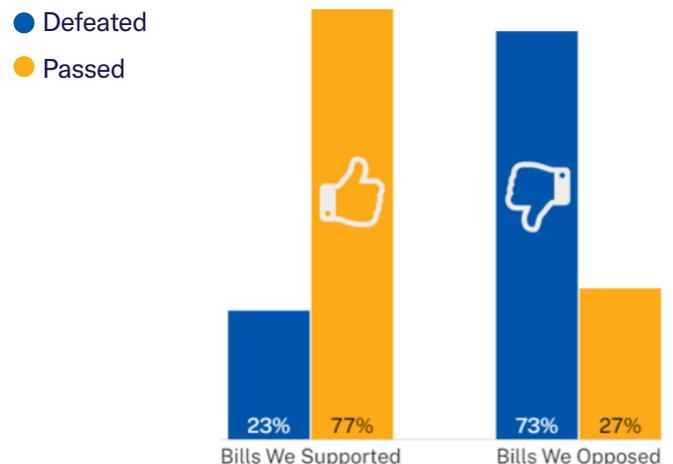
LIFT attendees speaking with Senator James Coleman during Lobbying is For The (LIFT) People 2023.

- **Protected immigrant families and communities** by prohibiting local law enforcement from incarcerating people in immigration detention. *(HB23-1100)*
- **Secured bedrock federal constitutional protections** by supporting a bill that puts Miranda rights into Colorado law for the first time, safeguarding against any future rollbacks by the U.S. Supreme Court. *(HB23-1155)*

Topline Numbers

ACLU staff testifying on bills	10
Number of bills ACLU testified on	28
Number of times ACLU testified	46
One-on-ones with Legislators	41
Total coalition partners	86
Smart Justice bills	29
Systemic Equality bills	20
Privacy and Liberty bills	15

Bill Positions and Wins/Losses





Systemic Equality

In the midst of a historic crisis denying people the fundamental right to housing, we joined partners in the long fight to **protect renters and increase affordable housing**.

- **Improved access to housing for renters, who disproportionately experience lower incomes and people of color**, by ending income requirements and capping rental deposits to no more than twice the monthly rent. *(SB23-184)*
- **Created alternatives for people with disabilities receiving Social Security benefits and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families** to get more support prior to eviction proceedings, increasing their chances to stay in their homes. *(HB23-1120)*
- **Expanded the Warranty of Habitability**, a law that requires rental units be safe and fit for people to live in, to ensure better protection for renters after natural disasters and environmental events. This will increase housing stability rather than displacement or eviction. *(HB23-1254)*
- **Protected housing stability** across Colorado by expanding the claims through which a court should find an eviction unenforceable to include discrimination. *(SB23-184)*

Privacy & Liberty

With people's right to abortion and gender-affirming care under threat across the country, our coalition's focus this session was **protecting patients and providers** in Colorado and those who might seek care in our state.

- **Supported the Colorado Reproductive Health, Rights, and Justice Coalition in protecting access to reproductive and gender-affirming care** in Colorado, regardless of the state of residence of the person seeking care and protecting providers offering these medical services. *(SB23-188)*
- **Increased health equity for people with lower and middle incomes** by decreasing financial barriers to reproductive care and STI and HIV counseling, prevention, testing, and treatment. *(SB23-189)*
- **Fought back against reproductive health disinformation** by maintaining consumer protections for patients seeking accurate information about reproductive care to ensure transparency and timely access to the care they need. *(SB23-190)*

The Work Ahead

As soon as one legislative session ends, we begin preparing for the next. **We look forward to connecting with ACLU members and communities across the state to explore how, together, we can build on the successes of this session and collectively identify our legislative priorities for 2024.**

We anticipate continuing our unfinished work to protect children from the juvenile justice system and to repair the harms of mass incarceration, fighting for equitable housing policy, introducing groundbreaking legislation to protect our personal and biometric data, and codifying our civil rights and civil liberties in Colorado so that we do not have to rely on the uncertainty of Federal protections.

Save the Date!

Get ready to shape next year's legislative session!

Lobbying is For The People (LIFT): Summer Advocacy Institute

August 4-5, 2023

lift People



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