



# WE THE PEOPLE

**ACLU**  
Maryland







# WE THE PEOPLE

## 2020 ACLU of Maryland Annual Report

*“So long as we have enough people in this country willing to fight for their rights, we’ll be called a democracy.”*

*-ACLU Founder Roger Baldwin*

The power of our country has always been with the people. And even with a Biden-Harris Administration, we still have a lot of work to do to protect our rights and liberties. Where do we go from here? How can Maryland become the state we all want to live in, particularly those who have historically been harmed by our government?

The 2020 election taught us that when we remove barriers and expand access to the ballot, citizens are able to vote in record numbers. That is why we are committed to realizing an election infrastructure that guarantees universal suffrage and robust access to the ballot, including Marylanders who are currently incarcerated.

A quality education is necessary to be a productive member of our society. But for generations, access to a quality education has been denied to Black and Latinx students and students with disabilities. That is why we are



Dana Vickers Shelley

**THE TIME MUST BE NOW TO  
PREPARE THE GROUNDWORK  
FOR A MORE HUMANE AND  
FREE MARYLAND IN THE  
YEARS TO COME.**



John Alvin Henderson

committed to realizing a public education system where all students can learn, thrive, and are prepared to effectively engage in the social, political, and economic life of their community.

The legal justice system has systemic racism baked into its DNA and has deeply hurt and impacted the Black community. That is why we are committed to realizing an equitable justice system that prioritizes community-centered approaches to public safety and ends our primary reliance on incarceration.


Our neighbors are our neighbors regardless of their legal status. But ICE ramped up their racist practices against our immigrant neighbors under the previous administration. That is why we are committed to realizing a state where all Marylanders are empowered to fully participate in society regardless of citizenship or legal status.

We are committed to realizing a Maryland where all individuals can live, think, and speak freely, without discrimination based on identity, unwarranted surveillance, with bodily integrity protected, and with equitable access to the public square.

And we are committed to making government accountable by maximizing transparency, establishing limits on governmental power, and strengthening enforcement mechanisms, particularly where there is the greatest opportunity for abuse of power.

The ACLU of Maryland does not just name the problems. We advocate for systemic solutions. Thanks for joining us in this important work!

Yours in liberty and equity,



**Dana Vickers Shelley**  
Executive Director  
ACLU of Maryland



**John Alvin Henderson**  
President, Board of Directors  
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# RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Maryland's constitution guarantees the right of all students to a high-quality education. That is why the ACLU is working to put race and wealth equity into practice, to ensure state resources are targeted to support students and districts impacted by opportunity gaps, achievement lags, and generational underfunding. The ACLU is also supporting restorative approaches that better support all students. We must remove police from schools and disrupt practices that discipline Black and Brown students unfairly and move them out of the classroom and into the legal justice system.

Students, parents, and advocates participated in a virtual town hall to talk about the status of the *Bradford v. Maryland State Board of Education* lawsuit and equity for Black students in Baltimore City Public Schools. Pictured from top left to right by row: Fareeha Waheed, Interpreter Jane Sutcliffe (ASL Interpreter Corps, LLC), Interpreter Ted Baran (ASL Interpreter Corps, LLC), A'niya Taylor, Joseph Kane, J'aie Drayton, Kiera Davis-Griffith.

# IMMIGRANTS' RIGHTS

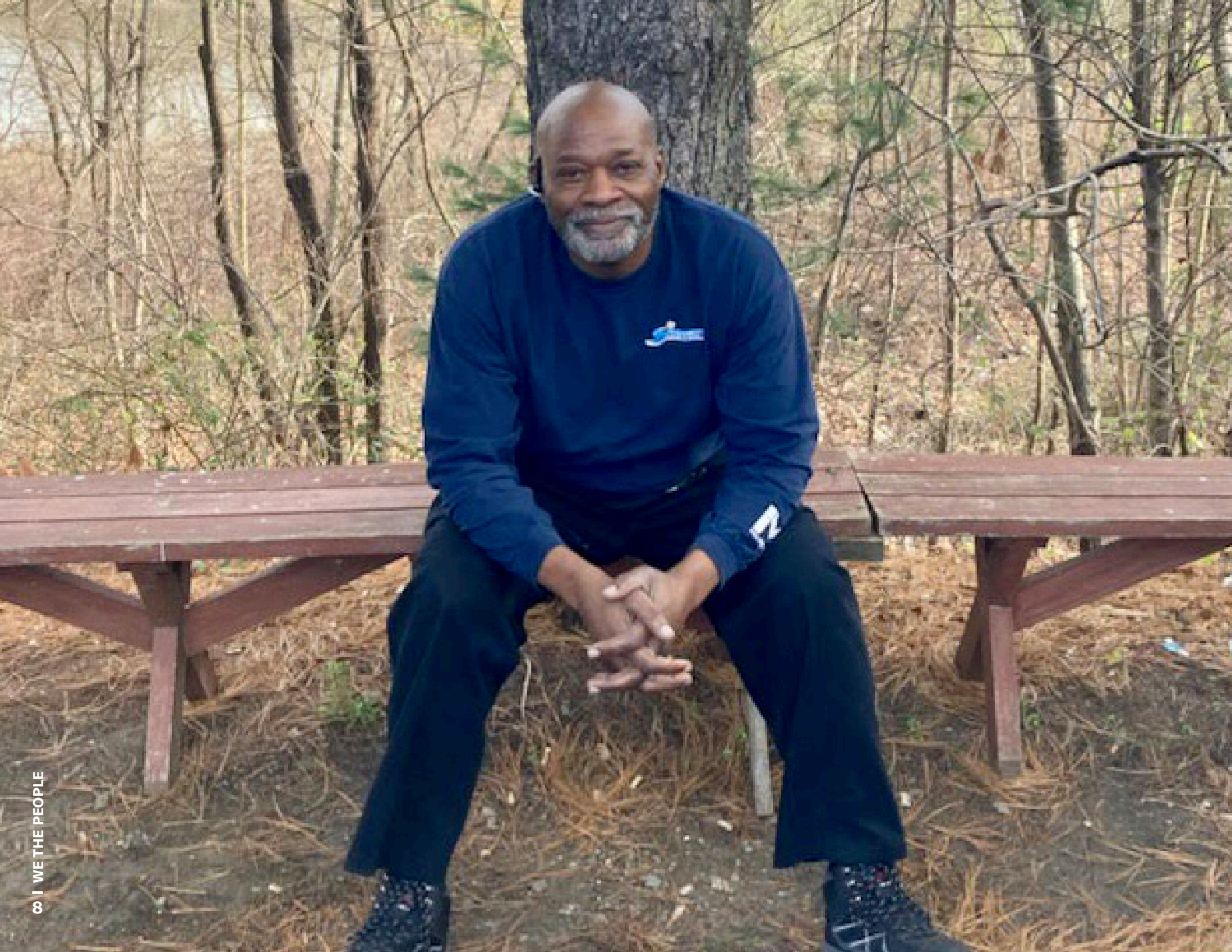
Sara Medrano and the Resources for Immigrant Support and Empowerment Coalition of Western Maryland secured a remarkable victory against racial profiling and dangerous cooperation between local police and ICE. The Frederick County Sheriff even issued an apology for his deputies' racial profiling Sara, a Latina Frederick County resident. It is not well enough understood that immigrants have constitutional rights in the United States, including the right to due process and to be protected from racial profiling. That is why the ACLU is working with grassroots partners to oppose 287(g) programs in Frederick, Cecil, and Harford counties.

Activists in Frederick County led by the RISE Coalition of Western Maryland, Frederick's March for Justice, and Frederick United, march and hold a car rally to advocate for funds for family economic relief, not family separation. Photo Credit: Sergio España











# LEGAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Marylanders must not be subjected to unconstitutionally cruel punishments. That is why the ACLU supports Marylanders serving life with parole sentences, and their families, who have been denied a real opportunity to earn release, even though they were children when the offenses were committed. The state's policy of giving the governor sole decision-making authority over who is released greatly politicizes the process. The ACLU is also working to protect the rights of children in contact with the legal justice system who are questioned without a parent or attorney present. This problem can cause children who face criminal charges, prosecution, and incarceration to be denied the basic due process rights that adults are entitled to.

Calvin McNeill is one of the Marylanders who brought a legal challenge to Maryland's broken parole system for those given life with parole sentences. McNeill was repeatedly denied release by Maryland governors, despite being recommended for parole several times. He finally won resentencing in 2020 after being incarcerated for 40 years. He was just 16 years old when he was sentenced. Photo provided by Calvin McNeill.

# INDIVIDUAL AUTONOMY

Realizing a full victory for the free speech rights of the mostly Black and Brown residents of Baltimore who are survivors of police abuse, a federal judge ruled that Ashley Overbey Underwood must be paid back tens of thousands of dollars by the City of Baltimore – with interest – after half of her settlement money for being brutalized by police was stolen from her by the City. This ruling is important because survivors of police abuse must never be silenced. The ACLU also helped a student in Baltimore City defend her right to not be discriminated against for her choice to wear a tuxedo when other girls had their choice of dresses for their graduation ceremony.

Ashley Overbey Underwood successfully defended her free speech right to speak out about her experience of being brutalized by the police when a federal appeals court ruled the gag order silencing her was unconstitutional. Baltimore City has since banned gag orders on survivors of police abuse and other forms of discrimination. Photo credit: Ashley Overbey Underwood









# FREE THE VOTE





# VOTING RIGHTS

Dating back to the racist Jim Crow Era, felony disenfranchisement laws were created in the states after the Civil War as an intentional effort to weaken the political power of Black people who had been enslaved. That time was also when the abominable effort began to incarcerate Black people who were newly freed. The narrative linking the right to vote to incarceration is fundamentally undemocratic. That is why the ACLU is determined to help restore the right to vote to all those who are currently incarcerated. During the 2020 Election, the ACLU supported leaders who are formerly incarcerated in their work to provide ballots and voting information to people currently in jail who still have their right to vote. And the ACLU also educated thousands of voters about their rights and solved problems at the polls through our Election Protection campaign.

*Free the Vote* is a documentary that depicts just how unjust and racist it is to deny the right to vote to millions of people who are incarcerated. The poster depicts the racist history of voter disenfranchisement in Maryland and throughout the United States, culminating in the powerful work by Nicole Hanson-Mundell, Monica Cooper, Earl Young, Qiana Johnson, and many more. Poster design credit: Nicole McCann

# GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Maryland's policing system is working exactly as intended. It's unacceptable. That is why the ACLU is working with more than 90 groups to reimagine policing in Maryland and realize five essential demands – Repeal the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights (LEOBR), control of the Baltimore City Police Department must be restored to Baltimore City residents, investigations into police misconduct must be transparent, use of force by police must be limited, and police officers must be removed from our children's schools. The ACLU is also supporting Black and Brown police officers from Prince George's County in their lawsuit challenging a department pervaded by race discrimination and retaliation, which contaminates relationships between police and the community.

A large coalition of advocates for reimagining policing, particularly family members of Black Marylanders killed by police, rallied in Prince George's County to demand justice and accountability both in that county and statewide.

Photo credit: Meredith Curtis Goode





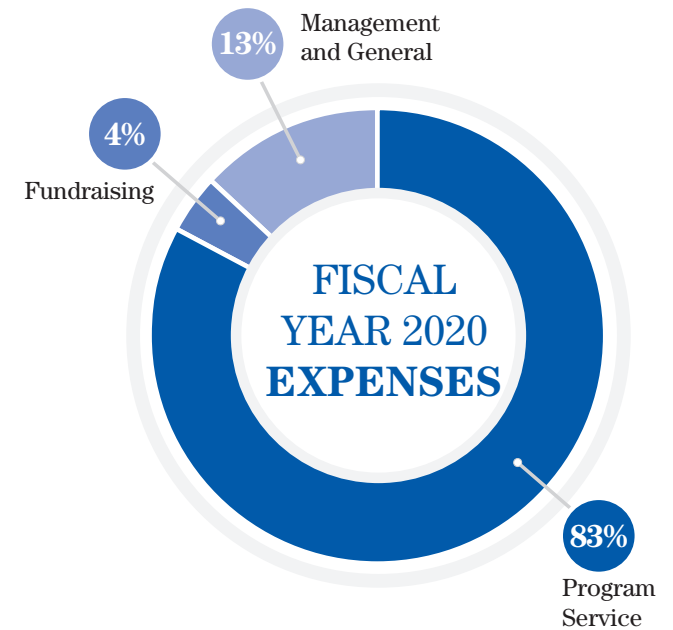




# RIGHTS DURING PANDEMIC

The global COVID-19 pandemic is a crisis, and it takes all of us working together to respond appropriately, effectively, and fairly. From the beginning, the ACLU has monitored the situation to ensure the government's response is scientifically justified and no more intrusive upon civil liberties than absolutely necessary. The ACLU has also worked hard to protect the rights of Black and Brown Marylanders caught in prison, jails, and immigrant detention centers because they are particularly vulnerable to harm. Together with public health experts and family members of loved ones inside, the ACLU advocated for Marylanders to be released, to be given hygiene products, and to have access to vaccines.

# AUDITED FINANCIALS / ACLU of Maryland



## SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Membership	\$ 1,481,837
Contributions	1,548,304
Restricted Foundation Grants	770,000
Bequests	433,580
Court Awarded Attorney Fees	257,475
In-Kind Legal Contributions	486,475
Less Investment Income/(Loss)	(330,591)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 4,648,313</b>

## EXPENSES

Program Service	\$ 3,825,581
Fundraising	185,161
Management and General	596,572
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 4,607,314</b>



# HOW TO SUPPORT THE ACLU OF MARYLAND

A contribution to the ACLU of Maryland is a powerful action. It ensures the defense of justice, liberty, and the freedoms guaranteed by **THE BILL OF RIGHTS.**

**YOU SUPPORT IT. WE DEFEND IT.**

## THE ACLU OF MARYLAND COMPRISES TWO ORGANIZATIONS:

- **Gifts to the American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland** qualify for ACLU membership and for support of our legislative work, including the lobbying of the Maryland State Legislature and of Congress. These gifts are not tax deductible. To make an online membership donation, please go to: [aclu-md.org](http://aclu-md.org) and click, “BECOME A MEMBER.”
- **Gifts to the American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Maryland** support our litigation, public education, and non-public policy advocacy. These gifts are tax deductible. To make an online Foundation donation please go to: [aclu-md.org](http://aclu-md.org) and click, “DONATE NOW.”

Checks for the Union should be made payable to the ACLU, while checks to the Foundation should be made payable to the ACLU Foundation.

Membership or Foundation gifts may also be mailed to our address at:

ACLU of Maryland – 3600 Clipper Mill Rd., Ste. 350, Baltimore, MD 21211

**To give a gift of stock** via DTC transfer, please ask your broker to send securities to our Foundation account (30A121398) at T. Rowe Price, DTC #0443 or to our Union account (30Q051390) at T. Rowe Price, D#0443.

Please contact the ACLU of Maryland development office (410-889-8555 ext. 153) to advise us of your gift.

## LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY

Join a special group of ACLU of Maryland supporters who have included the ACLU in their estate plans, thus ensuring the future of our work.

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We also thank donors who made gifts below \$1,000 as well as those who wish to remain anonymous. Every effort has been made to ensure accurate and complete listings of contributors. If you wish to change the way your name is listed, please contact us at [development@aclu-md.org](mailto:development@aclu-md.org).

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Daniel Thornhill  
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James & Ellen Yorke  
Pamela Young  
Jarvis Yu  
Joe Yuhas  
Laurie Zabin  
Michael Zasadil \*  
Scott Zeger & Joanne Katz  
Sheila Zelkowitz \*





# WE THE PEOPLE

LEFT: ACLU of Maryland, pictured from top left to right by row: Rosemary Ardman, Amber Taylor, Sebastian Brown, Nicole McCann, Deborah Jeon, Yanet Amanuel, Meredith Curtis Goode, Dana Vickers Shelley, Frank Patinella, Amy Cruice, Sergio España, Richard Winston, III, Jamie Grace Alexander, Gina Elleby, Jay Jimenez, Jenny Trust, Sonia Kumar, Craig Lee, Kimbrick Knox, Joe Spielberger, Lorena Diaz, Cherie Deogracias, Dara Johnson, Brianna Knowlton, David Rocah. For staff and volunteers not pictured, see pages 20-21.

COVER: From top left to right, by row: Coalition of leaders and groups led by Maryland women who have been formerly incarcerated advocate in Annapolis for passage of a pre-release facility and services for women. Photo was taken pre-pandemic. Photo credit: Meredith Curtis Goode; A crowd kneels at the Black Lives Matter protest in Washington, DC. Photo credit: Clay Banks, Unsplash; The blue mail voting image highlights the priority ACLU put on Election Protection for the 2020 General Election. Image design credit: Nicole McCann; Members of the Howard County Coalition for Immigrant Justice close out their monthly meeting. Photo was taken pre-pandemic. Photo Credit: Sebastian Brown; A healthcare worker holding sign with supportive 'we can do this' message while standing in the hospital. Photo credit: Drazen Zigic, Shutterstock; Activists in Frederick County, led by the RISE Coalition of Western Maryland, Frederick's March for Justice, and Frederick United, march and hold a car rally to advocate for funds for family economic relief, not family separation. Photo Credit: Sergio España.

Since 1931, the ACLU of Maryland has been a champion for

**LIBERTY, JUSTICE, AND EQUITY.**



**THANK YOU FOR WORKING WITH US**

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