



ACLU

Vermont

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA | 2020

Advance Criminal Justice Reform

Vermont has a strong track record of instituting smart criminal justice reforms, and this session we have an opportunity to transform our system so that it is more humane, equitable, and rooted in community-based solutions.

Recent data shows Vermont's prison population is again increasing. One of the reasons for that is our community supervision system returns people to prison at the highest rates in the country. Four out of every five admissions to Vermont's prisons are people who were previously released to community supervision, and an astounding 70% of those are for "technical violations" like lack of housing or curfew violations.

➔ Throughout the session, we and our allies will be **advocating for a complete overhaul of community supervision, better data collection for more effective oversight, greater investments in transitional housing, and other smart reforms to our justice system.**

Protect Access to Public Records

In September, we scored a major victory in the Vermont Supreme Court when it affirmed that government officials cannot require Vermonters to pay fees to inspect public records. In *Doyle v. Burlington Police Department*, the Court reinforced the principle that government transparency and accountability are vital to a democratic society.

➔ Already, we are hearing some state officials want to roll back the *Doyle* decision by restricting the public's right to know. **The ACLU and our allies will be working to ensure that access to the public's records is not put behind a paywall or limited in any way.**

Invest in Vermonters

The systemic underfunding of core functions of our state government has created a situation where many of the most marginalized Vermonters cannot meet their basic needs. With increased investments, we can build a Vermont in which our communities are strong, and everyone can thrive.

➔ **We will urge the Legislature to make increased investments in social services that are essential to Vermonters**, including but not limited to, our mental health system, support for young families and children, and programs that prevent and address trauma and substance-use disorder across our state.

Defend Vermonters' Civil Liberties

In addition, as always, we will be fighting to:

➔ **advance racial justice, enact stronger privacy protections, and bring greater accountability to police departments, among other initiatives.**

For more information, please contact Advocacy Director Falko Schilling at fschilling@aclvt.org or 802-223-6304.

Learn more at aclvt.org