



Our Rights Are at Stake. We Will Not Be Silenced.

An Open Letter from Civil Rights Groups to the American People

In America, our government cannot do whatever it wants. And we, the people, have a right to ask for what we need, defend ourselves from abuse, and speak our minds.

We have a free press, the right to protest, an independent legal system, and organizations for people, not profits, to hold our government accountable. These protections exist so we can all have a say in our lives and live them freely.

But today, the administration of President Donald Trump is acting as if the government can do whatever it wants, even if it violates our rights and takes away our freedoms.

The Trump administration is intentionally attacking any business; law firm; college, university, or school; and organization or government watchdog that disagrees with its policies or challenges its abuses and corruption. And it is scaring into silence legitimate, lawful demands and legal challenges, which are fundamental to our civil rights and our democracy.

Throughout our history, Americans have resisted power grabs that threaten our rights and freedoms. Today, we must resist again — together.

We are civil rights organizations representing millions of Americans, and we are sounding the alarm: The Trump administration and its allies are going after a laundry list of “opponents” — and in doing so, all Americans may face real threats to their rights and freedoms.

The Trump administration is:

- Arresting and threatening people who criticize the government. **This means our right to speak freely about government actions can now be silenced.**
- Attacking the ability of our courts — from lawyers to judges — to protect people from abuses of power, including the detaining of people without due process. **This means our right to a lawyer and fair treatment in court is threatened.**
- Censoring and attacking journalists for sharing facts. **This means our right to get facts and the truth is being undermined.**
- Attempting to make it harder for citizens to vote and undermining confidence in our elections. **This means our right to participate in free and fair elections is diminished, decreasing our voice and representation in our American system of governance.**
- Allowing agencies and non-government actors to illegally obtain and share personal data. **This means our privacy protections are being eroded.**
- Firing the people who protect and enforce civil rights. **This means our ability to get help when rights are violated is at risk.**

- Eliminating the inspectors general who make sure the government serves the people. **This means there are fewer or even no checks on corruption, unlawful practices, and misuse of taxpayer dollars.**
- Illegally breaking union contracts and eliminating vital jobs in service of everyday people, including nurses, firefighters, air traffic controllers, and more. **This means that both our safety and our ability to work with dignity are being denied.**
- Defunding scientific and medical research and environmental safeguards. **This means the health of our families could be jeopardized.**
- Censoring arts and attacking cultural institutions. **This means our right to freedom of expression is being suppressed.**
- Erasing our celebrations of, and commitment to, all of our diversity, cultures, and histories. **This means our kids can be bullied, our future leaders can be denied learning accurate history, and our employers can mistreat us without consequences.**

We Will Not Surrender America's Rights

What we're seeing now is just the beginning. These attacks will not stop unless we are united.

It will not be up to the courts, governments, media, or politicians to save us. The only thing that can save the American people is the American people. Our organizations refuse to be silenced or intimidated — and neither should you. We write this letter to invite all willing people to join us.

What You Can Do

Together, we can defend our rights and freedoms by taking action. [Take the pledge](#) to:

- Speak up when you see rights under attack in your community
- Attend at least one protest or community meeting before summer
- Contact your member of Congress when legislation threatens basic rights
- Support at least one organization working to protect our democracy
- Share information about these threats with at least five people you know

You can determine whether America remains a country where power is checked, where our needs are met, where our rights are protected, and where the government serves us, rather than silences us.

Join us in saying: We will not be silenced.

Signed,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

Advocates for Trans Equality

AFL-CIO

African American Policy Forum

AFSCME

AFT

All Voting is Local

American Association of People with Disabilities

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

American Atheists

American Civil Liberties Union

American Constitution Society

American Humanist Association
Americans for Financial Reform
Americans for Tax Fairness
Americans United for Separation of Church and State
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC
Asian Law Caucus
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance-AFL-CIO (APALA)
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
AVAN Immigrant Services
Bazon Center for Mental Health Law
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Borderlands Resource Initiative
Campaign Legal Center
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for Reproductive Rights
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
Coalition on Human Needs
Common Cause
Community Change
Community Justice Project (Florida)
Defending Rights & Dissent
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Democracy Forward Foundation
Demos
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
Emancipate NC
Engage Action
End Citizens United
Equal Justice Society
Equal Justice USA
Equality California
Families for Freedom
Feminist Majority Foundation
First Friends of New Jersey & New York
GLSEN
Human Rights Campaign
Human Rights First
Immigrant Defenders Law Center (ImmDef)
Immigrant Defense Project

Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC)
Immigration Services and Legal Advocacy (ISLA)
Impact Fund
Interfaith Alliance
Japanese American Citizens League
Jewish Community Action
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
Jews for a Secular Democracy
Justice in Aging
Juvenile Law Center
Kirva
Lambda Legal
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
League of Conservation Voters
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
League of Women Voters of the United States
Legal Action Center
Legal Defense Fund
Louisiana Advocates for Immigrants in Detention
Matthew Shepard Foundation
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
Movement Advancement Project
MPower Change Action Fund
NAACP
National Association of Social Workers
National Bar Association
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Youth Law
National Coalition for the Homeless
National Coalition on Black Civic Participation
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Employment Lawyers Association
National Hispanic Media Coalition
National Immigration Law Center
National Immigration Project
National Institute for Workers' Rights
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for New Americans
National Partnership for Women & Families

National Women's Law Center
NBJC
New Jersey Alliance for Immigrant Justice
New York Immigration Coalition
Partnership for Civil Justice Fund
PEN America
Pennsylvania Immigration Coalition
People For the American Way
PFLAG National
Pride At Work, AFL-CIO
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
Public Advocates Inc.
Public Citizen
Public Justice
Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism
Reproductive Freedom For All
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
SEIU
Silver State Equality-Nevada
Sojourners
South Dakota Voices for Peace
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
State Democracy Defenders Fund
Texas Civil Rights Project
The Advocates for Human Rights
The Futures Institute
The Sikh Coalition
The Southern Poverty Law Center
The Workers Circle
Transformations CDC
T'ruah
United Church of Christ Media Justice Ministry
UNITED SIKHS
Veterans for American Ideals
Voices for Progress
Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs
Western States Center
Women Lawyers On Guard Action Network, Inc.