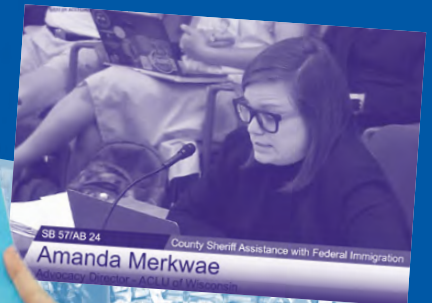


2025–2026

WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT



Thank You

This legislative report is a record of what we did together this session. The wins belong to you, and the fights still ahead are ones we'll take on side by side.

The 2025-26 session was defined by two simultaneous realities. We saw repeated efforts to restrict speech and privacy, target LGBTQ+ people, and increase involvement in federal immigration enforcement. At the same time, sustained advocacy secured meaningful victories, including protections for DACA recipients, postpartum Medicaid extension, codifying Indigenous students' rights, and the defeat of dozens of harmful proposals.

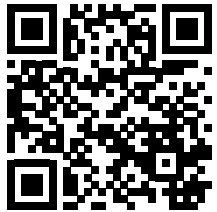
The work you see documented in these pages — all the policy proposals our team tracked, every legislative hearing where we submitted testimony, every harmful bill we helped to stop, and every meaningful protection we fought to advance — was made possible by the volunteers, donors, and advocates who supported the work and fought alongside the ACLU of Wisconsin this session.

You showed up to testify, sometimes waiting hours for your two minutes at the mic. You called your legislators when it mattered most. You donated when we needed resources to fight back, and you refused to look away when it would have been easier to step back. Your sustained commitment, session after session, is what makes this work possible.

From every member of the ACLU of Wisconsin team: **Thank you.**



2025-26 Session ACLU-WI's work by the numbers

<p>694 Bills closely monitored</p>	<p>153 Bills we registered a lobbying position (support/oppose/other)</p>	<p>+22,000 ACLU-WI supporters reached throughout the session</p>
<p>63 Bills we provided committee testimony on</p>	<p>6 Bills we supported that were signed into law</p>	<p>71 Bills we opposed that failed</p>
<p>77 Media mentions of ACLU-WI's work in the Leg</p>	<p>999 Messages Wisconsinites sent to legislators</p>	 <p>ACLU-WI BILL TRACKER aclu-wi.org/legislation</p>

Defining key terms

What it means to oppose/support a bill: Advocacy organizations and lobbying entities can officially register their position on a particular piece of legislation, similar to how individuals who testify at a public hearing indicate whether they support or oppose the bill. For an organization like ACLU-WI, this registration status (either in support, in opposition, or neutral) is available to legislators and the public to see. To oppose or support a bill means ACLU-WI has determined it relates to a priority issue, conducted research on the topic, and found that it significantly impacts Wisconsinites' rights to officially and publicly register.

What it means to "closely monitor" or "track" a bill: ACLU-WI staff keep vigilant watch over all bills introduced in the state legislature to ensure we are engaging with all legislation that impacts our work. To closely monitor or track a bill means that this proposal directly or indirectly impacts a strategic priority issue and requires additional monitoring — our staff will engage in further conversations with bill authors or legislative committee members to stay ahead of any changes and be the first to respond in case the bill progresses through the legislative process.

What it means for a bill to fail to pass/get stuck in committee: Soon after bills are introduced by individual legislators, they are assigned to certain topic-based committees for an initial period of review. Committee chairs generally have the power to determine which bills receive a public hearing and are voted on by their committee, which are two steps that are required before a bill receives a vote by the full chamber. If a bill is "stuck" or "dies" in committee, that means it never got past the initial committee vote because the committee chair or other party leadership decided it should not advance. Unfortunately, even bills that are enormously popular among Wisconsinites regularly "get stuck" or "die" in committee.



Term "bill" and "legislation" are used interchangeably throughout this document.

Wisconsin Legislative Process Overview

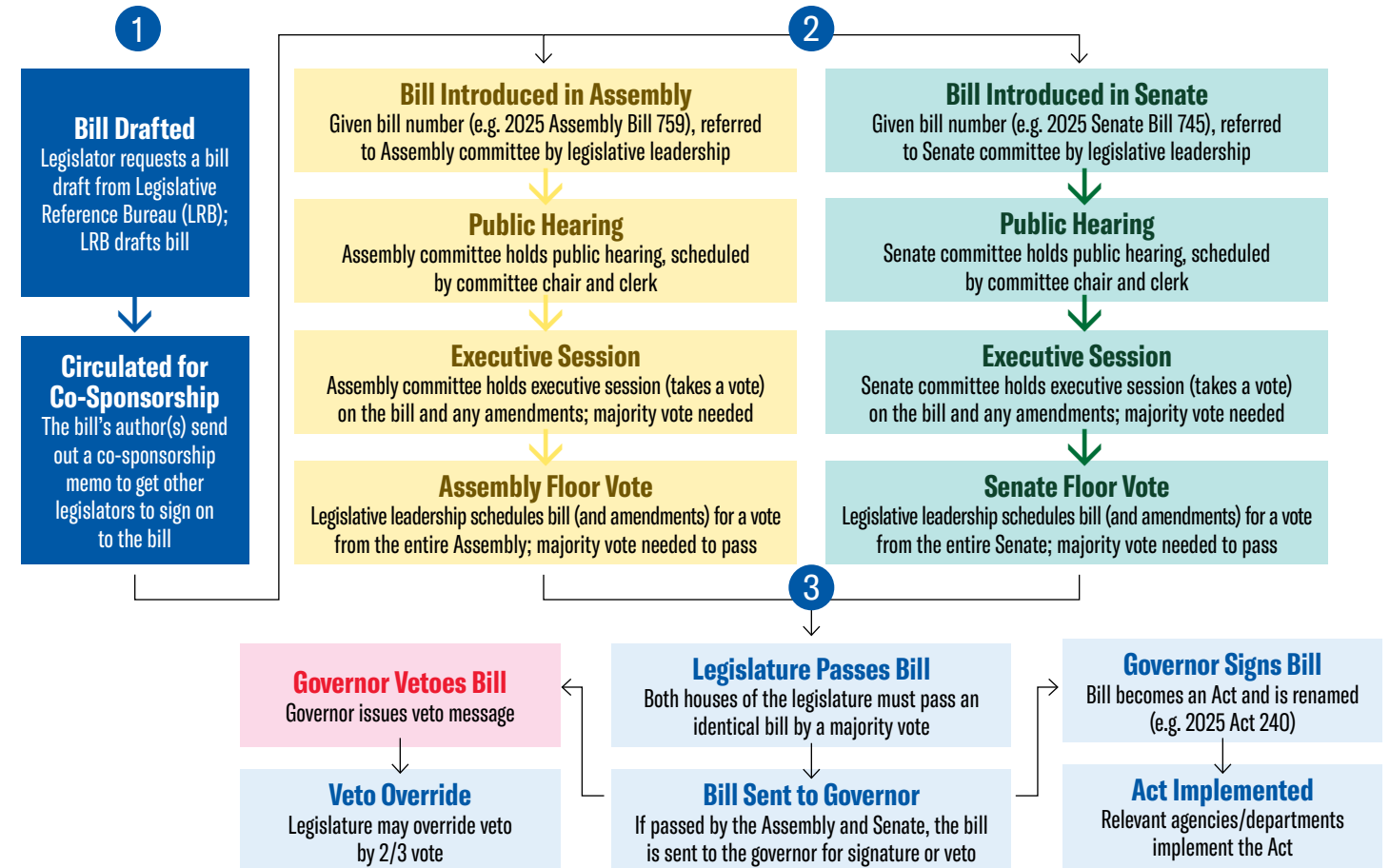




Photo by Loren Elliott/Reuters

Since President Trump took office in January 2025, in Wisconsin and across the country, immigrant families have lived under the constant threat of raids, deportations, and family separation. Neighbors disappeared. Children went to school not knowing if their parents would be home when they returned.

Wisconsin's state legislative session saw both attempts to bring that federal cruelty into state law, and a determined pushback from advocates, community members, and legislators who refused to let Wisconsin become an instrument of the mass deportation machinery. ACLU-WI worked alongside advocates to oppose a bill that would conscript local law enforcement into immigration enforcement and support a package of protections designed to keep families together and restore the community trust that mass deportation campaigns have shattered.

This session, we worked hard to have Wisconsin's laws reflect the reality that Wisconsin is home to hundreds of thousands of immigrants who contribute to the fabric of our state — and we secured some important victories.

Win

AB-24 Forcing Sheriffs to Do ICE's Bidding VETOED

This bill would push local law enforcement into harmful roles they were never meant to play — tools of mass deportation. If law enforcement refuses to do ICE's bidding, this proposed law would strip away funding for essential services in our counties.

822 ACLU-WI supporters contacted their legislators on this bill



On August 28, 2025, legislators and advocates for Wisconsin's immigrant communities announce a package of bills at the Capitol.

Keep Families Together Package

The "Keep Families Together" bill package is a direct response to dangerous bills like AB-24. The bills in this package seek to protect and restore community trust by requiring transparency, justice, and humanity in the immigration system.

AB-441/SB-444 The "No Secret Police" Act
Requires law enforcement officers to identify themselves by name, badge, and agency when making an arrest, and to provide the legal authority under which they are acting. It bans disguises and face coverings that conceal an officer's identity, with narrow exceptions for medical or tactical necessity. And crucially, it imposes real consequences: violating the law is a felony offense, with fines up to \$100,000.

AB-475/SB-446 Due Process for All
Immigrants facing deportation do not have a right to a public defender. They stand alone against the power of the state, with their families, livelihoods, and futures on the line. This bill seeks to correct the imbalance in power by investing \$300,000 into civil legal services for individuals and families navigating immigration proceedings. It also empowers counties to provide additional funding for local legal aid organizations.

AB-444/SB-484 Ban State Support for Immigration Detention Centers

Wisconsin taxpayers should not be funding cages. This bill makes it clear: no state or local facilities, no tax dollars, no infrastructure in Wisconsin can be used to detain people solely because of their immigration status.

AB-739/SB-493 & AB-57/SB-54 Protecting Safe Spaces & Community Trust

AB-57 bans immigration enforcement in safe community spaces like schools, churches, childcare centers, and medical facilities. AB 739 goes even further, cutting off all state and local collaboration with ICE, including the 287(g) agreements that turn local police into federal immigration agents.

Wins

AB-759 (now 2025 Act 240) SIGNED INTO LAW

Occupational Credentials for DREAMers
Under this bill, people known as Dreamers — those who arrived to the U.S. as an undocumented minor and are protected under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA) — are now able to work in jobs that require professional licensure in Wisconsin. Previously, thousands of Dreamers in Wisconsin were barred from working jobs that required a license from the state — things like teaching, nursing, plumbing, real estate, and cosmetology. Now, if all other qualifications for the professional license are met, DACA recipients can obtain these licenses and pursue their chosen career path.

AB-308 "Show Your Papers" Before Health Treatment VETOED



Governor Evers signs the bipartisan DACA occupational credentials bill into law on April 9, 2026 surrounded by legislators and community leaders at El Rey in Milwaukee.

LGBTQ+ Rights & Bodily Autonomy

LGBTQ+ Rights

This session, Wisconsinites showed what it looks like for community members to show up for one other. On multiple occasions, people waited hours, well into the night, to voice opposition against dangerous bills that would harm trans youth and adults. While there is harm done in merely introducing hateful ideas contained in these bills, we are celebrating another legislative session of defeating these proposals so they will not become law in Wisconsin.

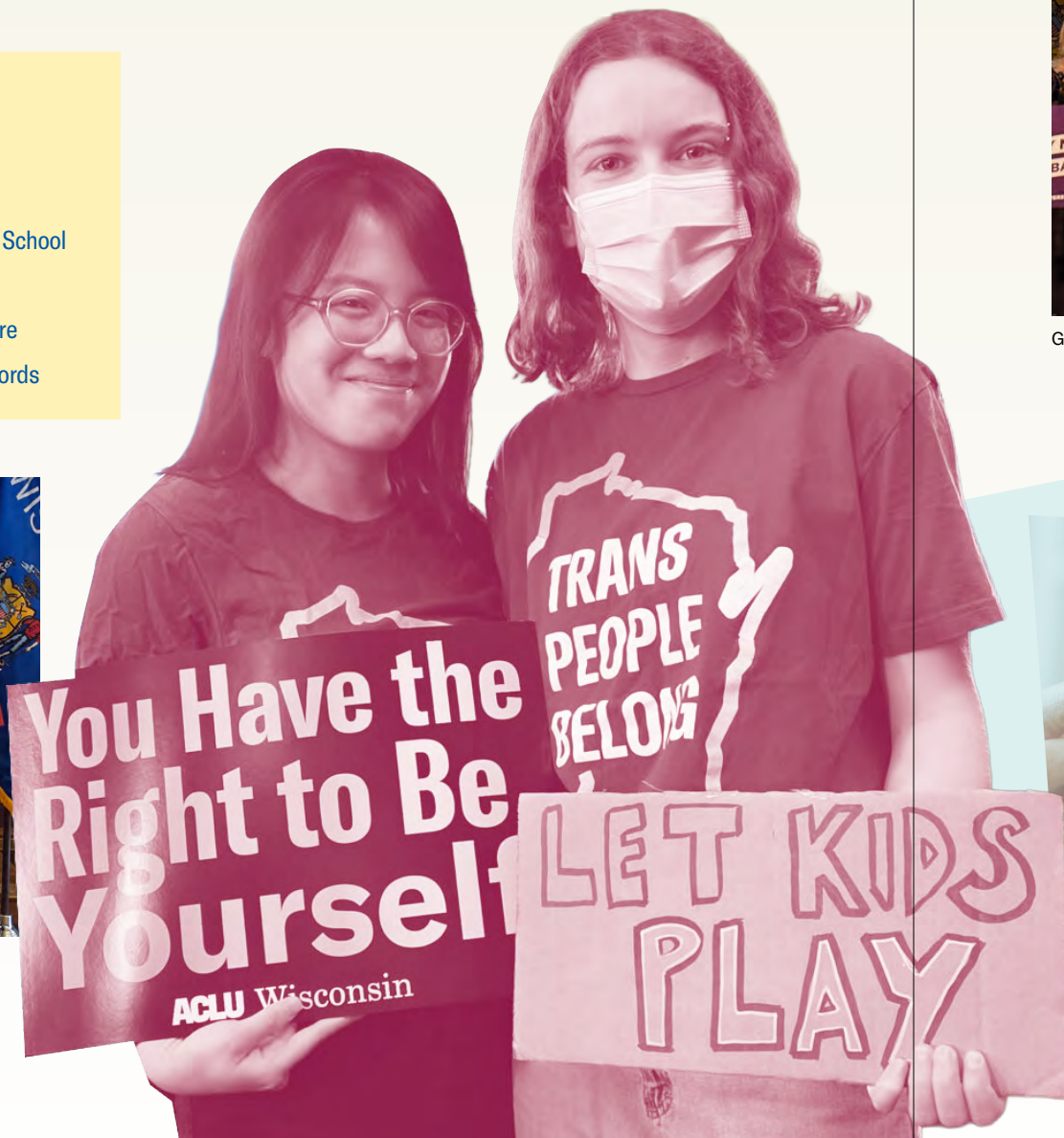
Governor Veto Victories

- [AB-100](#) Anti-Trans Sports Bill: K-12 Schools
- [AB-102](#) Anti-Trans Sports Bill: College
- [AB-103](#) Denying Preferred Names and Pronouns at School
- [AB-104](#) Trans Youth Medical Care Ban
- [SB-405](#) Lawsuits Regarding Gender-Affirming Care
- [SB-799](#) Parental Access to Minors' Healthcare Records

“Surrounded by advocates, I felt affirmed in my conviction that trans people belong in Wisconsin. This is my home, and I’m grateful to Governor Evers for championing trans rights and continually blocking attempts to make our state hostile to people like me.”

Lan Flynn, ACLU-WI Digital Strategist

Defeating a bad bill is not a passive outcome. It takes testimony, organizing, and advocates who keep showing up year after year, 10-hour-long hearing after 10-hour long hearing. We refuse to let go of the pressure, even when harmful legislation keeps coming back. Here’s what Wisconsinites standing in solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community stopped again this session.



ACLU-WI staff pose with Governor Evers after he vetoed another slate of anti-trans bills on International Transgender Day of Visibility.

Bodily Autonomy

SB-23 (now 2025 Act 102) Postpartum Medicaid
This is what persistence looks like. After years of advocacy and a near-miss last session, expanded postpartum Medicaid coverage is now the law in Wisconsin. Following this hard-fought victory, low-income mothers are able to stay on BadgerCare insurance for 12 months after giving birth, up from just 60 days. Expanding access to postpartum care is a critical step towards addressing birth equity in the face of systemic racism and structural barriers that exist in Wisconsin’s reproductive healthcare system.

AB-43 Pharmacists prescribing birth control
This bill expands access to birth control to patients that are at least 18 years of age by allowing pharmacists to prescribe and dispense birth control such as patches and oral contraceptive pills. It passed the State Assembly 87-10, a striking show of bipartisan support and a testament to sustained advocacy efforts to protect and expand bodily autonomy. Senate inaction kept it from crossing the finish line this session, but the Assembly vote makes clear that legislators recognize reliable access to birth control as an essential freedom that Wisconsinites demand.



Governor Evers signs Act 102, extending postpartum Medicaid coverage.



Criminal Legal Reform

Defensive wins

SB-76: Limiting Prosecutorial Discretion and Diversion Opportunities **VETOED**

This bill would require approval from the court any time a prosecutor wants to dismiss or amend a criminal charge for a series of offenses. The court may approve the dismissal or amended charge “only if the court finds the action is consistent with the public’s interest in deterring the commission of these crimes and with the legislature’s intent” to “encourage the vigorous prosecution of persons who commit offenses that are covered crimes.” There are many reasons why a charge may be dismissed or amended by a prosecutor, including the innocence of an individual charged with a crime, insufficient evidence for a charge to stand, or constitutional concerns with police action. **Procedural justice, fairness, and upholding the constitutional rights of the accused are foundational principles of the criminal legal system**, not solely “vigorous prosecution” and “deterrence.”

By curtailing prosecutorial discretion, this bill will limit access to critically important evidence-based early intervention programs in several jurisdictions throughout the state that provide targeted interventions through diversion or deferred prosecution agreements that pair risk reduction strategies with other accountability measures.

AB-85: Automatic Revocation **VETOED**

This bill would require the Department of Corrections to recommend revoking a person’s extended supervision, parole, or probation if the person is charged with a crime while on release.

This would take away any discretion that person’s parole officer might have if they would have otherwise continued to keep the person on supervision and automatically initiate an administrative revocation to send them to prison. This raises constitutional concerns because the practical burden of proof required for a period of incarceration on a new charge would essentially become “probable cause” rather than “beyond a reasonable doubt.”

Rather than trapping people in a revolving door of incarceration and supervision, people on parole, probation, or extended supervision should be given the support and opportunities they need to thrive in their community.

SB-146: Name Change Ban **VETOED**

SB-610: Drug-Free Homeless Service Zones **VETOED**

Offensive wins

The conditions inside Wisconsin prisons are cruel and unacceptable. Far too often, people incarcerated in correctional facilities across the state are denied even the bare necessities to survive, and are subject to unfathomable cruelty.

The Conditions of Confinement package of bills recognizes the humanity of people who are incarcerated. People end up in the carceral system for many reasons, and we must remember that we are all more than our worst day or worst mistake. **Incarcerated people should not be forced to face unlivable environments.**

The ultimate goal of incarceration is rehabilitation, which means giving people access to basic needs, including [hygiene products](#), [natural light](#), [the outdoors](#), [recreational programming](#), and [free connection to their loved ones](#), including phone calls. These bills would allow [people placed in solitary confinement](#) to read books and to write, participate in structured programming, and ensure that pregnant people continue to get prenatal care. They would guarantee a [minimum wage of \\$2.33 per hour](#).

These proposals are not asking for anything radical – they just seek to give incarcerated folks a basic standard of living that every human being deserves. When incarcerated people are treated with respect and decency, they are more likely to have better outcomes when they return home. If we are actually a state that believes in the dignity of all people, we must pass these reforms. Incarcerated people are our family, friends, neighbors and co-workers. They deserve better.



Offensive wins

Conditions of Confinement bills got a public hearing

AB-736/SB-728

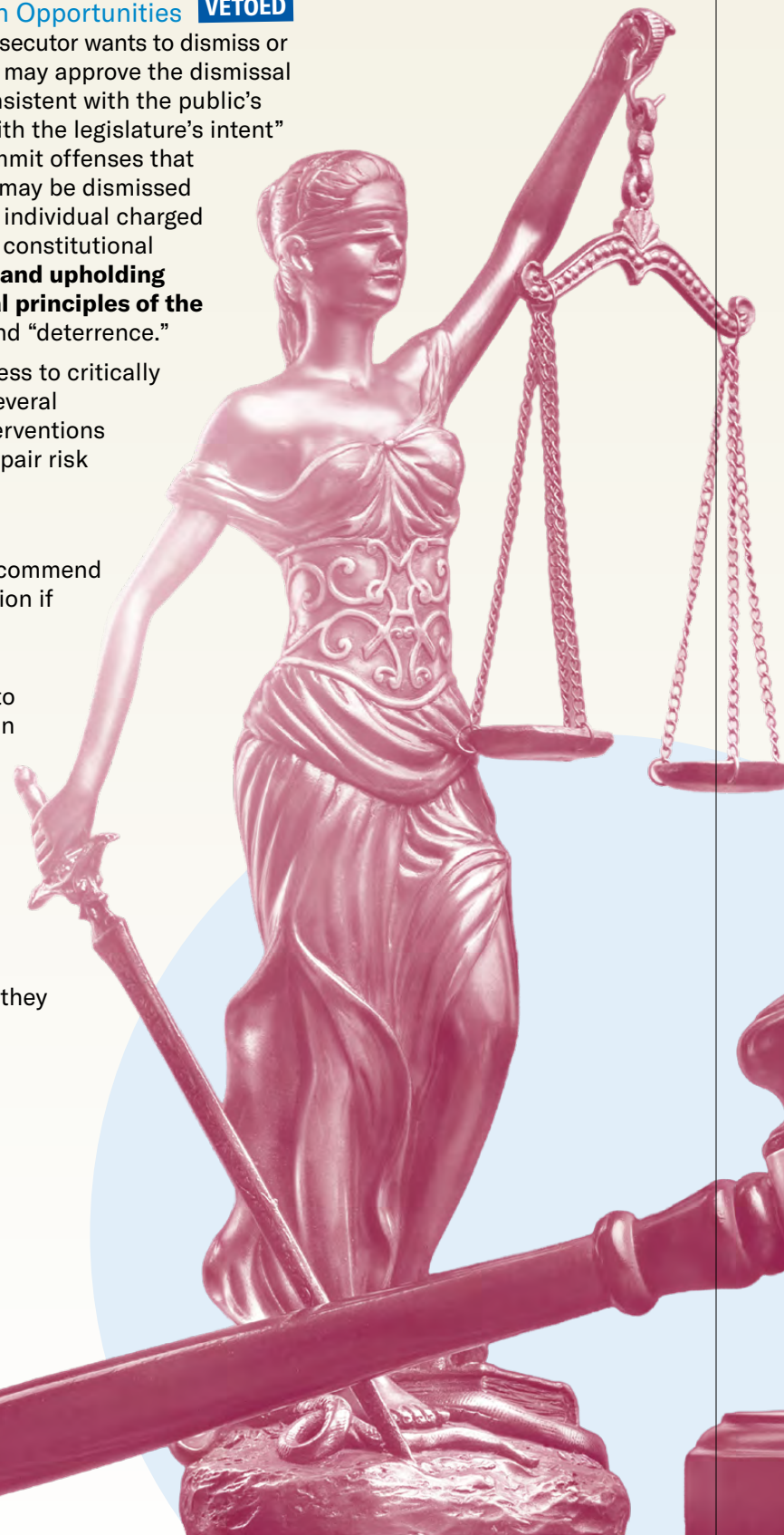
Requires DOC and county sheriffs to provide menstrual products free of charge

AB-741/SB-727

Caps the prices of most personal hygiene products, requires access to culturally-sensitive hygiene products, and provides a \$25/month stipend to people who are incarcerated to afford the products they need.

AB-604 **SIGNED INTO LAW (win)**

Medicaid coverage pilot for incarcerated people



First Amendment & Free Speech

AB-105 Internet Age Verification **VETOED**
 This bill proposes to “card” people when they visit certain websites by requiring age verification for people to access websites with content deemed “material harmful to minors.”

Under the bill, age verification could be conducted by checking a website-user’s government-issued identification card or “by using any commercially reasonable method that uses public or private transactional data gathered about the individual.” That means blocking access to content without first uploading your ID, jumping on a quick Zoom call showing that your face matches your ID, AI facial-recognition software or other biometric identification, or uploading a credit card number for AI to scrape consumer data from the internet to identify your age.

While intended to protect minors, this bill **exposes adult Wisconsinites to harmful surveillance and raises significant First Amendment concerns**, by requiring internet users to provide personal information to companies or applications that purport to be able to verify their ages. Requiring someone to present an official ID to merely visit a website may block some people—for example, those who lack government identification or whose age is misidentified by the relevant technology—from accessing the sites altogether.

Offensive Wins

AB-98 (now 2025 Act 222): Protecting Indigenous Students’ Right to Wear Tribal Regalia **SIGNED INTO LAW**

Defensive Wins

AB-672: Penalty Enhancer Targeting Speech **VETOED**

AB-961/SB-938: Content Warning Labels **FAILED TO PASS**

AB-962/SB-937: App Store Age Verification **FAILED TO PASS**

AB-963/SB-936: Social Media Age Verification **FAILED TO PASS**

SB-758: Social Media Age Verification **FAILED TO PASS**

Missed Opportunities

Failed to Pass Despite Bi-Partisan Support

AB-190/SB-194: Incentivising Open Records

AB-701/SB-666: Uniform Public Expression Protection Act (anti-SLAPP bill)

Loss

AB-446: IHRA Definition **SIGNED INTO LAW**



Strengthening Democracy



Offensive Win

AB-374 Compliance with Electoral Count Reform Act **SIGNED INTO LAW**

Defensive Wins

AB-87 Modern Day Poll Tax **VETOED**

This bill would prevent people with felony convictions from regaining their constitutional right to vote until they have paid all “fines, costs, fees, surcharges, and restitution” imposed as part of their sentence. Put simply, this proposal would create a modern-day poll tax in Wisconsin.

The ultimate goal of legislation like this is to make it harder for over-policed and over-criminalized groups – disproportionately Black, Indigenous and other people of color, people with disabilities, and people in poverty – to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

AB-595 Voter Registration List **VETOED**



Looking back to move forward

In last session’s legislative report, we highlighted “missed opportunities” – bills ACLU-WI supported that gained momentum throughout the session but ultimately failed to pass. This session, **thanks to persistent advocacy, these previous missed opportunities turned into victories!**

- Occupational Credentials for DACA Recipients
- Protecting Indigenous Students’ Right to Wear Tribal Regalia
- Postpartum Medicaid Extension

Now, we’re setting targets for 2027-28 to turn this session’s missed opportunities into more victories. Here are the proposals we have our eye on that did not pass this session but we feel can get across the finish line with targeted efforts from our team and your continued advocacy.

- Legalization of marijuana
- Expungement reform
- Anti-SLAPP protections
- Anti-shackling during pregnancy
- Safe harbor for child trafficking victims
- Expanding access to open records

Looking forward — join us

Thanks to thousands of volunteers who testified, called their legislators, marched, and showed up, we protected our neighbors, our rights, and our democracy. The work doesn't stop when the legislative session ends. Get involved today!

How to get involved with the ACLU of Wisconsin



Volunteer



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Become a member



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