



2012 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

The American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia (ACLU of GA) is committed to the protection of civil liberties and civil rights of all Georgians as dictated in the United States Constitution.

In the 2012 Legislative Session of the Georgia General Assembly, the ACLU of GA will continue to counter the growing threats to fundamental freedoms and remain steadfast in the ongoing fight for justice.

The bills and resolutions listed below comprise the ACLU of GA's 2012 Legislative Agenda:

Death Penalty

- *Prohibit the Use of the Death Penalty (SB 342) (Senate Judiciary)*
 - *This bill would prohibit the use of the death penalty in Georgia. (SUPPORT)*
 - *Sponsored by: (1) Jackson, Lester 2nd; (2) Jones, Emanuel 10th; (3) James, Donzella 35th; (4) Tate, Horacena 38th; (5) Butler, Gloria 55th*
 - *Status:*
 - *Senate Read and Referred – January 25, 2012*

Disability Rights

- *Expand Rights of Disabled Persons to be Accompanied by a Service Dog (HB 52) (House Human Relations & Aging; Senate Higher Education)*
 - *Would add public and private schools, colleges and universities to the list of places where disabled persons may be accompanied by a guide or service dog (SUPPORT)*
 - *Sponsored in the Senate by: (1) Orrock, Nan 36th*
 - *Status:*
 - *Senate Recommitted – January 9, 2012*

Education

- *Charter Schools (HB 661) (House Education)*
 - *Requires that charter schools be nonsectarian and requires that charter schools follow the same guidelines as other schools in terms of hiring, personnel, and civil rights laws. (SUPPORT)*
 - *Sponsored by: (1) Heard, Keith 114th; (2) Williams, "Coach" 89th*
 - *Status*
 - *House Second Reader – January 10, 2012*

As the session moves forward, we will update our legislative agenda. For more information, please contact Chad Brock at (770) 303-8111 or via email at cbrock@acluga.org. You may also visit our website at <http://www.acluga.org>



- School Voucher Requirement Waiver (HB 181) (House Education; Senate Education and Youth)
 - Would allow the State Board of Education to waive the prior school year requirement for school voucher eligibility. **(OPPOSE)**
 - Sponsored by: (1) Golick, Rich 34th; (2) Coleman, Brooks 97th; (3) Casas, David 103rd; (4) Lindsey, Edward 54th; (5) Nix, Randy 69th; (6) Setzler, Ed 35th.
 - Sponsored in the Senate by: Millar, Fran 40th
 - Status:
 - Senate Recommitted – January 9, 2012
- School Vouchers for Military and Foster Families (SB 87) (Senate Education and Youth)
 - Expands the class of students eligible for school vouchers to include students from military and foster families. Currently, the only students eligible for the program are students with special needs. **(OPPOSE)**.
 - Sponsored by: (1) Rogers, Chip 21st; (2) Williams, Tommie 19th; (3) Albers, John 56th; (4) Stone, Jesse 23rd; (5) McKoon, Joshua 29th; (6) Ligon, Jr., William 3rd
 - Status:
 - Senate Recommitted – January 9, 2012
- Establish Group to Look at Alternatives to School Expulsion (HR 1277) (House Education)
 - This bill would create a House Study Committee that would look for alternatives to school expulsion. The sponsors realize that many students are being expelled for non-violent offenses and for offenses that are unrelated to school and occur off school grounds. The Committee would encourage the General Assembly to adopt policies that discourage expulsion in these cases because they recognize that both the students and society as a whole benefit when they remain in school. **(SUPPORT)**.
 - Sponsored by: (1) Neal, Yasmin 75th; (2) Kaiser, Margaret 59th; (3) Clark, Valerie 104th; (4) Dudgeon, Mike 24th; (5) Dawkins-Haigler, Dee 93rd; (6) Evans, Stacey 40th
 - Status:
 - House Second Readers – February 7, 2012

Immigration

- Destroy the Dream Act (HB 59) (House Higher Education)
 - Would deny postsecondary educational opportunities to undocumented students. **(OPPOSE)**
 - Sponsored by: (1) Rice, Tom 51st; (2) Harrell, Brett 106th; (3) Walker, Len 107th; (4) Ehrhart, Earl 36th; (5) Bearden, Timothy 68th; (6) Ramsey, Matt 72nd

As the session moves forward, we will update our legislative agenda. For more information, please contact Chad Brock at (770) 303-8111 or via email at cbrock@acluga.org. You may also visit our website at <http://www.acluga.org>



- “Line Up the Children Bill” (HB 296) (House Judiciary Non-Civil)
 - *Would require all local school boards to collect data on the number of undocumented children within their districts and submit that data to the State Board of Education. Would also require all health care facilities, nursing homes, and anyone rendering patient care to undocumented persons to submit information to the Department of Community Health that would include the number of undocumented patients they cared for, the type of medical care those patients received, the cost and date of the treatment, and the method of payment. (OPPOSE)*
 - *Sponsored by: (1) Clark, Josh 98th; (2) Ramsey, Matt 72nd; (3) Cooke, Kevin 18th; (4) England, Terry 108th; (5) Harden, Michael 28th; (6) Dutton, Delvis 166th*

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered

- State Fair Employment Practice Amendment (HB 630) (House Judiciary)
 - *Would amend State law to prohibit discrimination in public employment based on sexual orientation and gender expression. (SUPPORT)*
 - *Sponsored by: (1) Drenner, Karla 86th; (2) Jacobs, Mike 80th; (3) Abrams, Stacey 84th; (4) Kidd, E. Culver "Rusty" 141st; (5) Bell, Simone 58th; (6) Willard, Wendell 49th*

Open Government

- Revisions to Open Records Act (HB 397) (House Judiciary Committee)
 - *Rewrites the law governing Open Records Requests, providing additional exceptions for when meetings remain private, extends time for when a party can challenge an Open Meetings Act violation, provides additional notice requirements, allows for a new defense for violations of the law, and clarifies definitions within the law. (MONITOR).*
 - *Sponsored by: (1) Powell, Jay 171st; (2) Bearden, Timothy 68th; (3) Powell, Alan 29th; (4) Greene, Gerald 149th; (5) Baker, Glenn 78th; (6) Burns, Jon 157th*

Privacy

- Requirement to Drug Test Applicants for Temporary Assistance (HB 668/SB 292) (House Judiciary /Senate Health and Human Services)
 - *This legislation is based on the myth that large numbers of our neediest citizens are using public benefits to purchase illegal drugs. This would require that all applicants seeking temporary assistance for needy families or Medicaid benefits submit to a drug test. The applicant seeking temporary assistance will be forced to pay for the drug test. A federal judge in Florida found a similar statute to be unconstitutional. (OPPOSE)*

As the session moves forward, we will update our legislative agenda. For more information, please contact Chad Brock at (770) 303-8111 or via email at cbrock@acluga.org. You may also visit our website at <http://www.acluga.org>



- *HB 668 – Sponsored by: (1) Spencer, Jason 180th; (2) Willard, Wendell 49th; (3) Braddock, Paulette 19th; (4) Houston, Penny 170th; (5) Atwood, Alex 179th; (6) Byrd, Charlice 20th*
- *SB 292 – Sponsored by: (1) Albers, John 56th; (2) Rogers, Chip 21st; (3) Gooch, Steve 51st; (4) Shafer, David 48th; (5) Goggans, Greg 7th; (6) Hill, Judson 32nd*
- *Status:*
 - *House Second Readers – January 11, 2012*
 - *Senate Read and Referred – January 11, 2012*
- *Random Drug Testing for Unemployment Benefits (HB 697) (House Judiciary)*
 - *Would require random drug testing as a condition of continuing unemployment benefits. The cost of the drug test would be deducted from the unemployment benefits of the recipient. (OPPOSE)*
 - *Sponsored by: (1) Stephens, Ron 164th; (2) McKillip, Doug 115th*
 - *Status:*
 - *House Second Readers – January 11, 2012*
- *Requirement to Randomly Drug Test Applicants for Temporary Assistance (HB 698) (House Judiciary)*
 - *Would require applicants of temporary assistance to submit to random drug testing. This would not include assistance programs that provide medical care or that are designed to primarily to benefit children. Applicants would be required to submit to at least one random drug test per year, and would be responsible for paying for their own drug test. (OPPOSE)*
 - *Sponsored by: (1) Stephens, Ron 164th; (2) McKillip, Doug 115th*
 - *Status:*
 - *House Second Readers – January 11, 2012*
- *Creation and Implementation of a Drug Testing Program at the Department of Human Services (HB 699) (House Judiciary)*
 - *This establishes a randomized drug testing program to be administered by the Department of Human Services in exchange for public “benefits,” including TANF but not including assistance related to medical care. (OPPOSE).*
 - *Sponsored by: (1) Stephens, Ron 164th; (2) McKillip, Doug 115th; (3) Spencer, Jason 180th*
 - *Status:*
 - *House Second Readers – January 11, 2012*

As the session moves forward, we will update our legislative agenda. For more information, please contact Chad Brock at (770) 303-8111 or via email at cbrock@acluga.org. You may also visit our website at <http://www.acluga.org>



- Requirement to Report Drug Related Arrests to Department of Human Services (HB 861) (House Judiciary Committee)
 - This bill requires law enforcement to report all drug related arrests involving persons over the age of 18 directly to the Department of Human Services. If any of those persons are currently receiving TANF benefits, the Department shall conduct a drug test on that individual within 30 days. It also requires that all TANF applicants pass a drug test prior to receiving any benefits. Current recipients would be subject to random drug tests. Applicants and recipients are required to pay for their own drug tests (**OPPOSE**)
 - Sponsored by: (1) Harden, Michael 28th; (2) Ramsey, Matt 72nd; (3) Allison, Stephen 8th; (4) Dempsey, Katie 13th; (5) McBrayer, Tony 153rd; (6) Dutton, Delvis 166th
 - Status:
 - House Second Readers – February 2, 2012
- Forced Volunteer Service in Exchange for Unemployment Benefits (SB 294) (Senate Insurance & Labor)
 - This would require recipients of unemployment benefits to perform at least 24 hours of volunteer service each week. This places an onerous burden on individuals who are desperately searching for work and often forced to take care of their children because they can no longer afford child care. (**OPPOSE**).
 - Sponsored by: (1) Albers, John 56th; (2) Rogers, Chip 21st; (3) Gooch, Steve 51st; (4) Shafer, David 48th; (5) Carter, Buddy 1st; (6) Ligon, Jr., William 3rd
 - Status:
 - Senate Read and Referred – February 1, 2012
- Requirement to Participate in “Personal Growth Activities” in Exchange for Food Stamps and Temporary Assistance (SB 312) (Senate Health & Human Services)
 - This bill would require applicants for food stamps and TANF to enroll in “personal growth activities,” which may include GED classes, technical education classes, adult literacy classes, or “self-development” classes. This applies to applicants who are working less than 40 hours per week. (**OPPOSE**).
 - Sponsored by: (1) Ligon, Jr., William 3rd; (2) Albers, John 56th; (3) Carter, Buddy 1st; (4) Williams, Tommie 19th
 - Status:
 - Senate Read and Referred – January 23, 2012

As the session moves forward, we will update our legislative agenda. For more information, please contact Chad Brock at (770) 303-8111 or via email at cbrock@acluga.org. You may also visit our website at <http://www.acluga.org>



- Privacy in the Georgia Crime Information Center (HB 663) (House Judiciary Non-Civil)
 - Provides greater privacy protections by imposing strict rules for when someone's criminal records can be accessed and viewed. **(SUPPORT)**
 - Sponsored by: (1) Neal, Jay 1st; (2) Lindsey, Edward 54th; (3) Hatfield, Mark 177th; (4) Benfield, Stephanie 85th; Brooks, (5) Tyrone 63rd; (6) Ashe, Kathy 56th
 - Status:
 - House Second Readers – January 10, 2012
- Requirement to Drug Test Members of the General Assembly (HB 677) (House Judiciary)
 - Would require all members of the General Assembly to submit to a mandatory drug test. **(OPPOSE)**
 - Sponsored by: (1) Holcomb, Scott 82nd

Religious Liberty

- "In God We Trust" On All License Plates (SB 293) (Senate Finance)
 - This would require that all license plates include "In God We Trust." Anyone wishing to cover this motto would be required to either pay for a decal featuring the name of the resident's county, or pay additional money to purchase a special license plate containing an alternative phrase. **(OPPOSE)**
 - Sponsored by: (1) Heath, Bill 31st; (2) Rogers, Chip 21st; (3) Tippens, Lindsey 37th; (4) Hill, Jack 4th; (5) Hill, Judson 32nd
 - Status
 - Senate Read and Referred – January 9, 2012
- Public Funding for Religious and Faith-Based Social Services (HR 425) (House Judiciary)
 - A proposed amendment to the Constitution that would allow religious and faith-based organizations to receive public aid for the provision of such services. **(OPPOSE)**
 - Sponsored by: (1) Neal, Jay 1st; (2) Walker, Len 107th; (3) Mills, James 25th; (4) Collins, Doug 27th; (5) Clark, Josh 98th; (6) Braddock, Paulette 19th

As the session moves forward, we will update our legislative agenda. For more information, please contact Chad Brock at (770) 303-8111 or via email at cbrock@acluga.org. You may also visit our website at <http://www.acluga.org>



Reproductive Justice

- Personhood Amendment (HR 1072) (House Judiciary)
 - *Would prohibit women from accessing reproductive services even in cases of rape, incest and when the woman's health is in danger. This proposal would also prohibit many forms of contraception/birth control. It is also patently unconstitutional and the state would be forced to spend a significant amount of money trying to defend this proposal in court. (OPPOSE)*
 - *Sponsored by: (1) Crawford, Rick 16th*
 - *Status:*
 - *House Second Readers – January 10, 2012*
- Abortion Ban at 20 Weeks After Conception (HB 954) (House Judiciary Non-Civil)
 - *This bill would ban all abortions at 20 weeks after conception unless the abortion is necessary to “avert the death of the pregnant woman or avert serious risk of substantial and irreversible physical impairment of a major bodily function of the pregnant woman.” No exceptions are made for the general physical and mental health of the woman, and no exceptions are allowed in cases of rape or incest. (OPPOSE).*
 - *Sponsors of the bill admit that they are seeking to overturn the constitutional right of a woman to procure an abortion before viability, which is a right that has been recognized by the United States Supreme Court since Roe v. Wade in 1973.*
 - *Sponsored by: (1) McKillip, Doug 115th; (2) Collins, Doug 27th; (3) England, Terry 108th; (4) Hamilton, Mark 23rd; (5) Sheldon, Donna 105th; (6) Peake, Allen 137th*
 - *Status:*
 - *House First Reader – February 9, 2012*
- The Giving Birth in Safety and Dignity Bill (HB 653) (House State Institutions & Property)
 - *Georgia is one of the few states that allows pregnant female inmates to be shackled to a table during childbirth. This bill would prohibit this inhumane and unreasonable practice. (SUPPORT)*
 - *Sponsored by: (1) Benfield, Stephanie 85th; (2) Bell, Simone 58th; (3) Henson, Michele 87th; (4) Morgan, Alisha 39th; (5) Drenner, Karla 86th*
 - *House Second Readers – January 9, 2012*

As the session moves forward, we will update our legislative agenda. For more information, please contact Chad Brock at (770) 303-8111 or via email at cbrock@acluga.org. You may also visit our website at <http://www.acluga.org>



Voting Rights

- To Allow Online Voter Registration (SB 325) (Senate Ethics)
 - *Would allow residents to register to vote through the Secretary of State's website. (MONITOR)*
 - *Sponsored by: (1) Fort, Vincent 39th; (2) Henson, Steve 41st; (3) Harbinson, Ed 15th; (4) Jones, Emmanuel 10th; (5) Jackson, Lester 2nd; (6) Stoner, Doug 6th*
 - *Status*
 - *Senate Read and Referred – January 24, 2012*
- To Allow Voter Registration on Election Day (SB 326) (Senate Ethics)
 - *Would allow residents to register to vote and vote on the day an election is held. (SUPPORT)*
 - *Sponsored by: (1) Fort, Vincent 39th; (2) Henson, Steve 41st; (3) Harbinson, Ed 15th; (4) Jones, Emmanuel 10th; (5) Jackson, Lester 2nd; (6) Stoner, Doug 6th*
 - *Status*
 - *Senate Read and Referred – January 24, 2012*
- To Allow More Students to Use a Student ID to Vote (HB 707) (House Governmental Affairs)
 - *Currently, students who attend public colleges, universities and technical schools may use their Student IDs as a Voter ID. This bill will allow students from most private colleges and universities to also use their Student IDs as a Voter ID. (SUPPORT)*
 - *Sponsored by: (1) Morgan, Alisha 39th; (2) Powell, Jay 171st; (3) Powell, Alan 29th; (4) Brooks, Tyrone 63rd; (5) Ashe, Kathy 56th; (6) Dobbs, Elly 53rd*
 - *Status*
 - *House Second Readers – January 12, 2012*

As the session moves forward, we will update our legislative agenda. For more information, please contact Chad Brock at (770) 303-8111 or via email at cbrock@acluga.org. You may also visit our website at <http://www.acluga.org>