

ACLU Nevada Takes Action Against Federal Overreach

LAS VEGAS — Leaders from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) highlighted ongoing efforts to safeguard civil rights and liberties during a virtual discussion Thursday about the organization's nationwide Firewall for Freedom campaign.

The campaign, led by ACLU National and its state affiliates, aims to counter federal overreach and promote policies that protect local communities. "The Firewall for Freedom campaign is a proactive ACLU campaign to protect against federal threats and attacks on our civil rights and civil liberties," said Zara Haq, senior advisor and regional campaigns lead for ACLU National. "We're looking to state and local governments to enact policies protecting our communities."

Haq cited recent victories, including Portland's ordinance limiting federal intervention in local law enforcement operations and a North Carolina executive order safeguarding reproductive privacy. She emphasized that these state-level actions show how local governments can push back when federal protections weaken.

Turning to Nevada, ACLU Executive Director Tara Haseebullah explained that the state's efforts focus on four areas summarized by the acronym "FIRE": First Amendment rights, Immigrants' rights, the Right to vote, and Equal protection. "We're looking at local and state laws and policies we can enact here to help mitigate against the harms of the federal government," Haseebullah said.

Nevada's affiliate recently filed multiple lawsuits against local agencies for alleged cooperation with federal immigration enforcement, including cases against the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles. "We believe in transparent government," Haseebullah said. "We don't want resources that should be going to teachers and healthcare workers instead going to police departments that are cooperating with ICE."

Beyond immigrant rights, the ACLU of Nevada has been active in defending free speech and protest rights. Haseebullah said the affiliate provided legal support for protesters who were wrongfully detained and continues to challenge restrictions on student speech at universities. "We're not the arbiter of speech, we're the defender of speech," he said. "That includes speech that we find disagreeable."

Haq encouraged viewers to learn more about the campaign and get involved at [ACLU.org](https://www.aclu.org), noting that community participation is key. "This fight is not going to be just won by lawyers," she said. "It's going to be won by the people."

The Firewall for Freedom campaign continues to expand across the country as the ACLU and its affiliates work to strengthen state-level protections amid mounting concerns over federal civil rights rollbacks.