

DEMOCRACY  
FORWARD 

THIS IS WHAT  
DEMOCRACY  
LOOKS LIKE

# **COURAGE** IS THE NEW CURRENCY

---

**Made for This Moment,  
Ready for the Next**

**2025 IMPACT REPORT**



# Dear Democracy Forward Community,

We began this year uncertain about what exactly would unfold, but certain of two things: **the unparalleled power of the American people** and the Democracy Forward community's **commitment to doing whatever it takes to harness that power to fight autocratic threats**. As the Trump-Vance administration trampled on Constitutional rights, dismantled core protections, deployed the military in our communities, oversaw raids, and made it harder for Americans to make ends meet, the American people have met the moment. And, because of you, we have too.

When the president threatened lawyers and law firms, our Democracy Forward community was strong, ensuring that the American people are able to access the courts, represented by exceptional lawyers who are winning court orders at historic rates. We have been able to mount scaled responses to the Trump-Vance administration's federal attacks — filing hundreds of legal actions and winning — while also continuing our mission-critical work in states and communities across the nation.

**"In the United States there is no king."** These words appeared in the lawsuit we filed in the early weeks of this administration, challenging the president's mission to rewrite history and stamp out free speech. The call has been repeated across the nation as millions have mobilized

in the largest peaceful protests in U.S. history, determined to defend our rights. As powerful institutions have stepped back, the people have stepped forward. And, with your support, the people of this nation have been able to make their case heard both in the court of law and in the court of public opinion.

These pages provide a mere glimpse of the wins that you have supported and the impact our work has had for the American people this past year. They also show how we have used momentary setbacks to push forward, and how we are working to transform this historic crisis in our nation as a catalyst for generational change.

Uncertainty is still with us. But our work this year has made us all the more certain that the people can — and will — prevail. Courage is now the new currency — you have shown us that with your support.

**We are made for this moment and we are ready for what's next. We are so grateful to have you with us.**

**Skye L. Perryman, JD**  
President and CEO  
Democracy Forward Foundation  
& Democracy Forward



## POLITICO

**"...a powerhouse  
...challenging  
Trump 2.0."**

## The New York Times

**"...a full-throated  
legal response  
across a wide  
range of issues."**





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Reflections From Our President & CEO Skye Perryman .....	02
----------------------------------------------------------	----

## DEFEND

By the Numbers .....	04
Taking Swift, Decisive Action to Protect the American People .....	05
Democracy 2025 .....	08
Civil Service Strong .....	10

## DISRUPT

Going on Offense .....	12
In the States .....	14
In the Courts .....	16

## BUILD

Catalyzing Change .....	20
Ready for What's Next .....	24
A Team Built for This Moment .....	26

## SUPPORT US

Join Us .....	29
In the News .....	30

## OUR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

### Defend.

Defending democracy and policies that propel progress through regulatory and legal support.

### Disrupt.

Disrupting unlawful, regressive, and anti-democratic activity through litigation, legal action, and public education.

### Build.

Building a truly inclusive democracy for all.



# DEMOCRACY FORWARD 2025 BY THE NUMBERS

**250+**

investigations launched  
by Democracy Forward

**150+**

lawsuits filed by Democracy Forward  
to protect people and communities



**300+**  
**Million**

Americans protected from  
unlawful executive action



**650+**

partners in the work

**50+**  
**Million**

people reached through  
digital and online media

**1,500+**

detailed records demands  
filed by Democracy Forward





# TAKING SWIFT, DECISIVE ACTION TO PROTECT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**We met the Trump-Vance administration's harmful "shock and awe" with the power of people in courts and communities.**

At the outset of this year, it became clear that the president and his executive branch were ignoring the Constitution and harming people. We were prepared to protect the people. We know that one of the most important tools people have in this moment is the ability to initiate litigation against — to sue — their government. And we will use every legal tool available to ensure the government works for all people and advances the best of our nation's values. Our cases have brought people hope and helped communities find their courage.

This year, we have filed more than 150 lawsuits against the executive branch, launched more than 250 investigations, and submitted more than 1,500 detailed records demands across federal agencies. We have secured nearly 100 positive court rulings, including many that provide for relief to people across the nation. As the administration's autocratic playbook becomes more accelerated, you will find us accelerating our efforts and continuing to meet the moment.

**TAKE A LOOK AT THE HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR WINS**

## Inside **Philanthropy**

**"...leading the charge to rein in the executive branch"**

## *The Atlantic*

**"...the single largest source of Trump's legal troubles"**

## **THE HILL**

**"Democracy Forward is now the most prolific private organization to take on the Trump administration in court"**





## RESPONDING TO THE MILITARIZATION OF GOVERNMENT

**BLOCKED** the unlawful deployment of the National Guard to Memphis on behalf of elected representatives and communities in Tennessee.

**CONTRIBUTED** to court rulings challenging National Guard deployment in Washington, D.C., California, and Illinois through friend-of-the court filings to support state Attorneys General's cases.

## PROTECTING IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

**SECURED** a court order preventing the IRS from sharing taxpayer data with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), protecting tax paying immigrants.

**BLOCKED** the Trump-Vance administration's efforts to unlawfully prolong detention of unaccompanied children.

**FORCED** the administration to pause its plans to shutter the civil rights offices at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

**STOPPED** the administration's unlawful \$100,000 fee on each H-1B visa application through litigation pressure as our case challenging the scheme remains pending.

**SECURED** opinions from the U.S. Supreme Court affirming that people cannot be removed from the United States without due process.

## DEFENDING THE FIRST AMENDMENT

**PROTECTED** the freedom of association and religion by securing a court order to block Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) activities in certain houses of worship.

**SECURED** the first federal court order recognizing that executive orders against diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility violate the First Amendment.

**BLOCKED** the U.S. Department of Justice's effort to retaliate against the American Bar Association for its stance on the rule of law.

**SECURED** court orders blocking the government's unlawful attempt to shut down Voice of America, Radio Free Asia, and the Middle East Broadcast Network.

## COMBATTING THE ANTI-EDUCATION AGENDA

**PRESERVED** funding and intellectual freedom in American classrooms and colleges by blocking the enforcement of the U.S. Department of Education's "Dear Colleague" letter that conditioned funding on alignment with the president's ideological agenda on civil rights.

**STOPPED** the administration's unlawful withholding of education funding, securing the release of nearly \$6 billion in congressionally authorized funds for K-12 students.

**BLOCKED** the administration's attempt to gain leverage and political control over the University of California system.



## **RESTORING TRILLIONS IN HEALTH, HOUSING, CLIMATE, AND VITAL SERVICES NATIONWIDE**

**BLOCKED** the White House's nationwide funding freeze which would have affected trillions in essential services and programmatic funding across the nation.

**STOPPED** the administration's action to undermine the Affordable Care Act, protecting health care access for 2.2 million Americans.

**BLOCKED** President Trump's efforts to deny access to food assistance, preserving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for over 42 million Americans and critical waivers for communities in 17 states.

**BLOCKED** the freeze of Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding, preserving infrastructure, community, and climate investments nationwide.

**BLOCKED** sweeping, unlawful restrictions on health and housing grants, protecting services for survivors of domestic and sexual violence, LGBTQ+ youth, and unhoused communities.

**BLOCKED** the unlawful withholding of Violence Against Women Act grants, safeguarding critical supports for survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

**REVERSED** the unlawful freeze of \$300 million for the Senior Community Service Employment Program, protecting vital work opportunities for older Americans.

## **CHALLENGING ATTACKS ON THE NON-PARTISAN, INDEPENDENT CIVIL SERVICE**

**BLOCKED** the administration's efforts to weaponize the government shutdown by unlawfully firing thousands of federal workers on behalf of more than 2 million public employees.

**BLOCKED** the administration's effort to unlawfully compel civil servants at the U.S. Department of Education to transmit partisan political messaging from their government email accounts during the shutdown — violating core First Amendment protections.

**SECURED** multiple court orders finding that the Trump-Vance administration's indiscriminate government-wide firings are unlawful (currently stayed by the Supreme Court while lower court proceedings continue).

**DELAYED** the administration's efforts to decimate the U.S. Department of Education and USAID.

**SECURED** a federal appeals court ruling reinstating the Register of U.S. Copyrights in the U.S. Copyright Office.

**EXPOSED** and delayed the administration's attempt to "buy out" federal employees.

**DELAYED** the administration's efforts to decimate the U.S. African Development Foundation.

**RESTORED** funding to AmeriCorps.



# DEMOCRACY 2025

## THE LARGEST AND MOST SUCCESSFUL AFFIRMATIVE LEGAL EFFORT AGAINST HARMFUL EXECUTIVE ACTION IN HISTORY

**Democracy 2025 exists because none of us can meet this moment alone.**

In the immediate wake of the 2024 elections, Democracy Forward launched Democracy 2025 as a strategic hub to protect people and their rights from the Trump-Vance administration's unlawful efforts to strip away freedoms and economic security. In one year, the effort has grown from a few hundred organizations to more than 650, representing millions of people across the country. The Democracy 2025 network is the largest coalition and most effective legal coordination effort against harmful executive branch actions in modern U.S. history, collectively bringing hundreds of legal actions against the administration. Thousands of

individuals are engaged each day in building legal cases to protect people as part of the network, making both offensive moves and working swiftly to defend people and institutions when they are attacked. Democracy 2025 creates the infrastructure for coordination, thought leadership, and support for partner organizations in their crucial efforts to challenge the Trump-Vance administration. The network matches needs to legal teams to ensure that harmful and unlawful policies are challenged in court. This is especially important given that a number of large elite law firms continue to sit on the sidelines of pro-democracy legal work or, worse, have capitulated to the Trump-Vance administration's demands.

**As we enter our second year, Democracy 2025** will expand its strategic mapping, litigation coordination, specialized working groups, resource production, and attorney and advocate network, ensuring that partners have what they need to defend and protect the American people while finding opportunities to go on offense.

United, we will disrupt these anti-democratic actors and build for a better future.

Learn more and join the fight to protect democracy at [democracy2025.org](https://democracy2025.org).





NEARLY

70%

of legal cases filed against harmful Trump-Vance administration actions have been filed by Democracy 2025 coalition members and state attorneys general



Powering Nonprofits. Advancing Justice.

“...a coalition of more than 650 organizations that now anticipates threats against democracy and strikes quickly with litigation and action.”

226

litigation victories secured for people and communities by Democracy 2025

168

multi-organization collaborations among Democracy 2025 members

516

affirmative legal challenges to harmful or unlawful federal actions have been tracked by Democracy 2025 since inauguration

650+

Democracy 2025 partner organizations

## OUR PARTNERS COLLABORATE ON:

- ✓ Protecting free speech and individual rights
- ✓ Safeguarding immigrant communities
- ✓ Challenging attacks on essential federal programs
- ✓ Opposing corruption
- ✓ Blocking efforts to militarize our communities
- ✓ Promoting evidence-based health and science
- ✓ Addressing climate and environmental concerns
- ✓ Advancing civil rights
- ✓ Protecting free and fair elections

Democracy 2025 consists of more than 650 organizations, including ACLU, AFT, Asian Law Caucus, CREW, Democracy Defenders Fund, Earthjustice, Interfaith Alliance, Lambda Legal, National Immigration Law Center, NBJC, NEA, National Women's Law Center, Public Citizen, Union of Concerned Scientists, and so many more.



# CIVIL SERVICE STRONG

**Like 95% of Americans, we believe civil servants should be hired and evaluated based on merit — not political views.**

**Civil Service Strong, a project of Democracy**

**Forward**, is a nationwide collaborative effort committed to supporting our civil servants. A strong, professional, and nonpartisan federal workforce is essential to a functioning democracy. Across the country, 2.2 million civil servants swear an oath to the Constitution and deliver essential services, support our military and veterans, safeguard public health and safety, and uphold the rule of law.

Civil Service Strong leads an inclusive coalition working to protect, strengthen, and rebuild this workforce. Our partners span democracy, labor, law, policy, and good-government sectors, united in defending civil servants, reinforcing public institutions, private sector, and advancing a government that works for everyone. Together, we are building a durable, aligned movement to meet today's threats and shape a more resilient future for public service.

Learn more about how we are working to protect and defend civil servants while thinking through what a better future for federal workers could look like, please visit [civilservicestrong.org](https://civilservicestrong.org).



**Unions sue over Trump's 'illegal' plan to fire many federal workers in a shutdown**



**Thousands join virtual meetings seeking answers to federal buyout questions**

- ▲ Civil Service Strong supports federal employees seeking to navigate this uncertain time with litigation, technical assistance, and community development.



## CIVIL SERVICE DEFENSE AND INNOVATION FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

**Ensuring that when talented people leave government, they are still working for the American people.**

The Civil Service Defense and Innovation Fellowship Program is a flagship initiative of Civil Service Strong. Created in response to escalating threats to the professional, nonpartisan civil service, the fellowship engages former federal employees as researchers, storytellers, and strategic organizers. Our first cohort of former federal employees and public-sector experts launched in the fall.

Civil Service Strong will also host the first cohort of former federal public servants to help develop Democracy Works 250, a new initiative to reimagine a people-centered government that truly serves all.

## RISE UP LEGAL DEFENSE NETWORK



Through Rise Up, we provide free legal support — alongside our partners — to hundreds of thousands of federal workers whose rights have been violated, including many who were illegally fired. The network includes nearly 1,200 lawyers who are trained to provide up to an hour of free legal consultation to federal workers. Rise Up also mobilizes advocacy and research to confront emerging threats and ensure civil servants can continue serving the American public without political interference.

[workerslegaldefense.org](https://workerslegaldefense.org)

## Civil Service Strong: Serving those who serve

Civil Service Strong is led by Managing Director Rob Shriver, the former Acting Head of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management

GOVERNMENT JOBS TODAY,  
YOUR JOBS TOMORROW.





# GOING ON OFFENSE

## Changing the game.

We knew that if President Trump sought to implement Project 2025 the vast majority of the American people would reject it. The president did too, which is why he distanced himself from the agenda when on the campaign trail. As he took office and installed architects of Project 2025 into key positions in government, we knew there was an opportunity to go on offense. Our work is to expose corruption and extremism for what they are: un-American. In doing so, we unite people who may not agree on everything but are now united in the urgency to push back and move forward together.



## EXPOSING THE ADMINISTRATION'S COVER-UP OF THE EPSTEIN FILES

After months of broken commitments and stonewalling, we filed the first lawsuit to obtain information regarding the administration's handling of the Epstein files, leading to public exposure of the cover-up.

*Democracy Forward Foundation v.  
Department of Justice, et al.*



**Judge orders expedited processing of request for records related to DOJ's handling of Epstein files**



**Trump administration faces first lawsuit to force release of Epstein files**



## The New York Times

### Rights Groups Sue to Overturn Agreement That Sends U.S. Immigrants to Salvadoran Jail

## MOUNTING LITIGATION PRESSURE TO INCREASE TRANSPARENCY

As the nation reeled from the president's agenda of removing people to foreign black sites without due process, we brought a first-of-its-kind lawsuit challenging the agreement between the United States and El Salvador that perpetuated the unlawful detention of immigrants without due process. This case has already led to the public disclosure of key terms of the president's secret arrangement as we continue to press the court to strike down the agreement as unlawful.

*Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights et al. v.  
Department of State, et al.*

## DEMANDING FREEDOM OF SPEECH

When the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) attempted to chill Jimmy Kimmel's protected freedom of speech, we opened an investigation the same day and filed demands for public records.



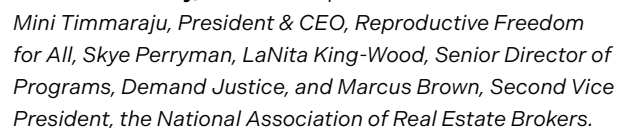
The investigation helped to mobilize massive push back. When the government failed to respond, we sued for records to expose the FCC's threats of punitive action against broadcast entities if they continued to air commentary critical of the Trump-Vance administration.

*Democracy Forward Foundation v.  
Federal Communications Commission*

## DISRUPTING THE PRESIDENT'S ATTACK ON ELECTIONS

As the president seeks to create massive databases consolidating sensitive and legally protected personal information on millions of people in an attempt to purge voter roles, we filed a class action lawsuit exposing the attacks on our elections. The case is on an expedited schedule so that we can ensure protections prior to the 2026 midterm elections.

*League of Women Voters v. Department  
of Homeland Security*







## STATE CASE STUDY

## LONGSTANDING DIVERSITY LAW UPHeld IN ALABAMA

### *AAER v. Ivey*

A federal court dismissed a challenge brought by Ed Blum's American Alliance for Equal Rights (AAER) to Alabama's decades-old requirement that the state Appraisers Board include two racial minorities — preserving a critical law designed to ensure representation in a sector long marked by discrimination. Democracy Forward and Wiggins Childs represented the Alabama Association of Real Estate Brokers (Brokers Association), the state chapter of the nation's oldest trade association for Black real estate professionals, intervening to defend the law and underscore Alabama's strong interest in remedying past and ongoing discrimination in real estate and appraisals. To support the defense, the Brokers Association retained experts whose reports document the lasting effects of discrimination and demonstrate how diversity improves decision-making and equity on bodies like the Appraisers Board.

With the case dismissed on June 6, 2025, the Brokers Association is urging regulators and legislators to advance reforms that address persistent inequities. This outcome marks a meaningful victory for equality and opportunity in the state.

*AAER v. Ivey* is one of a series of challenges brought by AAER, an organization that has attacked pro-diversity and other equity measures across the country. AAER and its founder Ed Blum are known for mounting legal challenges to civil rights and diversity initiatives, often relying on misguided reasoning based on the Supreme Court's 2023 decision in *Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA) v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*. SFFA was also founded by Ed Blum.



Democracy Forward clients defend Alabama law ensuring diversity on state's Appraisers Board.

**ALABAMA** POLITICAL REPORTER

**Lawsuit  
challenging  
Alabama real  
estate board's  
racial quota  
dismissed**



# IN THE COURTS

**Not just a frontline,  
but the center of the fight.**

## **FORCING COMPLIANCE WITH COURT ORDERS**

The vast majority of Americans — 81% of adults — believe that if a federal court rules that what the administration has done is unlawful, the administration should follow its ruling. As judges appointed by presidents from both political parties — including those appointed by President Trump himself — have issued orders striking down harmful autocratic actions, the Trump-Vance administration has sought to undermine the courts, at times even defying court orders.

**Our team at Democracy Forward has not only won many court orders this year, but we have successfully litigated compliance with court orders to ensure that people get the relief they are entitled to under the law.** We are working in the court of law, the court of public opinion, and the halls of government to ensure that all levers of power are used to ensure that when people win in court, those wins are enforced.

While the president and his allies tried to pass legislation that would weaken the courts' ability to enforce their orders against the executive branch, our team raised the alarm bell and ultimately the provision was removed from the bill. ▼

**HUFFPOST**

**GOP Provision  
That Makes  
Trump A King  
Breaks Senate  
Rules, Says  
Parliamentarian**

**POLITICO**

**“History’s eyes  
are on the  
Supreme Court”**

**‘No One’s Going to Get Out of  
This Moment Intact by Keeping  
Their Head Down’**



## WINNING FOR THE NATION

When the Supreme Court ruled in *Trump v. CASA, Inc.* and found that certain universal injunctions are not proper, our team sprung into action to ensure that people and communities across the nation who have been harmed can still get the relief they needed in court. Through strategic litigation strategies that take into account the Supreme Court's guidance in *CASA*, our team has continued to win court orders for people across the nation. Our work to ensure that people get the relief from the courts they need after *CASA* is just one example of our team's strategic adaptability.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

### Judges Continue to Block Trump Policies Following Supreme Court Ruling

Senior Counsel Aman George, part of Democracy Forward's founding litigation team, speaks to a crowd outside the Supreme Court at the Lawyers' March

## SHINING LIGHT ON THE SHADOW DOCKET

The Trump-Vance administration has used the Supreme Court's emergency docket — now widely known as the "shadow docket" — exponentially more than any administration before it, including the first Trump administration. Increasingly, the Court is resolving significant questions through the shadow docket, often with limited explanation. This trend has, in some instances, made it easier for the president and corporations to avoid deeper judicial examination and review.

While the majority of our cases do not reach the Supreme Court and are resolved in the lower courts, several of our major wins — from preventing the decimation of the U.S. Department of Education, to blocking government-wide firings, to keeping Elon Musk's so-called Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) out of the American people's Social Security data — have been paused as a result of unexplained decisions on the Court's shadow docket.

Our team has not let the setbacks created by the Court's shadow docket stop our work to win for people and communities. We find a way, or make one. After

the Court blocked our order preventing the decimation of the Department of Education, for example, we brought a second federal lawsuit that forced the Trump-Vance administration to provide more than \$6 billion for public schools this year that it had been withholding. We are vigorously litigating in the lower courts the cases the shadow docket has paused, and we are confident that many of them will ultimately prevail.

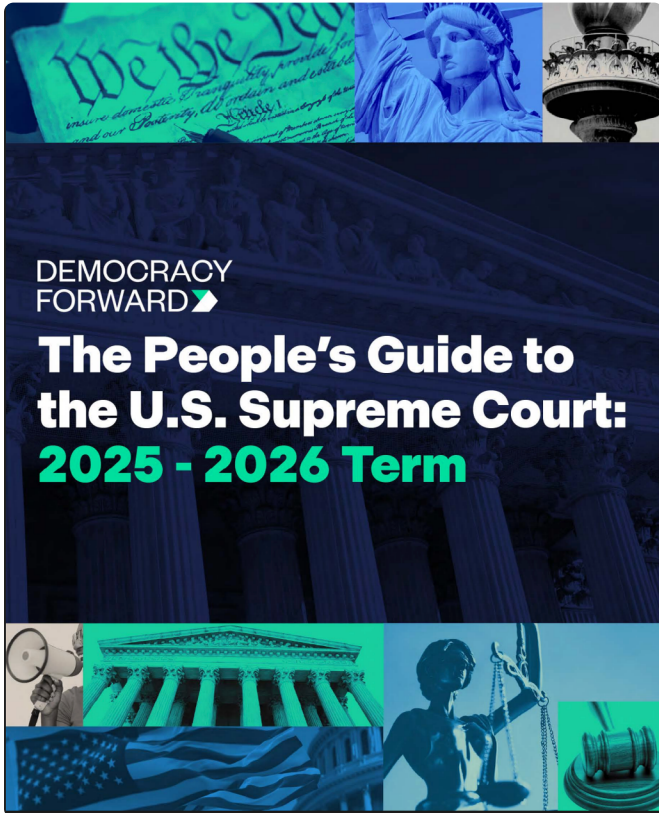
At the same time, we are shining a light on the harm caused by the shadow docket and building support for necessary judicial reforms.



REUTERS

### Judges vexed by Supreme Court 'shadow docket' rulings in Trump cases





## THE PEOPLE'S GUIDE TO THE U.S. SUPREME COURT

An informed public has the power to confront autocracy. The People's Guide is part of that effort — making complex Supreme Court cases clear and accessible so people everywhere can understand what's at stake. The 2025–26 term marks our third annual report on the Court and provides essential information about the cases that will shape the future.

**Download the guide:**

[democracyforward.org/  
peoples-guide-scotus-25-26/](https://democracyforward.org/peoples-guide-scotus-25-26/)

## BUILDING OUR BENCH

The Supreme Court will hear cases this term with real and immediate consequences for people across the country. From immigration and LGBTQ+ rights to economic stability and government accountability, the Court's decisions shape daily life and the health of our democracy. This year, we strengthened our bench of lawyers with federal appeals court and Supreme Court experience to broaden our capacity to engage in federal appeals and Supreme Court actions.



**Democracy  
Forward Boosts  
Appellate Bench  
With Latest Hires**



## ADAPTING TODAY, BUILDING TOMORROW

In addition to our urgent work to address accelerating threats, we have dedicated substantial resources to shaping the law in positive directions for the future. What is a dissenting opinion today can be a majority opinion tomorrow. As a number of legal principles and precedents are rewritten or overturned, it is important that legal advocates be focused on how to shape the law of tomorrow, not just today.

Our future-centered focus has continued this year, even as we have taken on real-time and urgent fights. We have dedicated team resources to building the law for tomorrow. We are active leaders in the Progressive Litigators Roundtable, a group of lawyers that are strategic regarding people-centered and justice-centered legal strategies. Our Strategic Initiatives team has provided resources to hundreds of legal organizations and advocates about the shifting legal landscape and opportunities to build legal theories that advance justice. Our work with academics and thought leaders has incubated new legal theories and approaches.



*Legal Director Elena Goldstein spoke at the Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University's Freedman Institute Symposium, "Upholding the Rule of Law in a Backsliding Democracy — Taking Stands, Pushing Back, and the Role of the Public."*



*Chief Program and Strategy Officer Jodie Morse joined a panel at Yale Law School's Access & Accountability 2025 Conference to discuss our work to hold the Trump-Vance administration accountable and stop abuses of power.*



*Our team of Democracy Forward attorneys celebrating a ruling in our case that ensured benefits were released to all 42 million SNAP recipients.*





# USING THIS CRISIS TO CATALYZE GENERATIONAL CHANGE

**Our Together for Democracy Initiative has built community and fostered change.**

## TOGETHER FOR DEMOCRACY

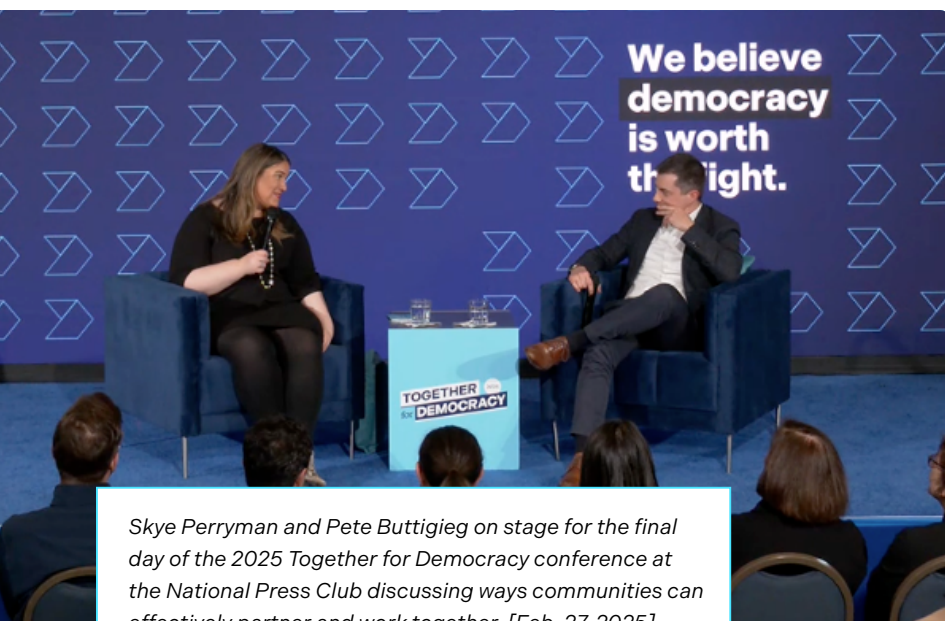
Strong communities are essential to a healthy democracy. They create the conditions for courage — courage to advocate for ourselves and each other, and to resist efforts to divide us. We launched Together for Democracy in 2024 to encourage and strengthen meaningful cross-sector collaboration in the pro-democracy ecosystem.

In February, we hosted our second annual Together for Democracy conference in Washington, D.C., convening advocates, scholars, policymakers, and changemakers to plan for the work ahead. The program featured panels on legal, organizing, and communications strategies, with speakers including community leaders, grassroots advocates, and national voices such as Governor JB Pritzker, former Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, Human Rights Campaign President Kelley Robinson, National Immigration Law Center President Kica Matos, Interfaith Alliance President & CEO Rev. Paul Brandeis Raushenbush, and so many others.

### ON THE HORIZON

Together for Democracy 2026 will be hosted on January 29-30, 2026 in Washington, D.C.

**TOGETHER  
for DEMOCRACY** 2026



*Skye Perryman and Pete Buttigieg on stage for the final day of the 2025 Together for Democracy conference at the National Press Club discussing ways communities can effectively partner and work together. [Feb. 27, 2025]*



# Dinners *for* Democracy

This year, we expanded our Together for Democracy initiative with nationwide grassroots efforts.

## DINNERS FOR DEMOCRACY & COFFEES FOR CHANGE

Gatherings that create space for people across all 50 states and D.C. to build community and engage in pro-democracy work. Since launch, thousands of people from each state and six countries have signed up to host events.

## CAMPUS COFFEES FOR CHANGE

Opportunities for students and university communities to connect and take action together. We also launched a Campus Ambassador Program, a leadership track for students who host at least four Campus Coffees per year and connect regularly with peers and Democracy Forward staff. We have hosts and ambassadors at 30 postsecondary institutions across 16 states and D.C.



*Dinners for Democracy hosted across the country.*



## HOST A TOGETHER FOR DEMOCRACY EVENT

It's easy to get started. Invite people from your community or network to come together — over coffee, dinner, or a virtual meet-up. Host at home, in a park, at your favorite restaurant, or anywhere that feels natural. We have a free Digital Toolkit that has conversation starters, discussion questions, and other resources to help make your gathering a success, including practical tips to answer the question: ***"What can I do to impact positive change?"***

[democracyforward.org/dinners](https://democracyforward.org/dinners)







## WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS

We Hold These Truths is a groundbreaking, nationwide effort — incubated and supported by Democracy Forward — to promote freedom, equality, and democracy by providing Americans with clear, reliable, and accessible facts about the protections provided under the U.S. Constitution for all people and the work required to safeguard our freedoms and nation's ideals. The initiative promotes civic education and information to encourage engagement by all Americans committed to our democracy and shared future.

The effort urges all Americans to join by reading, sharing, and committing to defending these values across all ideologies. Since its launch, tens of thousands of supporters of varying ideological backgrounds have signed the pledge.

On July 4th and Constitution Day 2025, We Hold These Truths ads ran in papers across the country. We used Independence Day to kick off a multimedia campaign with public leaders, actors, authors, and activists to raise awareness of the values that are increasingly under threat today. Videos to date include: Stacey Abrams, Reshma Saujani, Julianne Moore, Jodi Picoult, and Brad Meltzer.

Join us and sign the pledge at



[weholdtruths.org](http://weholdtruths.org)

**WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS**

**We *still* hold these truths. Even though they are under attack.**  
It will take all of us to protect and defend people, their rights, and our future.  
Join Americans of all backgrounds and beliefs in support of:

**Equality**  
Equality is a precondition of freedom. We all are free only when all of us, not just some of us, are free from discrimination, exclusion, and threat. Without equality for all, freedom for all is a broken promise.

**Equality of difference:** Our differences are our strength, not our weakness. Where autocracy and authoritarianism demand allegiance to uniformity, democracy demands the opposite — differences of people and opinion.

**Equality of voice:** Every person's voice is of equal worth, and every person's voice is equal, whether in the workplace, the public square, or the voting booth.

**Equality of opportunity:** Equality of opportunity is a right, not a privilege. Everyone is guaranteed the opportunities of education, employment, and participation in our democracy — regardless of their color, walk of life, social status, poverty or wealth.

**Equality under law:** Every person is equal in the eyes of the law, and equality under law is guaranteed only when the government's decisions about our lives are free of discrimination, racism, prejudice, bias, and favoritism.

**Democracy and Elections**  
In a democracy, voters elect their leaders, and elected candidates make the law. Our democratic republic functions best when Americans accept, honor, and respect election results. To achieve this outcome, elections must be conducted in a fair manner. Voting: A democratic society must enfranchise voters to the fullest extent possible, make elections open and accessible, and refrain from erecting unnecessary barriers to voting. Voter suppression is antithetical to democracy, and it exists when eligible voters are prevented from registering to vote, casting a ballot, or having their ballot counted.

**Peaceful transfer of power:** Our constitutional republic depends upon our shared commitment to the peaceful transfer of power, regardless of whether our preferred candidate wins.

**Judicial review of elections:** To ensure fair elections, aggrieved candidates must be able to invoke the judicial process to challenge the results of elections when the facts and law so justify, and are obligated to respect the important work of election officials in resulting judicial decisions. However, baseless claims about an election undermine public confidence in a trustworthy administration system.

**Conservative, Liberal, and Independent Leaders Join Together to Launch New "We Hold These Truths" Initiative to Promote Freedom and the Rule of Law**

**Join Us [weholdtruths.org](http://weholdtruths.org)**

Stacey Abrams  
Erika Alexander  
Donald B. Ayer  
Jennifer Finney Boylan  
Sophia Bush  
Pete Buttigieg  
Lynda Carter  
Erwin Chemerinsky  
Wesley Clark  
Barbara Comstock  
Kelsi Brown Corkran  
Rachel Dratch  
Michael Gerhardt  
Stuart Gerson  
Adam Grant  
Blake Cooper Griffin  
Thomas B. Griffith  
Lauren Groff  
Deb Haaland  
Robert Henry  
Sherrilyn Ifill  
Peter Keisler  
Thomas R. Kline  
Harold Koh  
J. Michael Luttig  
William P. Marshall  
Mary McCord  
Sharon McMahon  
Casey McQuiston  
Brad Meltzer  
Leona Mitchell  
Ted Mitchell  
Julianne Moore  
Trevor Morrison  
Melissa Murray  
Celeste Ng  
Skye Peryman  
Carter G. Phillips  
Jodi Picoult  
Anna Quindlen  
Jamie Raskin  
Dana Remus  
Cristina Rodriguez  
Richard Russo  
Brian Sandoz  
David Saperstein  
Reshma Saujani  
Curtis Sittenfeld  
Shanin Spivey  
Nic Storch  
Chutatisi St. Louis  
David S. Susskind  
Lisa T. Tiedeman  
Michael T. Tiedeman  
Seth W. Williams



ese truths.  
they are

protect and defend  
our future.

beliefs in support of

We all are free only when all  
discrimination, exclusion, and  
for all is a broken promise.  
are our strength, not our  
vitarianism demand allegia  
opposite -- differences of

of equal worth, and eve  
rplace, the public squ

unity is a right, not a  
rtunities of educatio  
racy--regardless o  
ealth.

he eyes of the law  
a government's  
tion, racism, pre

sted candic  
est when  
Its. To ac  
manner,

est n from  
n unable

nds  
ver,

ved  
challenge  
nd in return  
cials and  
s of fraud in  
election

ors must be

privileges, and

eaningful

o law, with respect

pendent and neutral

Intimidation by the

ernment, as well as the

Jennifer Weiner

Christine Todd Whitman

Bradley Whitford

Elizabeth Wydra

Will you sign?

Tatel

Waldman

Waxman



#### PROMINENT SUPPORTERS INCLUDE:

Erwin Chemerinsky  
and Lisa Tucker, former  
cabinet leaders Deb  
Haaland, Christine Todd  
Whitman, and Pete  
Buttigieg. Gen. Wesley  
Clark (ret.), Martin Baron,  
Lynda Carter, Sharon  
McMahon, Rep. Jamie  
Raskin, actor Julianne  
Moore, actor and activist  
Sophia Bush, and former  
Rep. Barbara Comstock.

## billboard

### ‘DEMOCRACY FORWARD’ COMPILATION FEATURES TRACKS FROM MICHAEL STIPE, WILCO, BRANDI CARLILE, JOHN PRINE AND TYLER CHILDERS

In partnership with **The Bitter Southerner**, we developed an exclusive 20-track double album titled “Democracy Forward,” featuring songs focused on democracy, resilience, and courage from major recording artists. Proceeds from the album support our work.

[democracyforward.org/](https://democracyforward.org/)  
[bitter-southerner-x-democracy-forward/](https://bitter-southerner-x-democracy-forward/)







# READY FOR WHAT'S NEXT

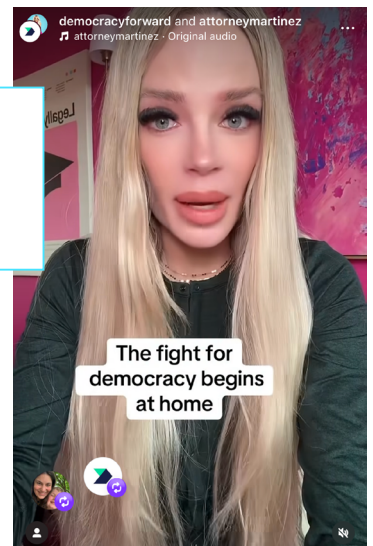
**We are prepared for the next moment.**

Our hallmark at Democracy Forward is being ready for what's next. Forward is in our name.

**We are prepared to address escalating threats to democracy that we know the nation will see in 2026 and beyond and are catalyzing this crisis to make real change.** We are continuing to expand and build a team that meets this moment and the days ahead. We are prepared to fight for democracy in our communities, in our courts, online, and everywhere in between. And, we are launching ground breaking initiatives to bring more people into the fight for democracy — and to reimagine what our nation can look like if the government truly works for and serves all people.



*We have reached more than 50 million people online. Our multi-generational media strategy is tailored to both English and Spanish speakers.*







## Because democracy works when the people who serve it can.

Democracy Works 250 is a nationwide effort to listen directly to the American people and to those who have served them—including current and former federal workers—to redesign how government teams operate and chart a new approach to hiring, performance, innovation, and accountability inside the federal civil service. This initiative marks the next phase of a growing movement to strengthen democratic institutions, rebuild trust, and restore a federal workforce that reflects the needs, expertise, and lived experiences of the American people. By turning today's defense into tomorrow's design, Democracy Works 250 lays the foundation for a government capable of meeting the demands of our 250th year — and the decades ahead.

Learn more and support us at



[democracyworks250.org](https://democracyworks250.org)



In December, Democracy Forward's Civil Service Strong initiative brought together nearly 300 community and federal leaders as part of the first launch of DemocracyWorks250. Pictured here are Jessica Floyd, The Hub Project – Moderator, Radhika Fox, PolicyLink, Dr. Rashawn Ray, Brookings Institution, and Micah Weinberg, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.



Civil Rights Project Director Audrey Wiggins speaks to an audience in Baltimore, Maryland.



**Our team is anchored in Washington, D.C.,** but spans the U.S. — bringing essential perspectives from across the country and giving us the agility and responsiveness that come with a nationwide presence.



# A TEAM BUILT FOR THIS MOMENT

**This moment requires top talent and unwavering dedication to using all lawful tools available to protect people and our nation — as well as to build a reimagined democracy that serves all of us. Democracy Forward's team is one for this moment and is ready for what's next.**

Democracy Forward is growing an exceptional team that can respond at scale and with the speed required to protect the American people now and in the future. Our team is innovative and agile with a focus on the future.

While we have been steadily scaling our team since 2021, we accelerated hiring after the 2024 presidential election to meet the unprecedented autocratic threats emerging from the executive branch.

Our organization — now more than 160 people — is a growing team with exceptional depth and expertise that works every day to ensure people have access to the courts when their rights are violated and when they face harm. In addition, we provide financial and in-kind support to small and midsize legal institutions as well as a network of public interest organizations to force-multiply the work. Our culture is grounded in inclusion and belonging, excellence, collaboration and partnerships, courage, and resilience. It fuels everything we do.

Democracy Forward President and CEO Skye Perryman appeared before the Republican-controlled House Oversight Committee in defense of the rights of immigrants and all Americans. [Sept. 19, 2025]







Francis Chung/POLITICO



## Democracy Forward On A Hiring Spree As It Takes On Trump

The New York Times

Justice Dept.  
Whistleblower  
Joins Legal Group  
Battling the Trump  
Administration



Francis Chung/POLITICO







## 2025 AWARDS AND RECOGNITION HIGHLIGHTS

This year, Democracy Forward was recognized by a diverse set of institutions for its positive impact on people and communities. Highlights include:

### **BUILDING EQUITY AND PROTECTING OUR FUTURE AWARD**

by the National Association of Minority Contractors

### **KEEP DC SAFE MISSION IMPACT AWARD**

by DC SAFE

### **PRESIDENTIAL CITATION OF 2025**

by the American Public Health Association (APHA)

### **GLOBAL WOMEN'S RIGHTS AWARD**

by Feminist Majority Foundation by Ms. Magazine

### **TIME100: MOST INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE IN THE WORLD**

awarded to Democracy Forward CEO Skye Perryman for the organization's swift responses to unlawful activities of the Trump administration

### **NONPROFIT POWER AND INFLUENCE INFLUENCER OF THE YEAR**

awarded to Skye Perryman for the organization's leadership to protect civic institutions



**"From standing up for voting rights and protecting the rights of federal employees to ensuring appropriated federal funds are being used as intended and combating the harmful effects of Project 2025, Democracy Forward has been a light in the darkness."**

APHA President  
Dr. Deanna Wathington





# JOIN US

**Together, we can ensure  
our best days are ahead.**

**Courage fuels courage.** Join this growing movement dedicated to safeguarding the principles of equality, justice, and democracy — because true progress depends on all of us.

## DONATE

Every contribution makes a difference. We rely on donations to support our litigation, research, and public education efforts. Democracy Forward Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Gifts to Democracy Forward Foundation are fully tax-deductible. Non-deductible donations to Democracy Forward, a 501(c)(4), are also gratefully accepted. Checks to either Democracy Forward Foundation or Democracy Forward may be mailed to P.O. Box 34553, Washington, DC, 20043. You may also choose [Tax Smart Giving](#) to maximize your impact through non-cash assets or opt to make recurring donations.

For more information please visit [democracyforward.org/donate](https://democracyforward.org/donate) or if you need assistance, email [donate@democracyforward.org](mailto:donate@democracyforward.org).



## GET INVOLVED

In addition to financial support, there are many ways to get involved in our work. Democracy Forward's initiatives invite collaborators, partners, volunteers, and hosts to take action — building community, showing courage, and strengthening our collective resolve.

### DEMOCRACY FORWARD

[democracyforward.org](https://democracyforward.org)

### DEMOCRACY 2025

[democracy2025.org](https://democracy2025.org)

### CIVIL SERVICE STRONG

[civilservicestrong.org](https://civilservicestrong.org)

### TOGETHER FOR DEMOCRACY

[democracyforward.org/community](https://democracyforward.org/community)

### RISE UP: FEDERAL WORKERS LEGAL DEFENSE NETWORK

[workerslegaldefense.org](https://workerslegaldefense.org)

### WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS

[weholdtruths.org](https://weholdtruths.org)

### DEMOCRACYWORKS 250

[democracyworks250.org](https://democracyworks250.org)






To engage the people, we have to meet them where they are. This year we dramatically enhanced our media relations engagement, and our work has been featured extensively in national and local media, major Spanish-language outlets, broadcast television, streaming platforms, podcasts and Substacks. Some of our notable coverage this year includes:

**P** A return of the resistance?  
**Politico**  
January 16, 2025

**USA TODAY** Judge blocks ICE enforcement actions at churches, other houses of worship  
**USA Today**  
February 24, 2025


**H** The Progressive Legal Group That Keeps Taking On Trump In The Courts – And Winning  
**HuffPost**  
March 21, 2025


 Unions, lawmakers attempt to block Trump administration's civil service overhaul  
**Federal News Network**  
April 22, 2025


 Skye Perryman joins MSNBC Prime to discuss Trump's First 100 Days  
**MSNBC**  
May 1, 2025


**MTN** PISSED OFF Lawyers Launch MASSIVE PROTESTS against Trump  
**MeidasTouch**  
May 6, 2025


 Judge Blocks Trump Administration From Dismantling Education Department  
**New York Times**  
May 22, 2025

 Michael Stipe, Jason Isbell And Brandi Carlile Among Artists Featured On Album To Benefit Democracy Forward's Legal Challenges  
**Deadline**  
June 10, 2025


 Meeting the moment: Democracy Forward takes prominent role in fighting Trump regime  
**Washington Blade**  
June 16, 2025


 Trump HIT with LEGAL FIRESTORM He NEVER SAW COMING  
**Legal AF**  
July 4, 2025

 Una demanda colectiva busca impedir que ICE arreste a las personas que acuden a sus citas en las cortes de inmigración  
**Noticias Telemundo**  
July 18, 2025


 Nonprofit sues DHS after Trump administration revoked legal status for migrants who entered the US under Biden-era app  
**Boston Globe**  
August 12, 2025


 The Anti-Trump Strategy That's Actually Working  
**The Atlantic**  
September 2, 2025

 Legal group Democracy Forward battles Trump's agenda  
**The Hill**  
September 10, 2025

 This Legal Nonprofit Has Brought More Than 100 Actions Against Trump Agenda, as Big Law Shies Away  
**Law.com**  
September 30, 2025

 Democracy Donors Look to Legal Challenges to Slow Authoritarianism  
**Inside Philanthropy**  
October 15, 2025

 Federal judge orders Trump administration to fully fund SNAP benefits in November  
**AP**  
November 6, 2025

 Education Department's out-of-office messages blaming Democrats for the shutdown are unconstitutional, judge rules  
**NBC News**  
November 9, 2025

 University of California Faculty Wins Trump Funding Fight  
**Bloomberg**  
November 14, 2025

Thank you for  
litigating the  
Rhode Island  
SNAP case.



Keep up the amazing  
work!

You give me hope —

Thanks for the work  
you're doing to defend  
the Constitution, specifically  
the Due Process Clause.

April 2025

Dear Staff of Democracy Forward Foundation,  
We are greatly worried about the  
state of our democracy at this time,  
and thank you for your efforts on  
behalf of America and its citizens. Your  
work is critical to our country's existence.

Thank you for all your organization  
is doing to fight for Democracy!!

Thank you for the great  
work you are doing to  
Keep our democracy from falling  
apart.

6/20/25

I appreciate your work  
on behalf of immigrants  
the U.S.



These notes, which we have received from people across the nation, are reminders of what your support means — to the people and communities we serve, to our democracy, and to our shared future.



## **INSTAGRAM**

@democracyforward

## **BLUESKY**

@democracyforward.org

## **TWITTER/X**

@democracyfwd

## **FACEBOOK**

@DemocracyFwd

## **LINKEDIN**

@democracyfwd

## **YOUTUBE**

@democracyforward

## **TIKTOK**

@democracyfwd

## **SHOP**

store.democracyforward.org

## **WEBSITE**

democracyforward.org