

SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

2021



IMPACT REPORT

PROTECTING VOTING RIGHTS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The SPLC is working to overturn key voter suppression measures in the Deep South. We're also investing in our Southern communities to mobilize voters of color in record numbers and protect equal access to the ballot box and fair representation.

IN 2021, THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

Increased access to the ballot box during the crucial Senate election runoff in Georgia by providing funding for up to 25 new ballot drop boxes to Fulton County – the state's most populous county – and by **assisting 233 people in "curing" small procedural mistakes on their ballots.**

Kept voters safe by training Georgia election officials and over 50 grassroots organizations about the threats extremists pose to democratic organizing and the election administration process.

Supported Black- and Brown-led civic engagement organizing in the South through our Vote Your Voice (VYV) program, which provides funding partnerships and capacity-building support to grassroots organizations that are often overlooked by national funders. After finding nearly **half a**

million people contacted by VYV grantees turned out to vote in 2020, the SPLC is increasing its investment in this program up to \$100 million through 2032.

Fought voter suppression by filing lawsuits in Georgia and Florida against new voter suppression bills that increased barriers to the ballot for all voters.

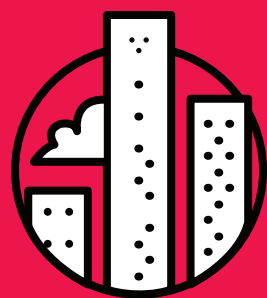
Helped 17 communities advocate for fair maps during the redistricting process by providing free technical assistance in our Southern states. We filed two federal lawsuits challenging Alabama's and Georgia's racially gerrymandered districts.

Defended the voting rights of people with disabilities in Alabama during an ongoing pandemic by filing a

complaint with the Department of Justice's Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties asking them to investigate how the state failed to provide an absentee voting program that is fully accessible to voters who are blind or have print disabilities.

Made a case for restoring the Voting Rights Act through the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act by providing expert congressional testimony and publishing two groundbreaking reports on the state of voting rights in the South.

Helped people with felony convictions navigate the re-enfranchisement process in our five states by partnering with and supporting grassroots organizations providing direct services to people who were formerly incarcerated.



50 organizations trained on combating electoral extremism and political violence



12 cases filed or litigated to protect voting rights



32,000 people contacted through our Vote Your Voice program turned out to vote in the Georgia runoff election



\$11,285,000 distributed through our Vote Your Voice program to 55 different grassroots organizations

ERADICATING POVERTY IN SOUTHERN COMMUNITIES

The SPLC aims to reduce the number of people living in poverty in the South by dismantling the systems that exacerbate wealth inequality and advocating for commonsense solutions, including protecting and expanding access to public goods and services.

IN 2021, THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

Stopped an Alabama law that criminalized and jailed people for panhandling.

Secured relief for immigrant workers and families impacted by a poultry plant disaster in North Georgia through advocacy and grassroots action with partners.

Reformed driver's license suspensions for 150,000 people unable to pay traffic fines and fees in North Carolina through a settlement agreement in our class action lawsuit.

Fought for Georgia residents' access to **timely and efficient unemployment benefits** through litigation during the ongoing pandemic.

Advocated for residents in our core states to **keep relief money that is rightfully theirs** – disaster relief payments from Hurricane Katrina and stopping wage garnishment from COVID-19 relief payments in Alabama.

Improved pre-trial detention practices that amount to debtor's prisons – holding people in detention simply because they cannot afford to pay bail – through monitoring and litigation against county bail practices in Alabama, Louisiana and Tennessee.

Won a major victory for North Carolina farmworkers, striking a portion of the North Carolina Farm Act of 2017 that stripped farmworkers of **the ability to bargain for voluntary union recognition** in settling legal claims.

Advocated with BIPOC farmers whose access to unprecedented debt relief through the American Rescue Plan is being threatened by litigation led by white nationalists and white identity extremists.

Secured class certification in our lawsuit to ensure **47,500 Medicaid-eligible children in Louisiana have meaningful access to the quality mental health services** the state is obligated to provide.

Filed amicus briefs and advocated to support **tenants' rights in Georgia** for people who were illegally evicted from a long-term residential motel during the pandemic.

Protected access to quality public education for immigrant students, students of color and students with disabilities:

When school systems implemented mask mandate bans, we sued to ensure that students with disabilities could continue safely attending school.

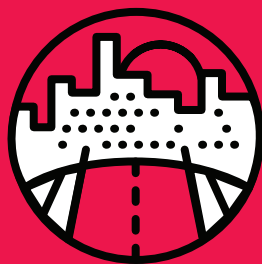
We published guidance for immigrant families to advocate for their right to quality public education.

We released a handbook for children with disabilities navigating the education system in Mississippi.

We released a groundbreaking analysis of inequitable school funding in our five Southern states.



212,000+ people represented in class action litigation for economic justice



\$118,500 distributed to 49 organizations providing direct services like food, shelter and health care to low-income communities in our Southern states



25 organizations and individuals represented through our BIPOC farmer debt relief advocacy



47 cases actively litigated to advance economic justice for immigrants, children, people with disabilities and low-income communities in the South

DISMANTLING WHITE NATIONALISM AND PROTECTING DEMOCRACY

The SPLC is working to promote an inclusive and equitable society by reducing the number of people who support white nationalist thinking and its resulting public policies. We do this through advocacy, litigation and exposing the influence of extremism and how it spreads to the public.

IN 2021, THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

De-platformed prominent extremists like Nick Fuentes by publishing investigative reports and **holding tech companies accountable** for enabling the online spread and funding for extremist activities.

Exposed and blunted the influence of extremist and hate groups in all levels of government by **tracking and monitoring 1,221 hate and extremist groups**.

Contributed to recommendations that were adopted by the Department of Defense's first-ever working group to counter extremism in the military, including significantly clarifying prohibitions against participating in supremacist or extremist activity, expanding screening and training, and prohibiting the use of social media to support extremist activities.

Pushed back against recent attacks by extremists hoping to create moral panic over teaching students the truth about racism in the United States by **distributing 627,179 free**

resources on culturally responsive and inclusive teaching to educators across the country.

Prompted internal investigations in the Department of Homeland Security after we revealed the **harmful activities of extremist militias at the U.S.-Mexico border** and Customs and Border Patrol's tacit endorsement of these activities.

Facilitated the passage of the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act of 2021 through our many years of advocacy for better hate crimes reporting statutes.

Pushed for accountability for those responsible for the deadly Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at our nation's Capitol by providing research and expert testimony to the Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack.

Pushed successfully to get Confederate monuments and symbols removed or renamed. We assisted

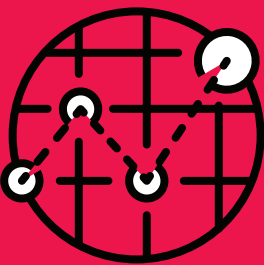
the Jacksonville, Florida, community in getting six schools renamed, and prompted the creation of an advisory council to rename streets in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Additionally, following our advocacy, the 2021 reauthorization of the National Defense Authorization Act requires removing Confederate symbols and names from all military outposts.

Challenged the Guyer Rule, a long-standing immigration rule with racist intent and impact that prevents naturalized unwed fathers from passing their U.S. citizenship to their children. We're suing to stop the deportation of several clients who would otherwise be U.S. citizens.

Combated online youth radicalization through our caregivers' guide to prevent extremism: Our analysis of those who used our guide showed it took only seven minutes of review for caregivers to become significantly more likely to recognize the warning signs of radicalization in youth.



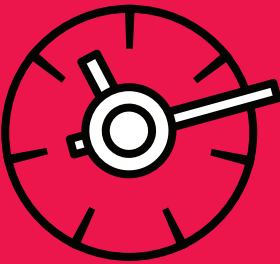
16 communities assisted in their efforts to remove or rename Confederate monuments



1,221 hate and extremist groups tracked across the country



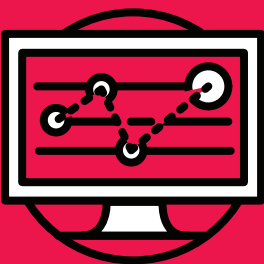
90,516 educators joined our Learning for Justice network, with nearly 8,600 participating in learning opportunities



7 minutes time it takes for our preventing youth extremism resources to make a difference



295,151 downloads of our podcast Sounds Like Hate, which received honorable mention from CNN



4.5 million people consulted our data on hate and extremism

DECRIMINALIZING AND DECARCERATING BLACK AND BROWN PEOPLE

The SPLC aims to reduce the overall number of adults and juveniles incarcerated in prisons, jails, and juvenile and immigrant detention centers in the Deep South. We work to reform local policies and practices that unjustly criminalize people of color.

IN 2021, THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

Freed over 20,000 people from immigrant detention centers through orders related to our *Fraihat v. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)* litigation that mandated ICE's pandemic response requirements to keep people safe from COVID-19 infection and release all medically vulnerable people from detention.

Won the release of 167 people from the Alabama and Mississippi Departments of Corrections as well as ICE detention. We provided direct services on asylum claims for 62 people. And we collectively represented over 94,000 incarcerated people in class action litigation to remedy inhumane prison and detention conditions.

Defended municipalities' right to determine their own public safety budgets without state oversight via lawsuit against Florida's HB 1, "Combating Violence, Disorder and Looting and Law Enforcement Protection Act," which was passed to directly oppose racial justice protests.

Got more than 25 unjustly expelled students re-enrolled through

lawsuits against school districts for overly punitive discipline practices. Students of color and students with disabilities are disproportionately unjustly expelled, suspended and policed, leading to involuntary institutionalization and future justice system involvement; we also **trained over 50 attorneys in this kind of school discipline representation.**

Prompted an overhaul of overly punitive school discipline practices in Gwinnett County, Georgia, through a school discipline case. The district is one of the largest and most diverse in the state, serving over 180,000 students.

Ended a Florida law that banned sanctuary city policies and required local law enforcement to use their "best efforts" to support the enforcement of federal immigration law. Testimony at trial **revealed the racist origins of the law sponsored by an SPLC-designated hate group.**

Helped permanently shutter Georgia's Irwin County Detention Center in response to widely reported medical

abuse against women. The Department of Justice announced an investigation into the ICE New Orleans area of responsibility following numerous complaints we filed with the DHS Inspector General citing widespread torture and abuse. SPLC also won federal oversight of three South Florida ICE detention centers.

Prompted Department of Justice (DOJ) investigation into a predictive policing program in Pasco County, Florida, following our coalition organizing and collective advocacy.

Secured class certification in our lawsuit to **end the use of solitary confinement** in Florida juvenile detention facilities and within the Florida Department of Corrections.

Litigated to end the harmful institutionalization of children in punitive facilities: We filed suit to end Florida's Baker Act, which involuntarily institutionalizes over 37,000 children each year, and to end the practice of placing Alabama's foster care youth in abusive psychiatric facilities, institutionalizing hundreds of children every year.



20,000 people released from immigrant detention in orders relating to our *Fraihat v. ICE* litigation



197,000+ people represented through class action litigation



167 incarcerated clients directly by SPLC released from prison and immigrant detention



34 cases actively litigated to decriminalize and decarcerate Black and Brown people



25 students prevented from being unjustly expelled through our litigation



45+ organizations partnered with through advocacy coalitions

OUR MISSION

The Southern Poverty Law Center is a catalyst for racial justice in the South and beyond, working in partnership with communities to dismantle white supremacy, strengthen intersectional movements, and advance the human rights of all people.

ON THE COVER

This collage by artist Ewelina Karpowiak draws imagery from SPLC's 50 years in the fight for racial justice. Images listed from top left to bottom right.

- 1 Family members of Michael Donald visit the Civil Rights Memorial
- 2 Cirila Baltazar Cruz and daughter (*Baltazar Cruz v. Mississippi Department of Human Services*)
- 3 SPLC office in Montgomery, Alabama, completed in 2001
- 4 Rosemary McCoy, SPLC client (*McCoy v. DeSantis*) and Vote Your Voice grantee
- 5 Julian Bond, civil rights leader and SPLC president 1971-1979
- 6 A migrant farmworker, representative of SPLC's work for immigrant justice
- 7 Melted clock from when SPLC offices were firebombed by the Klan in 1983
- 8 Students at Learning for Justice's (formerly Teaching Tolerance's) Mix It Up Day
- 9 Tanya Gersh (*Gersh v. Anglin*)
- 10 Civil Rights Memorial
- 11 Nat Wilkins (*Wilkins v. Lanier*)
- 12 Tracey Cooper-Harris and her partner Maggie (*Cooper-Harris v. United States*)
- 13 Crowd at Alabama Lobby Day

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