

ACLU
Puerto Rico

Our actions in October 2026

The ACLU of Puerto Rico is the local chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), a nonprofit organization founded in the United States in 1920. Our mission is to fight violations of the civil liberties guaranteed by the legal systems of the United States and Puerto Rico, wherever and whenever necessary.

We work to ensure that the constitutional guarantees and statutes that protect human rights and civil liberties are upheld and enforced in the Puerto Rican archipelago. We confront oppression, authoritarianism, and injustices against people.

OUR ACTIONS IN OCTOBER 2026



Our 12th Habeas Corpus Petition This Year in Defense of Immigrants' Rights

During October, we secured a bond determination for Mexican immigrant Sandro González Domínguez, allowing him to return to his community and reunite with his family in Puerto Rico while released on bond.
This case marks the 12th habeas corpus petition filed by the ACLU of Puerto Rico this year to defend the rights of immigrants.

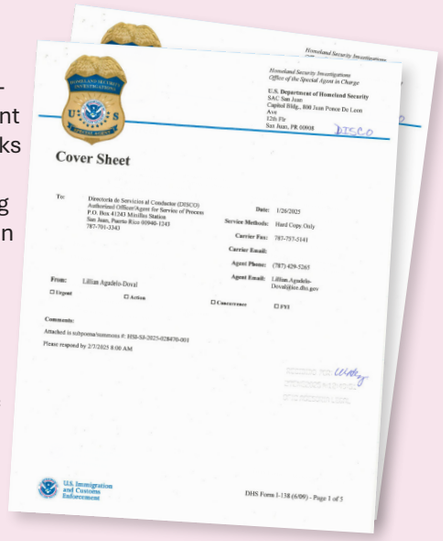
We also denounced González Domínguez's transfer out of Puerto Rico while his case remained pending before the U.S. District Court, as well as immigration authorities' failure to comply with a federal court order requiring his return to the archipelago.

A Landmark Case for the Right to Know!

We called for the resignation of Edwin González Montalvo, Secretary of the Puerto Rico Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTOP), after confirming that the agency cooperated with a "fishing expedition" by federal immigration authorities by voluntarily disclosing confidential information belonging to more than 6,000 immigrants with driver's licenses in Puerto Rico.

After a year and four months of legal efforts to obtain access to this information, the Puerto Rico Supreme Court denied DTOP's second motion for reconsideration, exhausting the agency's final attempt to overturn lower court rulings recognizing that the administrative subpoena that led to the disclosure of immigrants' personal information to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is a public record.

The Court's resolution, issued on October 9, 2026, and officially notified on October 14, brought the legal dispute over access to the document to an end. Following the notification, DTOP finally released the information to the ACLU of Puerto Rico.


Cover Sheet

"The Secretary of DTOP has a ministerial duty to uphold and comply with local laws and the protections established under our Constitution. Through his actions, the Secretary has demonstrated his inability to fulfill the responsibilities of his office."

Annette Martínez Orabona,
Executive Director of the ACLUPR

JOIN THE FIGHT

Defending rights does not happen on its own, but through a united and active community. We invite you to stay informed, share our analysis, support our cases, and defend the civil and constitutional rights of all people in the streets, in the Legislature, and in the courts.

- Visit our bilingual website and subscribe to our updates: www.aclu-pr.org
- Follow us on social media
- Write to us at acluofpr@aclu.org



Escalating Immigration Enforcement Operations and the Defense of Constitutional Rights

Throughout October, we denounced the massive and intimidating deployment of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in immigrant communities across several municipalities in Puerto Rico, as part of an escalation of discriminatory and violent enforcement operations.

We reaffirmed everyone's constitutional right to record, document, and protest these operations and warned of the retaliation and intimidation documented by the ACLU across the United States against individuals exercising these rights.

We also held federal authorities and the Puerto Rico government accountable for enabling these practices, particularly following confirmation that DTOP voluntarily disclosed confidential information belonging to more than 6,000 immigrants to ICE.

Looking ahead to November, we will continue monitoring and denouncing these operations, defending constitutional rights, and strengthening our efforts to educate immigrant communities about their rights.

Defending Abortion Rights and Reproductive Freedom

During October, we expressed our opposition to House Bill 1067, which seeks to criminalize assisting minors in accessing abortion services without parental consent.



We warned that the measure could create new barriers to exercising reproductive rights, particularly for 16- and 17-year-olds, who can currently access these services without parental authorization.

We also highlighted the legislation's potential constitutional implications for freedom of speech and freedom of movement.

As part of our public education efforts, we reaffirmed that abortion is legal in Puerto Rico and that access to lawful medical care is a right we must defend.

Looking ahead to November, we will continue monitoring the bill's progress through the legislative process and denouncing any attempts to restrict reproductive rights.

Court Victory Defending Freedom of Expression and Oversight of Prison Conditions

The Court of First Instance in Ponce dismissed the claims for a preliminary injunction and declaratory judgment filed by Carolina Catering Corp. against Defensoría de los Derechos Carcelarios, Inc. (DDC), marking an important victory for the fundamental rights to freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

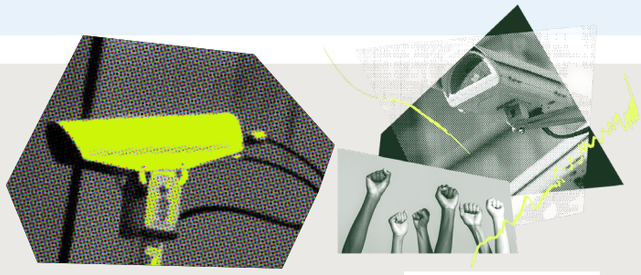
In a partial judgment issued on October 5, Judge Hamed Santaella Carlo concluded that the injunctive relief sought by Carolina Catering was incompatible with constitutional protections. He also warned of the chilling effect that such a court order could have on news organizations, journalists, and the public at large.



"Freedom of the press and freedom of speech do not exist solely to protect speech that is comfortable or uncontroversial. They exist precisely to ensure that people can expose wrongdoing, question authority, and scrutinize matters of public interest without facing the threat of being silenced by a court order."

Fermín Arraiza Navas, Legal Director of the ACLUPR

Say NO to Senate Bill 974, Senate Joint Resolution 198, and House Bill 897!



Public safety is a shared goal. However, legislative proposals promoting the use of technologies such as Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) systems require a broad public discussion that fully considers and acknowledges the threats they pose to civil liberties and constitutional rights.

Across the United States, numerous cases have documented the misuse of these cameras by law enforcement officers, as well as errors in the operation and management of these systems that have resulted in rights violations.

Scan the QR code to send a message to Puerto Rico senators urging them to vote against Senate Bill 974, Senate Joint Resolution 198, and House Bill 897.

¡Escanea el código QR y únete a la lucha en Puerto Rico!