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The ACLU of Minnesota Calls for a Special Session

The ACLU of Minnesota is calling on Governor Tim Walz to call a special session of the Minnesota Legislature as is his right under the Minnesota Constitution. Special sessions are not uncommon. There have been more than 50 in the history of the Minnesota Legislature.

A special session is urgently needed to construct a firewall to protect Minnesotans' freedom against actions President-elect Trump's administration is expected to pursue immediately upon taking office on January 20.

ACLU-MN special session priorities are:

Expand Privacy Protections to Insulate Immigrants, the LGBTQ+ Community, and People Seeking Reproductive and Gender-Affirming Healthcare

- Limit how companies and law enforcement may collect, use and share data to explicitly protect against civil rights abuses and disclosures to law enforcement without legal process.
- Protect health-related information not already protected by HIPAA, including information in health and fitness apps, period trackers, and financial and location information that could all be used against Minnesotans seeking reproductive health or gender-affirming healthcare.

Protect the LGBTQ+ Community

- Ensure the highest possible protections for LGBTQ+ students with a particular emphasis on transgender and nonbinary students.

Protect Immigrants

- Limit use of state and local resources in deportation and immigrant detention operations.
- Oppose and denounce the use of the federalized National Guard or military against immigrant Minnesotans and nonviolent protesters.

Address Gap in Policing Investigations

- Authorize the attorney general to initiate pattern or practice investigations and lawsuits against law enforcement engaged in civil rights violations.

Prioritize Equal Rights

- Pass the Equal Rights Amendment and enshrine the highest protection for Minnesotans against discrimination based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, or sex, including pregnancy, pregnancy outcomes and reproductive freedom, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation.

The ACLU-MN is calling for a special session on these priorities because if President-elect Trump does what he says he is going to do, more immigrant families will be separated, more people will face severe harm because of reproductive health and gender-affirming care restrictions, and the federal government will be weaponized against immigrants, protesters, and political opponents.

“Minnesota already stands as a beacon for protecting the civil rights and civil liberties of the most marginalized members of our community,” said ACLU-MN Executive Director Deepinder Mayell. “Make no mistake – the president-elect’s plans would devastate communities in profound ways and would seek to dismantle fundamental constitutional rights. Time is running out. We must work quickly and decisively to ensure the highest level of protection for the LGBTQ+ community, reproductive rights, immigrant rights and racial justice.”

Beyond a special session, there is work our state and local leaders can do to create a Firewall for Freedom. **Join the ACLU-MN town hall from 2:30-4 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 25, where ACLU-MN staff and community leaders – including Attorney General Keith Ellison – will share details of the plan to create a Firewall for Freedom.**

The town hall and Firewall for Freedom document are a culmination of work that the ACLU-MN and ACLU affiliates around the nation have been doing for months in preparation for a second Trump presidential term.

“When our institutions are threatened,” said Mayell, “it is up to us, the people, to remember those vulnerable values, to let those steadfast truths be our grounding, and to work with resolve and discipline to protect them, against all odds. If we don’t, no one else will.”

The ACLU of Minnesota is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that defends and promotes the rights of all Minnesotans through litigation, lobbying and community engagement.