

Restoring
NEW YORK CITY:
A Civil Liberties Agenda for the Mayor's First 100 Days



New York Civil Liberties Union
125 Broad Street, 19th Floor
New York, NY 10004
212.607.3300 | nyclu.org

RESTORING NEW YORK CITY:

A Civil Liberties Agenda for the Mayor's First 100 Days

Stop-and-frisk. High stakes testing. Surveillance. These are not simply abstract terms. For millions of New Yorkers, they are real life. The city that was once synonymous with boundless opportunity has sadly won a new reputation: America's capital of inequality and inequity, a sanctuary for the One Percent.

The Mayor Elect has promised a real break from New York's "tale of two cities," and we welcome his resolve. We also recognize that it won't be as easy as we'd like to turn the page and create a New York where all people can trust and respect the NYPD, where all children have access to a decent education, where immigrants feel safe enough to abandon lives lived in the shadows, and where protest is truly protected – indeed cherished – as free speech.

But it can be done.

The New York Civil Liberties Union has an ambitious civil liberties agenda for the next mayor. Included here are just some of the urgent civil liberties priorities the new administration must act on – priorities for the first 100 days that are time-sensitive and achievable through the focus and determination of the executive branch alone.

The first months of any new administration are crucial and set the stage for what will follow. The new mayor and his team need to hit the ground running and make full use of those critical first days. We look forward to working with the new administration to solve these urgent issues facing New York City. And we'll be watching to make sure the book truly has been closed on New York's tale of two cities.

During the first 100 days in office, the new mayor must:

RECOGNIZE RACE MATTERS

- Commit that all city policies take racial impact into consideration – including policing, education, health care, transportation and disaster relief.

PROMOTE FAIR AND JUST POLICING

- Appoint a police commissioner who commits to protect the basic rights and liberties of all New Yorkers – black, white and brown; Muslim and atheist; immigrant and citizen; rich and poor; gay and straight.
- Immediately adopt fair and sensible policing measures by reforming stop-and-frisk, ending Muslim surveillance, supporting a ban on racial profiling, strengthening officer accountability mechanisms, prioritizing police-community relations, and scaling back arrests for minor offenses.

ADVANCE EDUCATIONAL EQUITY AND FAIRNESS

- Appoint a progressive schools chancellor who recognizes that standardized tests must not be the determining factor for a child's future; listens to the needs and concerns of all parents, students and educators; rejects policies that push youth out of school and into the streets; and supports comprehensive, medically accurate and age-appropriate sex education.
- Say no to the criminalization of school discipline. End police control of the schools, return school discipline to educators, give principals real control over decisions like if they want metal detectors or want to ban cell phones, and retire overly harsh school discipline and zero-tolerance policies.
- End the over-reliance on high stakes tests. No single test should dictate where a kid goes to kindergarten, if she is eligible for Gifted and Talented programming, where she goes to high school, and if she is promoted and can graduate.

PROTECT IMMIGRANTS' RIGHTS

- Provide municipal ID cards to undocumented New Yorkers so they can do basic things like get a bank account or sign a lease, and close loopholes that prevent immigrants from calling the police and accessing other basic services necessary for a safe and secure city.

ADOPT ACCOUNTABILITY

- Direct all city agencies to embrace transparency and ensure that public records are truly public and open meetings open.
- Support and fully fund the creation of an NYPD Inspector General to provide much needed oversight to the nation's largest police force.

RESTORE NEW YORK'S COMMITMENT TO THE FIRST AMENDMENT

- End the "command and control" response to peaceful protest and ensure that New York City is a place where the right to protest is protected.
- Protect the rights of artists and photographers so that no one is hassled or even arrested because they take a photo or make a video.
- Protect religious freedom in schools and avoid the endorsement of religion that results from the use of public schools for religious worship services.