



MOUNTAIN STATES LEGAL  
FOUNDATION  
FREE COUNTRY. FREE PEOPLE.

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2025

THE CONSTITUTION'S LAWYERS

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# FREE COUNTRY. FREE PEOPLE.

Mountain States Legal Foundation is a 501 (c)3 non-profit law firm based in the American West. We go to court to fight for your constitutional rights.

# LETTER FROM THE CEO

For those of us who believe in the strength, wisdom, and power of our Constitution, 2025 is a year of encouragement. So let me encourage you: the battle is never over, and the war is never won.

*Doesn't that cheer and encourage you?*

It should! Because that is the very definition of the American experiment. Our Founders built a government of limited, enumerated powers, designed to restrain itself. You may remember that James Madison, in Federalist 51, described one of the limiting principles that holds government in check as "Ambition ... made to counteract ambition." However, the several principles—such as separation of powers, checks and balances, and federalism—that the Founders built into our charter of liberty were only part of their strategy. **They also bet big time on you!**

You are the "we the people" who authored a charter of liberty that granted our federal government a scant few powers. And the Founders were counting on every generation to do their part to jealously guard our individual liberties and push back against a government and preserve the liberties they fought to secure.

As he left the Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin famously answered Mrs. Powel's question about the government they had created saying, "A republic, if you can keep it." That was September 18, 1787. For nearly two and a half centuries, America's citizens have risen to that challenge.

When I joined Mountain States, I quickly recognized our profound responsibility as defenders of the Constitution—not only to our clients but to every American, just like you, whose freedoms we are dedicated to defending. I know you feel that sense of purpose too. As you'll see in the next few pages, we have our hands full! Because we believe it isn't enough to simply keep things from getting worse. Our Constitution has something to say about every one of these fights and more, and we believe it is well past time to take the Constitution on offense.

After all, it is our contract with the government we created after the men of Bunker Hill cleared the way. We ceded our government limited and enumerated powers in that great document.

And it is our responsibility to enforce the contract we agreed to. At Mountain States Legal Foundation we spend all day, every day litigating for liberty.

We do this alongside some remarkable, brave individuals. They stand up with us on behalf of all their countrymen who are similarly situated—

- Individuals who refuse to allow their government to treat them differently because of their race, or
- Individuals who have had the government foreclose on a home worth several hundred thousand dollars to settle an overdue tax bill worth less than \$2,000, or
- A child who is suspended for proudly wearing the battle flag of America's first navy.

Each client has a unique fight, and each unique fight exposes a larger battle for the liberty of all Americans. If they lose the fight for liberty, we all lose. That's why Mountain States fights—and wins—through aggressive, precedent-setting litigation, reclaiming liberty case by case, battle by battle.

Mountain States is an incredible group of litigators, communicators, and supporters who are determined not just to hold the line but to restore it by winning the hearts and minds in the court of law and public opinion.

That same September day in 1787, as he watched his colleagues sign their completed Constitution, Dr. Franklin also mused about General Washington's chair from which he had presided over the Convention. You may recall that it is topped by a half sun. Franklin commented, "I have often and often, in the course of the session, and the vicissitudes of my hopes and fears as to its issue, looked at that behind the President, without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting: but now at length, I have the happiness to know, that it is a rising and not a setting sun."

*I believe that sun is rising again. Are you ready to join us in the battle?*



*Cristen Wohlgemuth*

**Cristen Wohlgemuth**  
President & CEO

# NATURAL RESOURCES

## ACTIVE CASES

- *Baker Ranches v. Haaland*
- *WildEarth Guardians v. US Forest Service*
- *Center for Biological Diversity v. Haaland*
- *Garfield v. Biden*
- *Wilderness Society v. Biden*



*Three generations working the ranch: Paul Nettleton, son Chad Nettleton, grandsons Jarret and Kase*

## WHY WE PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES

MSLF believes it is our responsibility to safeguard our natural resources, and that the welfare of the American public depends as much on an adequate energy supply as on the protection of the environment. These factors must be balanced and considered together.



In 2025, Mountain States Legal Foundation continues to stand as a guardian of property rights, and as a champion of the stewardship of natural resources. These principles are part of the proud tradition of the American West. Yet government overreach threatens not only the private ownership of land, but also the responsible management of natural resources and public lands. MSLF's work challenges these intrusions on property use, emphasizing the constitutional right of individuals to manage and utilize their property as they see fit.

This year, we are confronting the complex legal issues at the crossroads of property rights and so-called conservation efforts. We are ensuring that federal and state agencies respect the balance among authorized regulation, public uses of public lands, and property rights, particularly concerning land-use decisions and resource extraction. We are vigilant in opposing regulations that overstep agency authority, deprive landowners of the value of their property, or simply exist as a giveaway to special interests. Our mission is to protect the Western way of life, which includes the development of land for housing, agriculture, and energy production, while also safeguarding the environmental heritage that characterizes our country.

We are litigating precedent setting cases involving federal legislation, such as the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, and others. Our goal is to defend the rights of landowners against expansive overreach that could restrict land use without justification or clear legal authority. We stand firm in our commitment to protect these rights, ensuring that the West and the whole nation remains a place where individuals can thrive on the land they own and steward.

# SECOND AMENDMENT

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## ACTIVE CASES

- *Black v. Garland*
- *Garcia v. Polis*
- *Sullivan v. Ferguson*
- *Ortega v. Grisham*



MSLF's Center to Keep & Bear Arms stands as a defending force for your natural right to self-defense from both man and tyranny. In 2025, we are taking the Constitution on the offense, as peaceable Americans are facing the most anti-second amendment era in our nation's history. While the government may be intent on disarming Americans, MSLF's Center to Keep and Bear Arms is equally determined to stand in their way. Our cases are aimed at challenging the unconstitutional actions of the government and holding the courts accountable to the true meaning of the second amendment.

Our multifaceted approach involves directly supporting peaceable Americans who are confronting unreasonable restrictions on their self-defense and pushing back against agencies like the ATF that overstep their regulatory bounds.

**We believe in the principle that the second amendment is fundamental to the American identity and essential for the protection of other liberties.**

As we go on the offense, we will tackle second amendment issues head on, arguing in courtrooms across the country to defend the right of Americans to keep and bear arms. We are also employing additional targeted strategies, such as comments objecting to proposed ATF regulations and testifying against unconstitutional legislation. We will not shy away from high-stakes cases or "minor abuses" that have the potential to shape the national conversation and set lasting precedents. Through our fierce advocacy and dedication to principle, Mountain States will ensure that the right to keep and bear arms is not merely maintained but restored as a cornerstone of American freedom.



Clients Jennifer VanDerStok (Left) and Alicia Garcia (Right)

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# FIRST AMENDMENT



## ACTIVE CASES

- *Kristen Fry v. Denver Public Schools*
- *Moms for Liberty v. US Department of Education*
- *Jaiden Rodriguez v. Harrison School District 2*
- *Young America's Foundation v. UCLA*
- *Danielle Johnson v. Oregon DEQ*



**Jaiden and his mom, Eden Rodriguez**

*Jaiden attends school at Vanguard Middle School*

Though it is our youngest practice area, Mountain States work to protect and reassert American's rights to free speech and association is already turning back the tide of power-hungry government officials. In 2025 we are confronting government entities, such as educational institutions and public employers, that attempt to compel speech or suppress the expression of one's values and beliefs. As the number of threats to free thought and expression rise, our cases will hammer home the principle that no government official can demand conformity on controversial topics.

The marketplace of ideas is the foundation of a robust and healthy republic. Our attorneys are defending individuals, ensuring that their right to express dissenting views in public forums is not infringed. As an example, student speech and expression are becoming a test for how strongly—or weakly—our First Amendment rights are protected. The dialogues within schools mirror the larger conversations happening across the nation, from town halls to the halls of Congress and, just as in any other context, the government cannot be allowed decide which points of view are worthy of discussing and which ones are too “dangerous” or “controversial” to see the light of day.

While our work encompasses more than speech in the school setting, I'm sure you will agree that our work in schools from colleges down to grade schools is some of our most important. Because schools are training the next generation of American citizens, they must lead by example, showing students that it is never ok to shut down points of view because they are disagreeable and that the proper response to uncomfortable speech is reasoned disagreement.

**Too many people believe that if ideas cause “harm,” by which they mean “discomfort” or “disagreement,” those ideas can be suppressed.**

Whether it's wearing a “DONT TREAD ON ME” patch, or public employees who stand up and speak out on unconstitutional employment practices, our greatness as a nation is closely tied to our ability to express ourselves and freely engage in a robust marketplace of ideas. MSLF is on the front lines, ensuring that every citizen has the liberty to speak freely and associate with others, regardless of the popularity of their views.

# EQUAL PROTECTION

## ACTIVE CASES

- *Brigida v. U.S. Department of Transportation*
- *Young v. Colorado Department of Corrections*
- *Holeman v. Vilsack*
- *Strickland v. Vilsack*



**Andrew Brigida** one of our clients in the class action lawsuit against the FAA *Brigida v. U.S. Department of Transportation*

Since 1978, long before DEI initiatives flooded our country, Mountain States has led the fight to combat government actions that undermine the principle of equality under the law. Our strategic legal campaigns are designed to dismantle any form of government discrimination, ensuring that every American is treated equally under the law.

In sharing that idea, your mind likely echoes Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous speech. While standing in Lincoln's marble shadow, he cast a vision for his country, saying, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."

Do you also remember that he began by reminding his audience of the promises of America? "When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men — yes, Black men as well as white men — would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

But these days, there are concerted efforts in the Biden Administration and throughout state and local governments to undermine these principles. Rather than recognizing the worth of the individual and respecting their unalienable rights, our governments are attempting to divide us based on meaningless immutable characteristics like race and sex.

These efforts are not only unconstitutional, they're dangerous. A prison setting is no place to tell guards to treat others differently based on race. The airline industry is no place to emphasize race or sex over skill and experience. So, the next time that you board a plane, remember that Mountain States is going to court to protect merit over identity politics.

In 2025, our attorneys are challenging policies perpetuating division and undermining the individual's right to equal treatment under the law. We are confronting the government's efforts to treat us differently based on which "group" we fit into. Our litigation efforts reinforce the notion that the Constitution guarantees equality under the law.

We understand the importance of this fight — not just for those we directly represent, but for America's future as a nation.



**MOUNTAIN STATES LEGAL  
FOUNDATION**  
FREE COUNTRY. FREE PEOPLE.



# 2024 IMPACT REPORT

Thank you to all of our donors for your help in fighting to preserve American's liberties! We can't do it without you!



**\$3.1 Million**  
Contributions



**\$750,000**  
Legal Fee Awards



**\$611,000** Endowment  
Fund Income



**\$11,680**  
Additional Income



**\$4.47 Million**  
Total Revenue



**7,588**  
Legal Hours



**11 Court**  
Appearances



**10 Cases**  
Launched



**5,191**  
New Donors



**8,071 Total**  
Donors



**225 Media Placements**



**34,628 Followers**  
across all Social Media  
Platforms



**28 Amicus**  
Briefs Filed



**\$6 Million in**  
Legal Fees Our  
Clients Never  
Received a Bill  
For



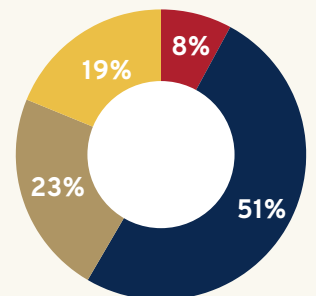
**11 Court**  
Victories



**14 Speaking**  
Appearances

**2024 EXPENSES:  
\$5,341,127**

- Legal: 51%
- Communications: 23%
- Fundraising: 19%
- Operations: 8%



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Mountain States Legal Foundation



# MSLF FIGHTS FOR YOU, ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Since our founding in 1977, Mountain States Legal Foundation has been a relentless advocate for liberty, taking on precedent-setting cases across the United States. Our supporters hail from every state, united by a shared commitment to defending and restoring the rights guaranteed by our Constitution—just like you. Thanks to this nationwide network of freedom-loving individuals, we've been able to stand firm in the face of government overreach and legal injustice. Together, we are shaping the future of freedom in America. With every case we take, every precedent we set, and every victory we achieve, Mountain States Legal Foundation is ensuring that the principles of liberty endure for generations to come. Your support makes this possible, fueling our fight to protect the Constitution and preserve the rights that define our nation. The battle for freedom is ongoing, and with your help, we are ready to meet every challenge that lies ahead.

## GET TO KNOW OUR BOARD

*“As someone who believes deeply in the principles of individual liberty, I am proud to stand with Mountain States in the fight to protect those rights from government overreach. MSLF continues to lead the charge in preserving our freedoms, and I am honored to play a role in this vital mission. Now more than ever, we need their relentless advocacy to ensure our nation remains true to its founding principles.”*

**-William McGrath, MSLF Vice Chairman of the Board**

*“America was founded on the principles of freedom, opportunity, and the rule of law—values enshrined in our Constitution with the understanding that they must be protected and upheld through changing culture & times. Growing divisions and extreme ideologies threaten to erode these foundations, putting individual rights and liberties at risk. Mountain States Legal Foundations stands on the front lines, defending constitutional rights, safeguarding property ownership, and ensuring that the government remains accountable. Their commitment to liberty, justice, and the rule of law is a necessity for preserving the nation we cherish. I am proud to support and serve Mountain States Legal Foundation in this vital mission, standing with them to defend the freedoms that define America.”*

**-Barbara True, MSLF Board Member**



# ONE OF A KIND

You might ask what makes Mountain States Legal Foundation different from any other liberty organization. Our answer—we are working for freedom in ways no one else is. And we have the evidence to back up our claim. Our Center to Keep and Bear Arms is the only in-house, litigation-only Second Amendment enterprise in the nation. No other organization is developing a similar center—focused on natural resources and public lands—either. Equal protection and free speech are principles crucial to the success and growth of America and thus are core areas of our litigation. MSLF is not just another liberty-minded organization. We spend our days in courtrooms across the country fighting for liberty, the Constitution, and our brave clients. Clients who we defend pro bono, and who in turn stand up in place of us all, giving our attorneys the opportunity to set legal precedents that restore and protect the principles we safeguard in our Constitution.

## 2025 LEGAL STRATEGY

We are the Constitution's lawyers. So what does that mean in 2025? There is no resting on our laurels. The fight for liberty doesn't pause, and neither do we. Over the past four years, we have battled—and won—against unconstitutional overreach, striking down racially discriminatory policies, halting government-imposed speech mandates, and challenging rogue agencies like the ATF that seek to rewrite the law. But 2025 demands more. With shifting political landscapes, we will intensify our focus on unconstitutional state and local overreach, ensuring that liberty is not trampled in the name of progressivism run amok. We will take the fight to agency bureaucrats who act as unelected lawmakers, exposing their abuse of power and holding them accountable to the Constitution. Whether defending the right to speak freely, bear arms, or own property, MSLF will remain the unshakable legal barrier against tyranny. This year, we go beyond defense—we go on offense. The principles of limited government, free enterprise, and individual liberty are not suggestions; they are rights. Our litigation will not only challenge bad policies but dismantle the very frameworks that enable them. It's time to double down, not back down. The Constitution demands vigilance, and MSLF is here to answer the call.





**MOUNTAIN STATES LEGAL  
FOUNDATION**  
CENTER TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS

As a fearless champion of the Second Amendment, the Center to Keep and Bear Arms has quickly become a national leader in Second Amendment litigation and a force to be reckoned with. Since its launch in 2020, the CKBA has been on the frontlines in the fight for Americans' Second Amendment-protected rights, and we intend to stay there. We pursue targeted gun rights litigation to drive lasting, precedent-setting change in favor of liberty and the Constitution.



**MOUNTAIN STATES LEGAL  
FOUNDATION**

CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROSPERITY & ENERGY

MSLF's Center for American Prosperity & Energy (CAPE)—a powerful initiative that will champion the Constitutional principles that safeguard America's prosperity, ensuring that the extractive industries are not crippled by government overreach. By taking on government overreach and dismantling anti-energy policies, CAPE aims to restore the balance of power between citizens and bureaucrats, ensuring that energy producers, small businesses, and consumers alike can thrive without unlawful interference.





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