

Guide To Your Week



Upcoming Events

House Bill 5 is now heading to the State Senate: The bill, known as the Safer Kentucky Act, passed in the House. VOCAL-KY and allies continue to oppose HB5 and call it for what it is the “Unsafe Kentucky Act”. This bill neglects the root causes of crime and focuses on increased spending on incarceration. It’s possible HB5 won’t be heard in Senate Judiciary Committee until March 7th at the earliest

- **HB 5 will easily cost Kentucky more than *\$1 billion* over a decade** just from limited provisions for which data could be obtained through corrections, impact statements and open records requests.
 - [New KyPolicy report](#)
 - [Fact sheet](#) (for easy distribution/sharing)
- HB 5’s harms to KY counties

- [Vera county-level analysis](#)
- [Jail Pop vs Bail Setting in Kentucky](#)

JOIN us in stopping these bad bills from getting passed. Below are some action items you can take!

Action Items:

1. **Send a letter from your organization to the bill sponsors** highlighting your concerns with the bill. [Instructions here](#).
2. **Sign on to our organizational [letter of opposition](#)** that will go to the committee and bill sponsors [here](#).

VOCAL-KY Know Your Rights Training: Being stopped by police is a stressful experience that can go bad quickly. Here we describe what the law requires and also offer strategies for handling police encounters. **When:** Monday March. 4th @ 2pm **Where:** 723 South Brook Street (Store front) **Contact:** Ronnie "Pony" Morris, pony@vocal-ky.org / 502-232-8797

Kentucky Day of Empathy: Join us for Kentucky's Day of Empathy. Where we will gather in the Rotunda to celebrate the work being done around empathy, with directly impacted people and advocates from across the state. **When:** Tuesday, March 5th **Where:** State Capitol in the Rotunda **RSVP** <https://mobilize.us/s/1Xa4kg>

Legal Rights for people who use(d) drugs training: The legal Action Center (LAC) uses legal policy strategies to fight discrimination, build health equity, and restore opportunity for people with criminal records, substance use disorders and HIV/AIDS. **When:** Wednesday, March 6th @12pm **Where:** 723 South Brook Street (Store front) **Contact:** Jennifer Twyman, jennifer@vocal-ky.org / 502-599-2778

Monthly Membership Meeting from 4pm - 6pm: Our general membership meetings are where we develop the knowledge, skills, and relationships required to fight for and win the resources and policies ourselves and our loved ones desperately need. **When:** Wednesday March. 20th @ 4pm **Where:** 723 South Brook Street (Store front) **Contact:** Jennifer Twyman, jennifer@vocal-ky.org / 502-599-2778

Month in Review

“We Love Voting Rights” Lobby Day and Rally: The people mobilized in Frankfort at the capitol on February 13th to restore voting rights to Kentuckians with felonies in their past. We gather in the rotunda for a rally led by people directly impacted by this issue, telling their stories.

Amnesty Dockets: VOCAL-KY joined with allies on Feb. 9, 10 and 12th, in Jefferson County District Court. The amnesty dockets followed an effort by the The Coalition to End Jail Deaths, County Attorney, District Court Judges and the office of the Circuit Court Clerk to dismiss bench warrants five years old or more that meet these same criteria in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. It gave many people the opportunity to resolve old court cases, fines and fees without being arrested. It was a great opportunity to prevent unnecessary incarceration and restore hope in the judicial process. We had a great turnout. VOCAL-KY was very happy to assist with Court reminders, transportation, lunch and court support all three days with our community partners.

Black Lobby Day: Allies joined together for grassroots lobbying in Kentucky. We gathered at the Kentucky State Capitol on **Monday February 26th**. Topics ranged from reparations, death penalty, education and black history.

Smart Justice Mini Lobby Day: On **February 28**, we joined together with ACLU of Kentucky for the Smart Justice Lobby Day! Leaders had the opportunity to talk to their legislators about Clean Slate legislation, Liberation Identification legislation, and why harsher punishments don't deter or address the root of crime.

Rally for a New Kentucky: Students in Kentucky are under attack! The 2024 General Session has seen bills restricting students -- and their communities -- rights to voting, learning about BIPOC history and inclusive, holistic care. February 29, was an event of solidarity with Kentuckians for the Commonwealth.

What We're Reading and Watching

WHAS11: [Closure of Thorntons](#)

WDRB: [Police Reforms](#)

Cardbox: [Policing - A Fact Finding Report](#)

NEWSBREAK: [Anti-discrimination ordinances](#)

Member Spotlight

Lydia Gipson

To be an activist is to speak. To be an advocate is to listen. Society can't move forward without both. Those are just some of the values I learned from being a member of VOCAL-KY.



Lisa Hatcher

VOCAL-KY has been an amazing resource for our community. I strive to go out of my way to help others before myself. Being a member has given me the opportunity to help people and myself process through our systems, like housing rights and the jail systems. I struggled with both of these issues in my life and now I'm advocating to change them.

