



May 27, 2023

CONTINUED WORK AT THE LEGISLATURE

The Senate and House are taking a break from floor proceedings for the next few weeks in an effort to provide time for members and stakeholders to negotiate the remaining big legislative issues for this session, including a potential Prop 400 transportation tax extension and Arizona's housing crisis. Historically, floor proceedings would typically happen daily until sine die, even if there were no bills that needed to be read, debated on or voted out. Members found themselves coming in for a prayer and to say the Pledge of Allegiance only, then proceedings would be adjourned. Out of respect for everyone's time, President Warren Petersen has generally halted this practice in the Senate this session. Members are scheduled to return to floor proceedings June 12. The goal is to wrap up final work on any outstanding bills then.



PROTECTING PARENTAL RIGHTS & ARIZONA KIDS

Some Arizona public schools are pushing the use of gender pronouns on students without parental knowledge as a way to mask from parents the psychiatric issues certain kids are experiencing in growing numbers. According to the National Library of Medicine, gender dysphoria among children is becoming increasingly common and is associated with numerous other conditions like depression, anxiety and suicide. My bill, SB 1001, would have prohibited a school district or charter school from knowingly referring to students under the age of 18 by a pronoun that differs from the child's biological sex, or a first name that is not listed in school records. We believe parents have a right to know if their child is in psychological turmoil so they can provide them with proper care. Sadly, the Governor disagrees and vetoed the bill.



- Senator John Kavanagh

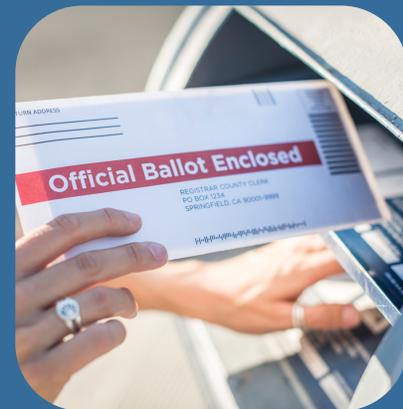




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HOBBS DENIES ELECTION TRANSPARENCY

I couldn't be more furious at the Governor's decision to disregard the need for complete transparency in our elections by vetoing HB 2560. Voting is the sacred way we as Americans give our consent to be governed, and the people of Arizona should have confidence in the integrity of that process. To increase voter confidence, we need to demystify the elections and allow the public the transparency they deserve. I worked hard with both sides of the aisle for two years to address the lack of trust in our state's elections, which is why this bill had strong bipartisan support, including from Democrat Secretary of State Adrian Fontes. Clearly, Governor Hobbs is going back on her promise to sign legislation with bipartisan support by vetoing yet another good bill.



- Senator Ken Bennett



COLORADO RIVER WATER CUTS

A few weeks ago, I joined State Representatives Gail Griffin and Lupe Diaz in sending Governor Hobbs a letter urging her office and the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) to prioritize time-sensitive efforts to protect Arizona's interests in its water supplied by the Colorado River. Fortunately, a deal was reached between Arizona, California and Nevada to cut millions of gallons of water usage over the next four years. I spoke with Ted Simmons on PBS *Arizona Horizon* about this is great news. It's always better when the states can make their own agreement rather than have the heavy hand of the federal government come in and do it for us. This will now allow us to look ahead for long-term solutions to conserve our state's most important natural resource.



- Senator Sine Kerr





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INVESTIGATING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE

I led a monumental committee this week at the Capitol focusing on local, state and federal efforts in recent years to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic and the fallout from such measures. I'm so proud of and grateful for every person who was a part of this two-day committee. The testimonies we heard were disturbing and heartbreaking but resulted in massively productive and eye-opening conversations about the many ways our government and medical industry failed Americans, as well as how we can work toward ensuring we never experience this again. I'm looking forward to continuing our conversations in subsequent committees in the near future. To watch the hearings in their entirety, head to azleg.gov and find "archived meetings" under the "Senate" tab.



-Senator Janae Shamp

DEFENDING SCHOOL CHOICE

I joined my colleagues on both the Senate and House Leadership teams in a letter responding to Attorney General Mayes on her irresponsible claims and accusations against families exercising school choice freedom through Arizona's Universal ESA Program. It's alarming the state's chief legal officer would make such outlandish claims that are refuted by Arizona law, and we demand she publicly retracts them. The Legislature did not authorize and does not condone the selective targeting or roving investigations of ESA parents. Legal and ethical political attacks against ESAs have repeatedly failed, and this situation will be no different. We remain proud that Arizona was the first in the nation to implement universal school choice, which has benefited our families. The state has been a model for the rest of the county and will continue to be so.



-Senator T.J Shope



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CONTINUING TO SUPPORT SCHOOL CHOICE

I feel it's important to reiterate my support for the Empowerment Scholarship Accounts program (ESAs) amid Attorney General Kris Mayes' threats to investigate families participating in it. As a parent with children who have benefited from this program, I know how impactful and important it is for Arizona. I've been a champion for school choice since I first filed for office in 2019 and will always fight to support it. Arizona can rest assured; this program is safe and it's not going away. Department of Education Superintendent Tom Horne and ESA Director Christine Accurso have done a tremendous job ensuring this program is only being used for educational purposes, something the past administration, unfortunately, did not do. Bottom line, ESAs are here to stay.



- Senator Justine Wadsack

OHV RECREATION IN ARIZONA HITS A ROADBLOCK

An important bill I sponsored addressing technological advancements in off-highway vehicles (OHV) operating in Arizona was ignorantly vetoed by the Governor this week. SB 1100 would have increased the maximum weight of OHVs subject to registration and tax requirements from 2500 to 3500 pounds. Hobbs' veto letter stated she believes the *Off-Highway Study Committee* established last session, instead of the Legislature, should determine whether upgraded OHVs can be legally operated in Arizona. However, this study committee was formed to address concerns stemming from improper use of OHVs and enforcement issues, not whether policymakers should amend the state's OHV definition to allow new products for our outdoor enthusiasts. Hobbs' veto shows her lack of knowledge on the issue, which is a complete disservice to our state.



- Senator Frank Carroll



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HOBBS MISSES OPPORTUNITY TO PROTECT DRIVERS

Photo radar enforcement is a scheme cities and towns use to collect millions of dollars from unwitting drivers, statewide each year. These systems ignore the root causes of safety concerns on our roads. They do little to eliminate immediate threats like drunk drivers, reckless drivers or speeders. Instead, photo radar cameras provide quick cash for the coffers of unelected municipal bureaucrats. Photo radar also incentivizes politicians to penalize our citizens with unfair fines because 10% of each citation goes directly to fund campaigns through the AZ Clean Elections program. Additionally, every driver who passes by a camera, whether they've violated the law or not, is being photographed and documented. I sponsored SB 1234 to ban these systems that take advantage of Arizona drivers. This week, Hobbs failed our citizens by vetoing the bill.



-Senator Wendy Rogers

REMEMBER AND HONOR

While many of you will enjoy this holiday weekend with family, friends, BBQs and pool parties, we want to take some time to acknowledge the true meaning of Memorial Day. This special occasion is a time to honor and remember the heroes who courageously gave their lives in service to our country. We are forever grateful for their sacrifice and their dedication to protecting our freedoms. Our thoughts and prayers are also with those who have lost loved ones in the armed services. May the pain and grief they've experienced not be in vain. We hope you will set a moment aside to reflect on the liberties provided to us by the brave men and women in who have paid the ultimate price. Freedom isn't free. We should never take this notion for granted. God bless. Be safe.





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