



January 27, 2024

A PLAN TO COMBAT THE BORDER INVASION

Joe Biden and his administration have made it unequivocally clear that they have abandoned their duties to enforce immigration policy. As a result, our communities are suffering the dire consequences of the lawlessness associated with tens of thousands of people, many of whom are criminals, illegally entering our state each month with no repercussions. It's our duty as state legislators to ensure the safety of our citizens, which is why Senator David Gowan and I introduced legislation this week to provide local, county, and state law enforcement the tools they need to protect our communities from harm. The "Arizona Border Invasion Act" creates three border-related crimes with subsequent punishments. The "Aggravated Unlawful Flight" bill creates tougher penalties for drivers who endanger the life of another person while fleeing law enforcement and greater penalties for transporting children under the age of 15. Learn more in this [video](#).



-Senator Janae Shamp



OUR CHILDREN ARE NOT FOR SALE

I am a mother, a wife, and a protector of our kids. I believe strongly in holding child traffickers accountable for their heinous crimes, which is why I've filed legislation for a ballot referral to put convicted child sex traffickers behind bars for life. I hosted a press conference this week with a clear message: our children are not for sale, and we will not tolerate heinous crimes against them. I believe in this message so much, I want it enshrined in the Arizona Constitution. If SCR 1021 advances, voters will decide whether to authorize a prison sentence of natural life with no opportunity for release for individuals convicted of the most egregious forms of child sex trafficking. Trafficking is not specific to age, race, or gender, and it occurs throughout rural Arizona, as well as suburban and urban areas across our state. It's a monstrous crime that's become more prevalent in our state because of Biden's open borders. I, along with my Republican colleagues, will continue to fight to protect our children. -Senator Shawna Bolick





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PROTECTING YOUR TAX DOLLARS

As Arizonans struggle with inflation, it's critically important to scrutinize the government's handling of our citizens' hard-earned tax dollars and to push back against bad practices. I've been diligently working with Senate colleagues and Senator Sinema's office to come to a resolution with the federal government that will protect the more than 700,000 recipients of last year's tax rebate from having to give Biden's IRS a portion of those dollars this tax season. It makes zero sense that the IRS is taxing a tax rebate. I also introduced SB 1056 to prevent cities and counties from imposing tax hikes on their citizens without a two-thirds vote from their governing body. Lastly, I introduced SCR 1006 to allow property owners to apply for a property tax refund if cities or counties fail to take action against a public nuisance that negatively impacts their property value, subject to voter approval. Both bills passed out of committee this week, but all Democrats voted against them.



-President Warren Petersen



BRASS KNUCKLE BAN

An East Valley teenager recently caught my attention with his efforts to push for new laws against the use of brass knuckles. This teen was attacked by someone who used the weapon to punch him in the head. Unfortunately, I've learned this was not an isolated attack. As a retired police officer, I have to admit, I was shocked brass knuckles are even legal in our state. In my opinion, they are purely offensive weapons and have no self-defense value. Handguns, tasers, and chemical sprays are all defensive weapons that people can carry. Brass knuckles are not a defensive weapon, as they require you to get close to an assailant. While I'm still ironing out details, I've pledged to work on legislation to restrict these devices used to enhance the power of a punch. The use of brass knuckles can result in dangerous and deadly attacks, which our citizens should never be subject to. You can learn more about this issue by watching a [story I participated in with ABC 15](#).



-Senator John Kavanagh





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SAFEGUARDING ARIZONA'S GROUNDWATER

I introduced legislation this week to safeguard groundwater resources in rural Arizona communities by providing an additional management tool to residents of basins outside of active management areas. SB 1221 allows citizens to initiate, form, and manage groundwater basins, while preserving the existing foundational economy in their communities. I know that farmers and ranchers, who are multi-generational land stewards of Arizona's resources, are all in on collaborative solutions to aquifer management that require their participation. Although the work is harder when water users are fairly represented at the table, I have dedicated the last several months to hearing from agricultural, industrial, commercial and other rural water users. I will continue to bring more voices to the table from across the state. I believe wholeheartedly in this proposal, which is a product formed by rural Arizonans sharing the common goal of preserving their local economies and the health of groundwater basins for generations to come.



-Senator Sine Kerr

EXAMINING DCS GROUP HOMES

During the recent sunset review of the Arizona Department of Child Safety, DCS revealed a dangerous issue regarding its inability to investigate group home employees when there is alleged child abuse. Under current law, DCS does not have the authority to investigate these allegations, and instead must pass them along to local law enforcement. As chairman of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee, I'm abundantly aware that reform to improve DCS oversight is necessary, which is why I've sponsored SB 1067. This bill, which has already passed out of committee, will require DCS to report a person suspected of child abuse if they are an employee of a child welfare agency contracted by DCS and the child is placed with the agency. This is the beginning of what I hope to be many successful reforms to increase oversight and accountability. The safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children is a top priority for Senate Republicans.



-Senator T.J. Shope



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DEFENDING DEMOCRACY

Efforts by Democrats to disqualify former President Donald Trump in the 2024 presidential election will not prevail. The Arizona Legislature is proud to join more than two dozen states to ensure he is not removed from the Colorado ballot, or any other state's ballot. Trump recently filed a brief asking the U.S. Supreme Court to rule that the Constitution's 14th Amendment doesn't prevent him from appearing on the Republican primary ballot. Arizona Republicans then joined a brief to defend our former president and oppose the Colorado Supreme Court's bad ruling to disqualify him. Radical liberals are posing an enormous threat to our democracy, and it is imperative we continue to fight against this unconscionable maneuver. I'm proud to be a part of our Arizona Republican Caucus that makes defending our freedoms a priority, and I am in strong support of our efforts to protect our elections.



-Senator Wendy Rogers

NATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK

It's national school choice week, and Arizona has become the gold standard with our historic 2022 expansion of the Universal Empowerment Scholarship Accounts program. Republican lawmakers are committed to funding students, not systems. This program empowers parents to use their own tax dollars to pay for their preferred educational settings that will best serve their children's unique needs, whether through private schooling, homeschooling, online curriculum, or other options. Contrary to the misinformation Hobbs, Democrats, and teachers unions continue to spread, ESAs save taxpayer dollars. It costs just \$7500 on average to fund an ESA student, while it costs more than \$14,000 on average to fund a public school student. Hobbs continues to make every attempt to dismantle universal ESAs, as reflected in her budget proposal, which pulls nearly 50,000 students out of the program. So long as Republicans hold the majority in the Legislature, we won't allow this to happen.



-Senator Justine Wadsack



NAME	DISTRICT	PHONE	EMAIL
SENATOR KEN BENNETT	LD 1	(602) 926-5874	KBENNETT@AZLEG.GOV
SENATOR SHAWNNA BOLICK	LD 2	(602) 926-3314	SBOLICK@AZLEG.GOV
SENATOR JOHN KAVANAGH	LD 3	(602) 926-5170	JKAVANAGH@AZLEG.GOV
SENATOR WENDY ROGERS	LD 7	(602) 926-3042	WROGERS@AZLEG.GOV
SENATOR DAVID FARNSWORTH	LD 10	(602) 926-3387	DFARNSWORTH@AZLEG.GOV
SENATOR J.D. MESNARD	LD 13	(602) 926-4481	JMESNARD@AZLEG.GOV
SENATE PRESIDENT WARREN PETERSEN	LD 14	(602) 926-4136	WPETERSEN@AZLEG.GOV
SENATOR JAKE HOFFMAN	LD 15	(602) 926-3292	JAKE.HOFFMAN@AZLEG.GOV
PRESIDENT PRO-TEM T.J. SHOPE	LD 16	(602) 926-3012	TSHOPE@AZLEG.GOV
SENATOR JUSTINE WADSACK	LD 17	(602) 926-3106	JWADSACK@AZLEG.GOV
SENATOR DAVID GOWAN	LD 19	(602) 926-5154	DGOWAN@AZLEG.GOV
MAJORITY WHIP SINE KERR	LD 25	(602) 926-5955	SKERR@AZLEG.GOV
SENATOR ANTHONY KERN	LD 27	(602) 926-3497	AKERN@AZLEG.GOV
SENATOR FRANK CARROLL	LD 28	(602) 926-3249	FCARROLL@AZLEG.GOV
SENATOR JANA E SHAMP	LD 29	(602) 926-3499	JSHAMP@AZLEG.GOV
MAJORITY LEADER SONNY BORRELLI	LD 30	(602) 926-5051	SBORRELLI@AZLEG.GOV

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