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Caucus Newsletter

57th Legislature, 1st Regular Session



Arizona State Senate Republican Caucus

Weekly Newsletter

Welcome to the Official Arizona Senate Republican Caucus Newsletter! This week was the last official week Senate bills could be considered in House committees and House bills could be considered in Senate committees. From here, bills will go through Rules, Caucus, and Committee of the Whole, before a full vote of the chamber.





Working to Lower Gas Prices for Arizona Drivers

By President Pro Tempore T.J. Shope

Despite a moderation in Arizona gas prices from the painful \$4 and \$5 levels over the past four years, drivers are still paying about \$1 more per gallon today than they were in 2020. In an effort to ease the financial burden hitting hardworking Arizonans each time they fill their tanks, and to prevent future extreme price hikes at the pump, Republicans are working together on legislation to tackle one of the driving forces behind rising fuel prices. This week, the Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Energy & Water passed my strike everything amendment to HB 2300, sponsored by Rep. Biasiucci. The bill now expands the list of approved gas blends available for use in Maricopa County in statute to include formulas currently being used in neighboring states. Right now, Arizonans must fuel their vehicles with a boutique blend to meet clean air requirements set by the EPA during spring and summer. Supply disruptions will lead to rising prices. During meetings between President Petersen and EPA Administrator Zeldin, the Administrator signaled he'd help us with this issue. [Read more here.](#)



Addressing DEI in Arizona's Universities

By President Warren Petersen

I sent a letter to the new U.S. Secretary of Education, Linda McMahon, regarding my concerns over Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion policies and programs within Arizona's state-funded universities. For too long, state and federal officials have allowed university regents, presidents, faculty, and staff to indoctrinate our young men and women with un-American propaganda. They have taught our college students to hate the greatness of our nation and discriminate against others. Thankfully, Secretary McMahon is working to reverse this injustice on all fronts by holding universities accountable for their refusal to conform to existing laws blocking any institution from receiving federal funding due to discrimination based on race, color, and national origin. Arizona State University is facing investigations by the federal government, and I want to ensure state collaboration with the Trump Administration on this matter. I'm hoping to meet with Secretary McMahon on this issue in the very near future.

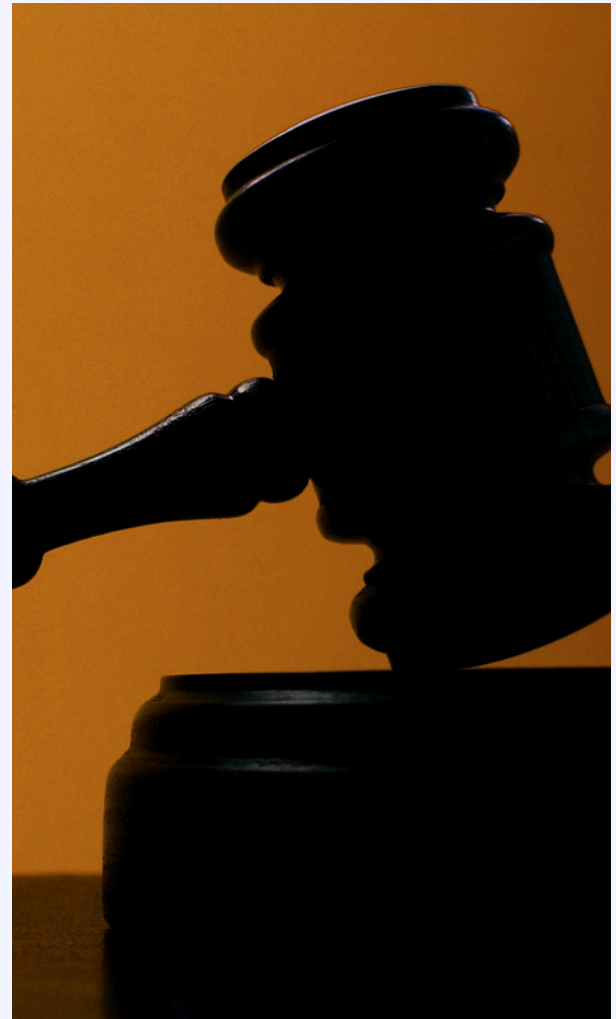




Vetting Katie Hobbs' Director Nominees

By Senator Jake Hoffman

Troubling revelations uncovered during a Senate Committee on Director Nominations, with two of Governor Katie Hobbs' appointments to lead state agencies, are reinforcing the critical role the committee serves as a check against radical, biased, and unqualified candidates. Testimony from Barbara Richardson, director nominee for the Arizona Department of Insurance & Financial Institutions, revealed a history of participating in discriminatory DEI programs. She also routinely evaded the statutorily required administrative process, by issuing rules through informal edicts rather than bulletins reviewed by the Governor's Regulatory Review Council, overstepping the agency's authority and robbing the public of both proper notice and participation. Testimony from Thomas Cole, director nominee for the Arizona Registrar of Contractors, revealed he had minimal prior professional experience in the construction sector, prompting unease over his ability to effectively regulate an industry he has never worked in. He admitted to questionable actions of cold calling random small business owners, without any suspicion of licensure violations, to ensure compliance with regulations, fostering an environment of government surveillance. He refused to acknowledge how his strong ties to labor unions could influence his decision-making. He also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. Department of Labor under the Biden Administration for the Wage and Hour Division, raising concerns over whether this MOU allows federal labor policies to influence Arizona contractor regulations.

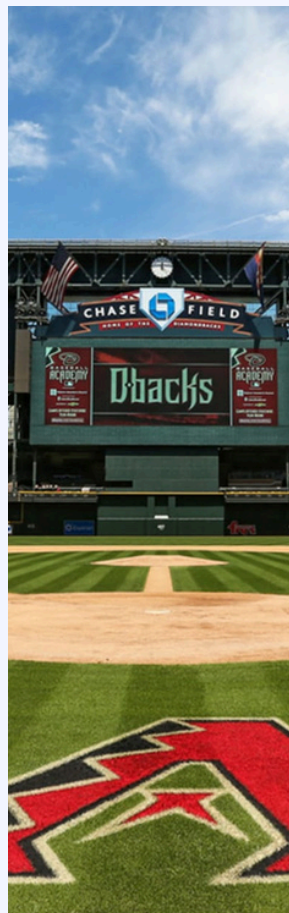




Emily Pike Death Sparks Probe of Group Homes

By Senator Carine Werner

My heart goes out to those who are grieving the senseless and horrific murder of 14-year-old Emily Pike, after she ran away from her state-licensed group home. We are currently gathering information on what can be done to prevent future tragedies such as this. My plan is to convene a bipartisan hearing for the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on the Department of Child Safety with officials from DCS, law enforcement, lawmakers, tribal councils and their social services departments, to examine procedures, protocols, and policies to keep children within the custody of these group homes safe and secure. Arizona's licensed group homes have repeatedly made headlines for egregious mistakes that have cost lives of the children within their care and have threatened the safety of staff. There may be underlying systemic issues requiring immediate reforms within these entities, so we must have an opportunity to assess where any mistakes are occurring and next steps from here. I'm pleased to see the [Arizona Attorney General's Office answered my call](#) to launch their own investigation on this matter. I will keep the public looped in on the Senate's efforts to address this serious situation and will provide more information on the hearing as it becomes available.



Working to Keep the Diamondbacks in Arizona

By Senator J.D. Mesnard

A high-profile bill is making its way through the legislature this week that has to do with the Arizona Diamondbacks. In the late 90's, Chase Field was built on government land in downtown Phoenix to facilitate the addition of a major league baseball team for Arizona - the Diamondbacks. Unfortunately, there has not been a lot of upkeep to the stadium since its construction, and it now requires about \$500,000,000 in repairs to meet today's standards. We want to see the Diamondbacks stay in Arizona, but it's a challenge with the current state of the stadium. While collaborating with the Diamondbacks along the way, we've been working through legislation that would create a partnership between the state, county, city and the Diamondbacks to invest in stadium modernization and upkeep. You can expect to hear more about this in the news as I work on a potential solution with my seatmate, Representative Weninger, who is the primary sponsor of the bill. Regardless of how the bill moves through the process, it is my hope that we find a way to keep Arizona as home of the Diamondbacks- a team that has given support to many worthy community causes in addition to bringing endless memories and economic opportunities to our state.



From DC to AZ, Big Wins for Patients & Public Health!

By Majority Leader Janae Shamp



Tuesday night's confirmation of Dr. Marty Makary as the new U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner is great news! It's time to clean up public health in our country, and Dr. Makary is the right man for the job. I am so excited to see him as our new FDA Commissioner. As an experienced surgeon, Dr. Makary has a lifetime of exceptional service in the field of health and wellness. He will undoubtedly help President Donald J. Trump and Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. carry out their goals to make America healthy again. Our food supply is full of toxins and carcinogens. Americans are incredibly overmedicated. I look forward to seeing his great work at the FDA to address these critical issues, and I am proud to support the MAHA movement with state legislation that is in lockstep with the goals of the Trump Administration to create a healthier society. One of those bills, [SB 1102](#), was just signed into law. I sponsored this legislation to prevent the problematic "middleman" from unwarranted interference in the doctor-patient relationship and to promote transparency within the pharmaceutical industry. This new law is a game-changer for Arizona patients, ensuring PBMs can't deny coverage for prescribed drugs, and I'm proud to have led this reform!



Protecting Against Deed Fraud

By Majority Whip Frank Carroll

In an effort to combat deed fraud, a harmful and growing issue that has devastated many Arizona families, I've sponsored [SB 1310](#), which recently advanced through the House Judiciary Committee by a vote of 7-1. The egregious crime involves the fraudulent transfer of property ownership, specifically targeting homes that are owned outright. Criminals will forge signatures, steal personal identities, and wreak havoc on unsuspecting victims, forcing them into costly legal battles to reclaim what's rightfully theirs. This crime leaves homeowners with overwhelming financial burdens and a profound loss of security. In an effort to deter criminals, SB 1310 increases the penalty for fraudulently recording real estate documents, to a class 4 felony, rather than a misdemeanor. By advancing this bill, we are sending a strong message to criminals that impersonation schemes have no place in our state. I remain committed to ensuring that homeownership is protected from those who seek to steal what others have worked so hard to achieve.



Keeping Pot Dispensaries Away from Children

By Senator Shawna Bolick

I'm pleased to report that a bill I sponsored to prohibit nonprofit medical marijuana dispensaries or cultivation sites from operating within 500 feet of a childcare facility or preschool center, was signed into law by the Governor this week! SB 1105 addresses a critical concern for protecting the innocence of children in Arizona, while still allowing marijuana dispensaries to operate in areas that are not in close proximity to sensitive locations. As medical marijuana becomes more widely accepted, it's essential to ensure that these dispensaries are not placed in areas where young children spend a significant amount of time. By implementing this reasonable buffer zone, we are taking proactive steps to maintain a safe environment for our communities. I am grateful for the overwhelming support from my colleagues and community who worked tirelessly to make this bill a reality and look forward to seeing this legislation take effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns!



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Bill
Status



Weekly
Schedule



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To Speak

Senator Janae