



June 3, 2023

VETTING HOBBS' STATE AGENCY DIRECTORS

In yet another example of why the Senate Committee on Director Nominations is critical to ensuring proper vetting of the Governor's appointments to lead state agencies, a troubling past was revealed this week during questioning of the nominee for the Registrar of Contractors (ROC), Martín Quezada. The former Legislator has a history of antisemitism, extremism and racism, which he's proudly displayed over the years across social media. While serving in statewide office, he developed a track record for voting against small businesses 82% of the time, which is the very community he's tasked with serving. Needless to say, Senators Shope, Kerr and I voted to reject Hobbs' reckless and irresponsible choice to lead the ROC. This appointment will now go before the entire Senate body for a final vote at a later date.



- Senator Jake Hoffman



SCHOOL CHOICE PROJECTIONS FOR 2024

The Arizona Department of Education provided an analysis of projected Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) costs for FY2024, however, they left out some important context. ADE estimates ESA enrollment will reach 100,000 by the end of FY2024, but does not delineate between enrollment in the new universal ESA program compared with individuals who were already eligible prior to the expansion. This report also does not provide a methodology for its 100,000-enrollment estimate, any FY2024 projections are highly speculative. As a result, we'll only have a basis for revising ESA projections once we receive actual FY2024 enrollment figures this fall. It's been unfortunate to see the thoughtless conclusions being drawn by the Governor and Democrats without sound facts. What we do know is that rising costs are reflective of parents choosing ESAs as the best learning option for their kids.



- Senator T.J. Shope





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ADWR GROUNDWATER STUDY

This week, the Phoenix Active Management Area (AMA) Groundwater Model and the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) released the results of a study of the groundwater supply in the Phoenix metropolitan area. The results show the Groundwater Management Act of 1980 is working as it should. The ADWR report projects 96% of 100-year assured water supply will be met. The remaining 4% of unmet demand over 100 years can be achieved through non-groundwater sources. The state has designated transport basins exclusively for filling these small gaps and because of our wise groundwater management, Arizona has water to sustain us now and in the future. I look forward to working with ADWR to improve accessibility to these plentiful in-state resources.



- Senator Sine Kerr

ENDING JUVENILE FEES IN ARIZONA

I'm proud to report a bill I sponsored to help juvenile offenders successfully transition into adulthood after serving out their punishments was recently signed into law. SB 1197 eliminates administrative court fees in the juvenile court system. These fees are from attorneys, detention and probation, some of which get levied, even if the child is found innocent. The bill also requires the courts to set up a process to vacate existing debt from these fees for individuals who have been previously charged. The bill does not impact punitive fines or victim's restitution. These fees tend to disproportionately impact low income kids, and if they go unpaid, they convert to a civil judgement against the individual when they turn 18. These kids are trying to get their lives back on track. Why further punish them and their families with what's essentially a regressive tax on a vulnerable population?



- Senator David Gowan



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CHANGES TO FIREWORKS DURING CHRISTMAS

Many Arizonans love to celebrate Independence Day or the New Year by lighting fireworks. To ensure they have such opportunity, state law establishes permissible fireworks that cities cannot prohibit during these and a couple other holidays (namely, Cinco de Mayo and Diwali) each year. However, because the timeframe currently in statute for permissible fireworks over the New Year begins on Dec. 24, there have been growing instances of fireworks use in neighborhoods during Christmas Eve, seriously disrupting the typical "Silent Night, Holy Night" moment. That's why a bipartisan bill I sponsored that was recently signed by the Governor shifts the statutorily-established start date to Dec. 26, thus allowing cities to determine whether to permit these fireworks over the Christmas holiday based on the desires of their communities.



- Senator J.D. Mesnard

NATIONAL CANCER SURVIVORS DAY

Sunday is National Cancer Survivors Day, a day to honor those who are living with a history of cancer for their strength and courage. It's also a day to honor friends and family who have been a support system through their journeys, in addition to raising awareness about the ongoing challenges faced by cancer survivors. Most of us unfortunately know someone who has been impacted by the disease. As a nurse, I know firsthand how difficult and painful it can be, and I believe everyone should have access to preventative care. Last month, I had a bill signed into law that will help ensure women can receive preventative care for breast cancer that matches the standard of practice that we currently use today. My hope is to make a difference in the healthcare industry during my time as a legislator.



- Senator Janae Shamp



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