

# COCONINO DEMOCRATS/DORR

## ARIZONA LEGISLATIVE ALERT

March 7, 2021

### EDUCATION

#### **MARCH 4 WAS A VERY BAD DAY!!!!**

March 4 was a bad day and this day might go down as the beginning of the end of Arizona public education if we do not draw the line, right here, right now.

Governor Ducey issued an executive order opening all schools for in person learning regardless of local decisions, circumstances, preparation and plans.

**SB1783 passed** and allows an alternative business tax that would AVOID the Prop208 surcharge for education. Estimated to deprive our schools and children of ~\$27M ANNUALLY.

**SB1400 passed** which would FORCE schools to give elective credit for private lessons or sport clubs. This has major equity implications and would ensure the elimination of music/arts/fine arts/sports programs in many schools and their invaluable educators.

**SB1108 passed** which would slash property taxes that fund our public schools IN HALF.

**SB1058 passed** which would mandate teachers post ALL lesson plans/resources/materials for EVERY class, EVERY day and not allow ANY deviation for a whole YEAR in advance.

**HB2840 passed** which makes it completely legal (currently a misdemeanor) to knowingly have a deadly weapon on school grounds if the firearm is not visible in a locked car. Firearm may be loaded or unloaded. Applies to 18 years old and up (does not exclude students).

**HB1456** - would ban sex education before the fifth grade and make HIV/AIDS education or any information about sexuality/gender identity or expression only available with parent/guardian consent. This would drastically reduce the number of students receiving sex ed and probably health ed, while also returning to the anti-LGBTQ stigmatization of students that existed before 2019.

**PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE** keep your eyes peeled for upcoming #REDforEd events that to stop these bills. All of them must pass the other half of the legislature, but in the meanwhile - spread the word, use RTS and My Bill Positions to weigh in on these bills, email/call your legislators, and stay vigilant. We must draw the line to save our public schools. #REDforED

## **BILLS HEADED FOR FULL HOUSE OR SENATE VOTES**

**(Cannot use RTS for these)**

**(But use My Bill Positions to voice opposition, if you have not already done so)**

## **CONTACT LEGISLATORS DIRECTLY ON THESE BILLS**

### **WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

**SB 1362 – OPPOSE – WENDY ROGERS** – Would add medical students to the list of providers who can refuse to assist with abortion-related services. All medical professionals would be allowed to refuse to dispense emergency contraception, as well as to cite ethical grounds and simply state verbally that they will not assist. There would be no protections for patients, even in an emergency.

### **VOTING RIGHTS**

**SB 1531 – OPPOSE** – Would require petition circulators to read the descriptions on initiatives and referendum petitions aloud to signers. Each signer would have to affirm to the circulator before signing that they read and understood the description. Otherwise, their signature would be invalid. Clearly another attempt to make it more difficult to pass laws that legislators don't like.

**SB 1593 – OPPOSE** – Would make a host of voting-related changes, none of them good. It shortens the early voting period from 27 to 22 days, specifies early ballots must be received by 7 pm on Election Day, adds a second "privacy envelope," and makes voters surrender their early ballots in order to vote in person.

**SB 1713 – OPPOSE** – Would require voters to send their early ballots back with proof of their eligibility to vote: an early ballot affidavit with their date of birth and a copy of their ID! Clearly designed to make it harder to vote.

**SCR 1034 – OPPOSE** – Would allow the legislature to amend voter-approved measures with a simple majority if courts find something illegal or unconstitutional in them. The measure does not require legislators to amend only the illegal part – hence it is a loophole to weaken the Voter Protection Act and voice of the voters at the ballot box.

## GOVERNANCE

**SCR 1001 – OPPOSE** – Would ask voters to repeal the governor’s executive order privileges. Clearly an attempt to undue any effort to control and mitigate the effects of the COVID pandemic.

**SCR 1010 – OPPOSE – USE RTS** - Asks voters to amend the constitution to require the legislature to go into special session for the duration of any declaration of emergency. Would cost the government a significant amount to put the legislators on daily allowance for extended periods for no real benefit.

## GENERAL FUND

**SCR1019 – OPPOSE** - sponsored by J.D. Mesnard (R-17), would ask voters to allow the state to exempt disabled veterans from state property tax. Arizona gives away more money every year in tax cuts and credits than it spends, leaving us with a government that is [underfunded in nearly every area](#) and struggles to provide the most basic of services. If we wish to truly care for our veterans, let's pass educational and economic support programs, and improve health care and other safety nets. Companion bill **SB1260**. Scheduled for Senate 3rd Read, Monday.

## THESE BILLS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR RTS!!

## GOVERNANCE

**HB2310 – OPPOSE** - **striker (Committee Monday)** that would allow Legislative Council (a group of lawyers responsible for drafting bills for lawmakers) and the Arizona Attorney General to review presidential executive orders for "legality," then file suit in federal district court against those orders. **(NOTE IN COMMENTS THAT YOU OPPOSE THE STRIKER VERSION)**

**HB 2648 – OPPOSE – (Committee Monday)** Would define it as discrimination to alter the tax treatment of a religious organization.

**SB 1105 – OPPOSE – Wednesday Committee** – Would increase the summary printed atop ballot measures such as citizen’s initiatives from 100 to 200 words. At best adding 100 words will make petitions more crowded, leaving less room for signatures. At worst, it bolsters the efforts of groups like the Goldwater and the Chamber of Commerce to steer politics in Arizona.

**HB 2111 – OPPOSE – Thursday Committee** – Would declare any law that “violates the 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment” to be void in Arizona.

**HCR 2002 – OPPOSE – Thursday Committee** – A non-binding resolution to support a constitutional amendment limiting the US Supreme Court to nine justices.

## EDUCATION

**HB 2241 – SUPPORT – Tuesday Committee** – Would require students be taught about the Holocaust and other genocides at least twice between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. All the more important given the current events!

**SB 1041 – OPPOSE – Wednesday Committee** - Would quadruple over 3 years the amount Arizona spends on a specific type of corporate School Tuition Organization (STO) tax credit and then tie it's growth to inflation afterwards. This is a tax break for corporations to give money to private schools. This overturns a bi-partisan agreement to cap these credits last year. This takes money from public education to fund private schools.

**SB 1118 – OPPOSE – Wednesday Committee** – Would expand individual and corporate STO tax credit vouchers to kids who transfer to private schools from being homeschooled or using an ESA or kids who move from out of state. Another expansion of vouchers!!

## WOMEN'S RIGHTS

**SB 1237 – SUPPORT – Wednesday Committee** – Would create a new right to sue for “fertility fraud” holding liable doctors who sue their own sperm to impregnate women without their consent!

## VOTING RIGHTS

**SB 1485 – OPPOSE - STRIKER - Wednesday Committee** – Would strip voters from the Permanent Early Voting List (PEVL) if they fail to vote their early ballots in two back-to-back primary and general elections, purging some 225,000 voters from the PEVL. The bill also has been amended to strip the word “permanent” from statute, making PEVL simply the Early Voting List.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

**HB2575 – OPPOSE – Wednesday Committee** - Bans hospitals from denying clergy visitation rights, including during a pandemic. The bill makes NO provision for infection control training, fit-tested personal protective equipment, self-quarantine after exposure, or an acknowledgement of risks.

**HB 2623 – SUPPORT – Wednesday Committee** – Would prohibit the use of consumer fireworks between 10 pm and 8 am on all days.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

**HB 2691 – OPPOSE – STRIKER - Wednesday Committee** – Deals with groundwater protection; sets various procedures for planning activities that might release hazardous materials into the state's waters. **NOTE IN YOUR RTS COMMENTS THAT YOU OPPOSE THE STIKER VERSION.**

## **SOCIAL JUSTICE**

**HB 2318 – SUPPORT – Thursday Committee** – Would curtail the use of “Hannah priors,” which allow attorneys to prosecute people facing multiple charges related to one crime as repeat offenders, even if they had clean records before.

**HB2648 – OPPOSE** – Would exempt religious organizations from accountability for any crime committed “for purposes of religious belief” within their organization – could shield things like child abuse, negligent or reckless medical care (or withholding of medical care), ignoring basic worker protection laws, fraud, etc. A strong OPPOSE!