



THE ARIZONA WE DESERVE

ARIZONA LEGISLATIVE DEMOCRATS
2018 SESSION

OUR VISION

Arizona is a fast-growing, culturally and geographically diverse land of opportunity. But families in our communities are still falling behind. Our vast potential as a state will remain unmet until we make the investments in education and infrastructure that a 21st century economy demands. Dishonest state leadership has held back the state we love. Short-sighted, extremist Republican policies favoring corporate interests over ordinary families have forced a race to the bottom for our schools and our kids. By purposefully starving our schools, Republicans have placed an anchor on our economic recovery while giving away tax dollars under the ruse of "trickle-down economics." The result has seen state revenue fall off a cliff and a glut of low-wage, back-office jobs that degrade workplace rights and provide little promise of advancement and prosperity.

It's time to focus on our kids not corporations, on job holders not shareholders. At the Arizona Legislature, it's Democrats who always have and always will stand up to those who would attack and dismantle the educational institutions that have made our state great. It's Democrats who will fight for equal rights, equal pay and equal opportunity. And it's Democrats who will advance the priorities that will move toward a better future for every Arizonan. We must fight to make our state government honest and accountable to you. We must fight for education and to shut off the pipeline of taxpayer dollars to wealthy private schools. And we must attract and develop talent, empower and encourage local entrepreneurs, and lift up and protect the rights of the disadvantaged. Together we are prepared to ignite and expand an economy that provides real opportunities to succeed for all Arizona residents regardless of who they are, where they live or who they love.

EDUCATION

Gov. Ducey has paid lip service to supporting education, but the results -- a meager one-time bonus for teachers -- were an insult to educators and our kids. Small steps in the right direction have not

changed the fact that Arizona has one of the most poorly funded school systems in the nation. On top of that, our schools are facing a fiscal cliff with the looming expiration of Prop. 301. We must do right by our kids and boost our economic strength by securing a long-term, sustainable K-12 investment increase and a curriculum that reflects the diversity of our state. We must stop Arizona's teacher exodus crisis and find a way to pay our educators a competitive wage. And we will protect taxpayer money by making charter schools transparent and accountable to the public they serve.

SOLUTIONS

Secure a meaningful and permanent teacher pay increase in the base-level funding formula.

Find a sustainable long-term funding solution for our schools.

Create a poverty weight for the school funding formula.

Repeal the ethnic studies ban.

Hold charter schools to the same standards of accountability and transparency as district schools.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The promised benefits from decades of Republican tax breaks for wealthy corporations have not trickled down to Arizona families. High-wage employers want to locate or expand in a state that invests in educating talented workers for a 21st Century economy. Democrats will stop the irresponsible giveaways and fight for Arizona's home-grown businesses, which drive the bulk of our state's job growth. Rather than competing for low-wage employers to locate in Arizona, the Democratic plan expands access to start-up capital to help new, cutting-edge small businesses grow and thrive. And we will protect workplace rights to prioritize individuals over corporations. Democrats will also spur commerce by repairing our aging infrastructure, improving the highways and bridges that deliver products to market.

SOLUTIONS

Develop an entrepreneurship pilot program for Arizona's disconnected youth.

Establish a public bank option to increase access to low-cost small business loans.

Level the playing field for Arizona businesses competing for state contracts.

Advance collective bargaining rights for Arizona's workers.

Champion LGBTQ rights and statewide economic competitiveness by passing anti-discrimination legislation for employment, housing and public accommodation.

Eliminate the VLT exemption for alternative-fuel vehicles so owners contribute their fair share for using Arizona's roads.

Increase HURF revenue via gas tax to better maintain Arizona's roads and bridges.

PUBLIC HEALTH - HUMAN SERVICES

Republicans and President Trump are determined to take healthcare away from hundreds of thousands of hard-working Arizonans and their kids. Democrats will champion innovative new ideas to protect and provide quality care and affordability. We will reverse the erosion of women's rights and restore the freedom to make their own healthcare decisions without government interference. We will strengthen our healthcare provider workforce. And we will work with all stakeholders to combat Arizona's opioid epidemic. Finally, we will restore policies to defend families and help more people, especially women, join and stay in the workforce.

SOLUTIONS

Enhance the primary care provider loan repayment program.	Repeal AHCCCS work requirement and time-limit provisions.
Increase access to mental health and substance abuse treatment services.	Restore Temporary Assistance for Needy Families eligibility by removing onerous restrictions.
Implement Good Samaritan 911 legislation.	Explore benefits of a Medicaid buy-in program.
Enforce the prescription drug monitoring program.	
Expand the Angel Initiative to fight opioid addiction and require law enforcement agencies statewide to participate.	Advance measures to keep families together, including DCS preventative services (child-care subsidies, family counseling, drug counseling).

TAX FAIRNESS

Republicans have given away the funding our state needs to invest in schools, roads, bridges and healthcare. Tax collections from businesses are the lowest since 1993.

Decades of tax breaks for rich donors and corporations have not delivered the promised benefits to our economy, which lags competitor states that invest more heavily in education and infrastructure. Instead, we face a \$100 million budget shortfall and don't have the money to invest in schools and other priorities that all Arizonans share. We will focus on our kids not corporations, on job holders not shareholders. Democrats will help rebuild the middle class by closing egregious tax loopholes and by restoring fiscal responsibility to ensure equity in Arizona's tax system. Our plan stops incentives for cheating by putting the referees back on the field to require tax compliance for corporations. And we will protect Arizona's revenues and strategic investments by capping the pipeline of state taxes that subsidize wealthy private schools.

SOLUTIONS

Rehire Department of Revenue auditors and collection staff, which deliver up to a 20-to-1 return on investment.	Halt the exponential growth of the corporate STO tax credit for private schools.	Eliminate tax loopholes and reinvest the savings into Arizona's core infrastructure.	Clarify and codify that digital goods and services are taxable.	Establish a State Finance Review Task Force to identify sustainable sources of revenue to fund education, healthcare, infrastructure and other critical services Arizonans want and need.
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HIGHER EDUCATION

The smartest way to grow Arizona's economy is to invest in talent – our people are our

greatest resource. By the end of this decade, two-thirds of all jobs will require some form of higher education. After years of continued cuts to our community colleges and public universities, obtaining the education needed to succeed has become a financial burden that many Arizonans struggle to manage. In today's highly competitive global economy, businesses are attracted by a highly qualified workforce. In order to secure and grow good Arizona jobs in a knowledge economy, we must ensure all Arizonans have access to a higher education, including DREAMers. To get there, Democrats plan to provide additional resources to help students cover the cost to attend our world-class institutions of higher education. We will also re-invest in the STEM, technical and workforce development programs that hone valuable 21st Century skills.

SOLUTIONS

Protect DACA students and allow them to pay resident tuition rates (requires repeal of Prop 300).

Reinvest in our universities and community colleges (reinstate STEM and workforce development funding for Pima and Maricopa Community Colleges).

Shift funding in the budget from the Koch brothers' "Freedom Schools" to pay for the Arizona Teachers Academies.

Scholarships for low-income students in programs that have a high workforce demand.

ELECTIONS

The right to vote is sacred and essential to our democracy. Well-run, honest elections should be our expectation, but Republican subversion and incompetence has eroded the people's trust. The years-long Republican assault on voting rights in Arizona must stop. It is our commitment as Democrats to modernize our elections and make it easier, not harder, for eligible Arizonans to vote. Our plan makes voting more accessible, registration more convenient, and removes roadblocks for eligible voters, while reducing "dark money" influence on our elections.

SOLUTIONS

Increase ballot access through automatic voter registration.

Expand in-person voting opportunities.

Roll back voter ID laws that do nothing to curb non-existent fraud but disenfranchise thousands of eligible citizens.

Require disclosure of dark money spending in Arizona politics.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

Climate change is real, and it impacts life in Arizona more every day. As we pass 15 years of sustained drought, Democrats are poised

to work with all stakeholders to negotiate common-sense long-term water and sustainability solutions that protect our communities and our economy. A universally critical resource like water should not be politicized. As responsible stewards of our air, water, land and cultural heritage, Democrats will also fight to protect pristine public and tribal lands from exploitation and lead the push to clean up polluted groundwater sites in low-income communities.

SOLUTIONS

Wake up colleagues across the aisle to fact that man-made climate change is real and putting the future of our kids and economy in peril.

Rehabilitate polluted business sites by funding the Water Quality Assurance Revolving Fund.

Protect the Grand Canyon region from uranium mining.

Fight to protect newly created National Monuments in the West.

Ensure environmental regulations and policies are enforced fairly without regard to race, age, color, national origin or income.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Arizona has endured a decades-long assault on women's rights by the GOP majority and powerful organizations like the Center for Arizona Policy. Arizona Democrats stand with tens of millions of women around the country who are standing up to say "no more!" Our caucuses are led by two strong and accomplished female leaders, and our agenda will level the playing field for women to make Arizona a stronger and more productive state. Democrats will restore the rights of women to make their own healthcare decisions. We will defend working families, especially women, to help them stay employed. And we will close loop holes to skirt pay equity.

SOLUTIONS

Roll back anti-women laws that have eroded reproductive rights and healthcare options for Arizona women.

Champion gender pay equity.

Support working families and make it easier for women to join the workforce by restoring childcare subsidies.

Support the Equal Rights Amendment.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Republicans in our state spend more on prisons than they do on higher education. Arizona has the 7th highest incarceration rate in the nation and has a recidivism rate worse than most states. Democrats are committed to re-directing the school-to-prison pipeline that Republicans have enabled by starving public education, overfeeding private prisons and overcharging juvenile offenders. Democrats will stop the criminalization of the poor. And we will stand up to powerful private prison lobbyists to enact real prison and sentencing reform. It's long past time for common-sense steps to reduce gun violence in our communities. Democrats will take the lead to keep our neighborhoods, schools and businesses safe by ensuring domestic violence offenders and others who should not be armed do not have access to firearms.

SOLUTIONS

Restore voting rights for felons who have served their time.	Prevent prohibited possessors from obtaining firearms by closing the gun show loophole.
Reduce recidivism and barriers to employment and housing for ex-offenders by "banning the box."	Help prevent mass-casualty shootings by prohibiting bump stocks.
Reduce prison costs by passing alternatives to incarceration for nonviolent offenders and those transitioning back into society.	Restore honesty and transparency to our corrections budget by reinstating the private prison cost study.
Raise the age of culpability and ban juvenile life sentences.	Prevent sweep of the indigent defense fund.

THE ARIZONA WE DESERVE

These are not only the solutions Democrats will champion this session; these are the priorities Arizonans want and deserve to see from their elected officials. Democrats have a realistic and responsible blueprint for honest, ethical and compassionate state leadership that works for you. To our colleagues across the aisle, as we begin this year's legislative session, we invite you to join us to find opportunities that move us closer to the Arizona we deserve. The choice is yours. Arizonans will be watching.

And to our fellow Arizonans, Democrats will have your back in the fight for our kids' education, for a state that supports home-grown Arizona businesses, and for a strong safety net that lifts up Arizona's most vulnerable citizens. And we will continue to embrace our incredible diversity as our state's greatest strength. Our shared vision for Arizona places people over private profit, acknowledges the critical role that honest and ethical government plays in our society, and – most importantly – understands that a successful tomorrow is only possible through wise investment today.