



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 5, 2024

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**2024 Environmental Report Card for AZ Legislature and Governor Released
Session Characterized by Inaction on Key Priorities – Water, Climate, and Environmental Justice**

Phoenix, AZ – Today, Sierra Club, joined by Chispa Arizona and Arizona Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) for Equity, released the [2024 Environmental Report Card for the Arizona Legislature and Governor](#).

“The 2024 legislative session was disappointing as legislators again missed opportunities to act on climate, environmental justice, and water, and unfortunately passed water legislation that does more harm than good, failing to address groundwater issues for rural Arizona or protect any rivers or streams,” said Sandy Bahr, director for Sierra Club’s Grand Canyon Chapter. “As if that were not bad enough, legislators loaded up the ballot with referrals, including one to make it difficult to advance rules to protect our air and water, one to target immigrants, and one to hinder citizen initiatives.”

While nearly everyone seemed to agree that Arizona needed to take action on water, especially as wells in rural Arizona continued to be pumped dry by industrial agriculture and an assured water supply was no longer available in parts of the Active Management Areas. It turns out, however, that developers, big agriculture, land and water speculators, and private water companies were all interested in continuing business as usual with unsustainable sprawl development and pushing through bills that changed the rules to accommodate that. The rural water issues were left unaddressed as there was no agreement on doing something meaningful.

“How will our younger and future generations see us? To know that we continuously chose profit over one another, over our home, our water, and over the healthy future of our children and loved ones,” said Nile Bunger, climate justice director with Arizona AANHPI for Equity. “The one place they rely on to keep them safe. What will the children say? How will we respond? Will we feel confident in our responses? If we can’t fight to save our planet outside of earth day, how can we expect our children to? One of the biggest acts of love we can give to one another is protecting our water rights and environment for all; although, time and time ago we ignore the concerns that are negatively affecting our BIPOC, rural, and marginalized communities. Our youth and younger generations are learning how

to be humans based on how we act as a human. The policies we create and support, the elected officials we vote into office, and if we hold them accountable or not when our voices and needs are being harmed over profit. A healthy environment and access to clean water should not be a privilege, yet it is. It is vital that we do not exclude the voices of the community and the future of Arizona's water rights. Our rural areas and communities deserve better. And may we remember that we are all part of nature, so we must act as such."

"The Arizona legislature holds great power and ability to make laws that impact us in our daily lives," said Alondra Morales, climate justice program coordinator for AZ AANHPI for Equity. "This report card serves as a clear summary of which legislators have the community in mind and which legislators have other priorities. I hope this is helpful guidance to the people of Arizona to get to know their legislators!"

"It's very clear that lawmakers who hold the majority at the legislature do not look out for the interests of the people of Arizona. Every step of the way during this legislative session we saw them ignore the will of the people and act in ways that benefit private interests," said Vania Guevara, political and advocacy director for Chispa Arizona. "We will continue to work diligently to connect our people to their own power by showing up in this space because we belong there. We will keep partnering with legislators that are environmental justice champions to push this body to protect the air we breathe, our access to public lands, and our right to an easy and accessible democracy."

One senator and 14 representatives earned an "A+" on the 2024 Environmental Report Card – they voted pro-environment and did not miss any votes. Unfortunately, all of the Republican caucus earned an "F" this year as they pushed a plethora of bad water legislation at a time when we desperately need strong protections for groundwater, as well as for our rivers and streams. They also voted for a large number of referrals that, if passed, would seriously harm efforts to advance clean energy, protect our air and water, and our democracy.

The 2024 Environmental Report Card is available on the website in English [here](#) and Spanish [here](#).

The Sierra Club is one of the largest and most influential grassroots environmental organizations in the U.S., with more than 3.5 million members and supporters. In addition to protecting every person's right to get outdoors and access the healing power of nature, the Sierra Club works to promote clean energy, safeguard the health of our communities, protect wildlife, and preserve our remaining wild places through grassroots activism, public education, lobbying, and legal action. The Grand Canyon Chapter of the Sierra Club, representing 16,000 members, has a long history of advocacy at the Arizona Legislature.

Chispa Arizona builds the capacity of Latinx families to influence policy makers and pressure polluters to protect communities' rights to clean air and water, healthy neighborhoods and a safe climate for generations to come.

Arizona Asian American Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) for Equity is a state-wide organization striving for equity and justice by building power through community directed organizing, increasing civic engagement, and empowering young leaders.

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