



News Release

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Contact: Sandy Bahr, Sierra Club (602) 999-5790, sandy.bahr@sierraclub.org

2026 Environmental Report Card for AZ Legislature and Governor Released
Harmful Energy, Water, and Wildlife Bills Die, But Still No Action to Protect Water or Act on Climate

Phoenix, AZ – Today, Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter, joined by Chispa Arizona and Arizona Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Advocates, Arizona Mountain Mamas, and Mi Familia Vota will release the [2026 Environmental Report Card for the Arizona Legislature and Governor](#).

"We were pleased to see the Legislature put a moratorium on tax breaks for new data centers, but more is needed to hold them accountable relative to water and energy use, as well as transparency," said **Sandy Bahr, director for Sierra Club's Grand Canyon Chapter**. "While we saw some action on PFAS to protect firefighters and to restrict homeowners associations from blocking backyard shade, the rest of the session was characterized by lack of action to protect our air, water, public health, or communities, plus way too many bills to impede solar and wind and to advance fossil fuels and nuclear, plus a bunch of legislation to weaken groundwater protections. The good news is all of this legislation died in one house or the other or via a veto."

"Every legislative session, Chispa Arizona is proud and grateful to work alongside the Sierra Club to ensure accountability. The scorecard helps provide an understanding for our members to see how their state representatives show up for us or how they don't," said **Vania Guevara, Advocacy and Political Director, Chispa Arizona**. "Our democracy unfortunately is sometimes influenced by private interests like utility companies—this influence seems to fluctuate year to year, and this scorecard is a tool to remind people that we are watching and that we have the real power."

In the 2026 Legislative Session, the House sent a plethora of bad legislation to the Senate, including [HB2267 public nuisance: renewable energy: exceptions](#) (Marshall), which would have established that any utility-scale solar or wind project that is built within four miles of a residence is automatically considered a public nuisance, and [HB2331 NOW: electric utility: reliable energy standard](#) (Marshall: Heap) which effectively said that 85 percent of the generating capacity to serve retail load cannot be solar or wind, thus limiting some of the cheapest energy sources. Both of these bills died as they did not receive a hearing in the Senate Natural Resources Committee.

Among the harmful water bills that the House sent to the Senate was [HB2758 McMullen Valley: eligible entities: groundwater](#) (Griffin: Blackman). It was some of the worst water legislation and was

never brought to the Senate floor as the votes were not there to pass it. The bill would have allowed private water companies and a New York hedge fund, Water Asset Management, to engage in the interbasin transfer of groundwater from the McMullen Valley in La Paz County, which would have harmed the people who live there.

"While we are pleased to see some much needed progress at the Arizona legislature on critical issues such as a moratorium on tax breaks for new Data Centers, we need more investment in solar, wind and other renewable energy sources," said **Monica Sandschafer, Mi Familia Vota Arizona State Director**. "An investment in clean energy is an investment in the Latino community who is hit hard by increasing energy costs when we need to be cooling our homes. We know investing in clean energy solutions now will allow the Latino community to thrive with lower energy costs and cooler homes in the future. This is not a policy fight but a clear and present need for our communities who need more cost saving clean energy solutions."

While it is difficult to find a way to grade legislators on the many important issues and bills that were left unaddressed, some of the same people who scored high on the report card are the ones who were advocating for protecting our air and water and advancing clean energy and environmental justice. [HB2141 environmental permitting: requirements: burdened communities](#) (De Los Santos: P. Contreras) would have defined "overburdened communities" and required major polluters seeking air quality, waste, and water quality permits in overburdened communities to develop "Environmental Justice Impact Statements," plus empowered the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) to deny or condition permits due to disproportionate impacts based on the statements. This bill never got a hearing, nor did [HB2928 working conditions: heat illness: prevention](#) (Sandoval: Abeytia, Aguilar, et al.) to mandate the industrial commission to establish rules that cover indoor and outdoor workplaces in industries such as agriculture, construction, landscaping, oil and gas extraction, and delivery services.

"As our temperatures rise every year, so do our utility bills, medical debt, and the urgency for environmental justice," said **Nile Bunger, climate justice director, Arizona AANHPI Advocates**. "When we talk about racial and social justice, we are also talking about environmental justice. One cannot be solved without the other, therefore, it is essential to have elected officials who prioritize policies that put people and the planet before corporate greed and profit. Particularly now, as climate tipping points are being triggered more frequently than not, we must demand that the longevity and health of Arizona and our communities are considered for generations to come."

"As Mamas, every action we take, every policy decision, and in this case, report card, we do it through the lens of what this will mean for our children's future and their well being, said **Cassandra Becerra, Arizona State Director, Mountain Mamas**. "Mamas being here collectively with these groups of environmental powerhouses, is our way of holding our decision makers accountable, and our way of showing our gratitude and support to those who have come to bat for our future generations. Arizona has made progress, but the wins are not the finish line. There is so much more work to be done and we can't get comfortable. This report card is a milestone, and a strong assessment of where our work is still needed. Let's unite and keep our focus on a cleaner, more equitable and thriving future for our children."

The 2026 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 Advocates (AZ AANHPI Advocates) mission is to empower and engage the Arizona AANHPI community, encouraging civic engagement and educate the community on relevant public policies, to facilitate the creation of an equitable society and inclusive democracy.

The Mountain Mamas are guided by our commitment to organize, inspire, and activate Mamas across the nation to advocate for our climate, clean air and water, and public lands. We strive to leave a better, healthier, cleaner world for our kids and grandkids. Whether by nature or nurture, we are all women who feel called to be the caretakers of our places and our people.

Mi Familia Vota's mission is to mobilize Latino power through year-round activation of the electorate and investment in local infrastructure to advance our community's policy priorities. Mi Familia Vota is fighting for a future where Latino voices shape and advance policies that promote the health, safety, and prosperity of Latino communities across the country.

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