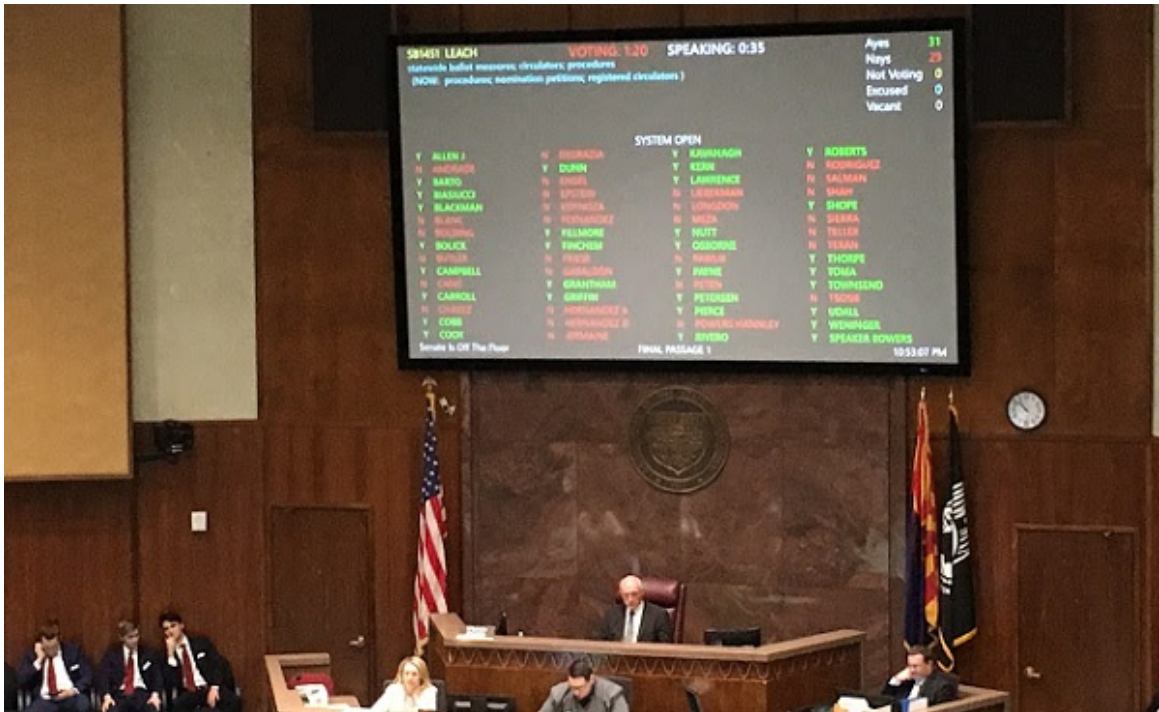


GOP Floating Budget and Bad Ideas



Floor of the Arizona House

May 21, 2021

Hi everyone!

There was limited activity this week on environmental and democracy bills at the Arizona Legislature. They did start floating budget documents -- not actual bills, just memos -- that indicate where dollars will be allocated. The good news is there is \$10 million for the Arizona State Parks Heritage Fund and \$250,000 for the Arizona Trail. The bad news is there is \$200 million in the draft budget for drought contingency. It does not say for what, but it is likely some kind of harmful infrastructure project. Stay tuned as we learn more on that. They may work on the budget next week, but it could also be the following week.

The Arizona Senate was also focused on the debacle happening on McDowell at the Coliseum where the Maricopa County ballots from the 2020 election are being held hostage. The Senate Republicans continue to defend the unethical and incompetent actions by their contractor. Now we know the contractor likely

[compromised the voting machines, so they cannot be used in the next election.](#)
Unconscionable.

[HB2309 \(violent; disorderly assembly; public order\)](#) is one of the bad anti-democracy measures still out there. This bill will chill actions by protesters and have a disproportionate impact on people of color who are already targeted by law enforcement and will infringe on our First Amendment rights.

[Tell your state senator to protect our right to protest and vote NO on HB2309.](#)

Here is an update on the other anti-democracy measures.

- [HB2792 \(early ballots; request required\)](#) prohibits elections officials from providing an early ballot to someone who did not request it and makes it a class 6 felony to do so. This is ridiculous on so many levels, including that we do not currently allow mailing of ballots to people unless they have requested it. **This is on the Senate Third Read calendar for Monday. Ask your senator to vote No.**
- [SB1106 \(S/E registration; permanent early voting list\)](#) removes the requirement that a county recorder try to contact a voter at the voter's new residence address if an election notice is returned undeliverable. It makes it a felony to try and assist any other person that resides in another state in voting, including forwarding an early ballot addressed to the other person. **This bill awaits action in House Committee of the Whole.**
- [SB1531 \(petition signatures; description; invalidity\)](#) voids the signature of any initiative or referendum petition signer that signs the petition without either hearing or reading the description printed on the petition. We do not require people to read anything about candidates before signing their petitions or voting on anything, why to sign an initiative petition? It also says the circulator has to cross out a signature if they think the person did not read or listen to the description. The result will be more signatures disqualified. **It awaits action in the House Committee of the Whole.**
- [SB1713 \(S/E early ballots; identification; mailing\)](#) requires additional ID for early voting and creates a new reason to toss out early ballots if there's an error in writing the date of birth, driver's license number, or voter registration number. There are also issues with access to the appropriate numbers as there are more 66,000 registered voters without a driver's license. **It awaits action in the House Committee of the Whole.**
- [HCR2001 \(initiatives; single subject; title\)](#) refers to the ballot a measure that narrows what can be included in a ballot measure and requires every subject to be in the title. This would make it impossible to place something on the ballot that is comprehensive and would provide another reason to toss out a ballot measure on a technicality. **This awaits action in the Senate Rules Committee.**
- [HCR2016 \(initiatives; supermajority vote requirement\)](#) refers to the ballot a measure to require a 55% approval rather than a simple majority approval for all ballot measures. This is a difficult threshold and will limit opportunities to address important environmental, animal, and social justice issues. **It awaits action in the Senate Rules Committee.**
- [SCR1024 \(initiatives; tax increases; vote requirement\)](#) refers to the ballot a requirement that initiatives and referenda that include taxes have a two-thirds vote from voters. This is an extremely high bar for these ballot measures. **It awaits action in the House Committee of the Whole.**
- [SCR1034 \(voter protection act; court determinations\)](#) refers to the ballot a measure to allow the Legislature to amend, supersede or appropriate or divert funds created by an initiative or referendum measure approved by the voters if the measure is found to contain any illegal or unconstitutional language by the Arizona or US Supreme Court. This would allow the legislature to throw out an entire measure, even if a small part was successfully challenged and would blow a big hole in the Voter Protection Act. **It awaits action in the House Caucuses.**

Updates on other bills:

[HB2248 \(corporation commission; electric generation resources\)](#) is staying on our watch list until the session ends. This bill infringes on the powers of the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) and seeks to derail clean energy rules that have already been derailed by the ACC itself. **This bill was held in the Senate Rules Committee in early April.**

[HB2623 \(fireworks; use; overnight hours; prohibition\)](#) would ban the use of fireworks between 10 PM and 8 AM. **This bill has not been heard in Senate Appropriations, so is likely dead.**

[HB2671 \(now: underground storage tanks; standards; reimbursements\)](#) includes provisions for underground storage tanks to meet federal requirements, which I am pretty sure they should anyway, allows transfer of \$10 million from this fund to the water quality assurance revolving fund, and it eliminates the sunset of this tax. This program has become a big subsidy for entities such as Circle K that should be using their private insurance to pay for leaky tanks. These dollars should be to help fund actions by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, but not pay the bill for these massive corporations. **This is on the Senate Rules Committee Agenda for Monday. OPPOSE.**

Please sign in on [Request to Speak](#) to oppose HB2671 in the Senate Rules Committee.

[You can see bills we are tracking here.](#)

If you don't know who your legislators are, just use this [Find My Legislator link](#) and enter your address to find your district, then go to [Members](#) to see who represents your district. You will find their phone numbers and email addresses there as well.

If you are not receiving these updates directly, you can sign up for them [here](#).

Thank you for sticking with us this session. You have made a difference!



Sandy Bahr
Chapter Director
Sierra Club - Grand Canyon Chapter



Coming Up This Week at the Arizona Legislature

The House and Senate will primarily be engaged in Floor actions. You can watch the Floor action in the Arizona House and Senate by using this [link](#).



California Condors at Vermilion Cliffs National Monument courtesy of BLM

