

The Arizona Legislative Alert

Bringing Unitarian Universalist Values to Public Policy

CROSSOVER WEEK

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February 19, 2023

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This week is crossover week, when bills that have cleared a committee have to come for a vote in their house of origin. So, the week is filled with floor votes, and there is no agenda information on when or if they will come up. If they are called up by the leader (and that is not a certainty), and if they pass, then they move to the other change and go through the whole committee process all over again. Bills that did not clear a committee in their house of origin, are dead unless someone introduces them as “strike everything” bill that literally puts them into the number of some other bill. (sigh).

This issue of the Legislative Alert will highlight a handful of bills that are ready to come for a vote this week and then will include the “Digest” showing bills that are ready for a vote, by topic. Here’s the topics:

[Culture Wars](#) [Education](#) [Elections](#) [Environment](#) [Guns](#) [Health/welfare](#)
[Housing](#) [Taxes](#)

Highlights

Abortion – There was an abortion bill passed early in the session by a committee that would instruct the AG to enforce abortion laws, even though the current AG has said she would not.

SB1117 – municipal platting. Passed committee 5-2. This bill is being vehemently opposed by city officials throughout the state as it declares that zoning is of a “state interest” and prohibits cities and local entities from overriding state-established standards for housing design and other aspects of city zoning regulations. There are some minority groups, however, who are supporting it as it appears the prohibitions may produce more affordable housing.

Education – Two bills that would allow guns on college and university campuses have made it through committee: HB2667 and SB1300. A bill interfering with college / university guidelines on free speech is still active (SB1013). Good news for education is that the Aggregate Expenditure Limit was passed by both chambers, so the schools can spend their money. Also good news is that SB1706 passed committee with one Republican and all Democrats voting for it. This bill would require the Department of Education to produce a quarterly report on the Empowerment Scholarship Accounts. ESAs allow parents to use public funds to send children to private and religious schools.

Elections – One of the worst of the more than 50 “bad” bills for elections and voting is SB1518 that restricts early voting in a number of different ways. Review the entire list!! At least, glance through them to see the myriad of ways the legislature has thought of to restrict the vote.

Environment – SB1500 passed last week and can be voted on. It requires all state investments to be invested exclusively for pecuniary benefit, thereby prohibiting any government entity from directing its investments into funds that are free of fossil fuel investments or that carry the ESG tag or some other socially-conscience tag if some other fund had a higher rate of return. ESG stands for Environment, Social, and Governance standard.

Health / Welfare – SB 1300 would require cities to eliminate homeless encampments, clean out the areas, and charge homeless people with a misdemeanor.

The Culture Wars – Several bills directed at transgender people are still active including SB1040; HB2458; and SB1001. Also, there are bills that attempt to prohibit teaching critical race theory and to tell teachers what pronouns to use.

THE DIGEST OF BILLS – this section is VERY long, so use the guide above to skip to the topics you are most interested in!

Abortion SB1021 – Attorney General Responsibilities – Passed committee 5-2. The Arizona AG has said she would not enforce the current abortion law. This bill requires the AG to defend all laws passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor. It is an obvious effort to force enforcement of abortion laws. SB1600 adds to the current rules regarding treating a baby born alive as a person.

Culture Wars -

- **Education HB2458 – and Senate 1305. Prohibited Instruction / race.** Passed 6-4 in House and 4-3 in Senate. This is a revised wording of bills being introduced throughout the country ostensibly to “ban critical race theory.” It is different from earlier versions, however, in that it does NOT prohibit teaching history that might make a child feel guilty and it explicitly says that it does not prohibit “*identifying and discussing historical movements, ideologies or instances of racial hatred or discrimination, including slavery, indian removal, the holocaust and internment.*” Also, **the bill never mentions critical race theory and it has revised the wording of last year’s bill that defined what cannot be taught. These are efforts to make it more acceptable. Here’s what it says:** *Prohibits a public school, school district, state agency or an employee from providing or allowing any person to provide instruction to students or employees that **promotes or advocates** for any of the following: a) judging an individual based on their race or ethnicity; b) that one race or ethnic group is inherently morally or intellectually superior to another; c) that an individual is racist or oppressive by virtue of their race or ethnicity; d) that an individual should be invidiously discriminated against or receive adverse treatment because of their race or ethnicity; e) that an individual’s moral character is determined by their race or ethnicity; f) that an individual bears responsibility or blame for actions committed by other members of the same race or ethnic group; or g) that academic achievement, meritocracy or other traits are racist or were created by members of a particular race or ethnic group to oppress others.* Most objective persons would agree with that these ideas should NOT be taught, but should the legislature be trying to ban ideas? Robin DiAngelo in “White Fragility,” for example, says that all white people are inherently racist and there is no way to overcome it. Her book would be banned. Many of the DEI programs (diversity, equity, inclusion) assert that all white people are racist and must confess their racism. Many of these training programs argue that white people are “complicit” in racism because they enjoy the privilege that slavery, Jim Crow laws, and continuing racism confers upon them. These would be a violation if such programs were being used in the schools. Trying to ban ideas is not a good idea. Democracies should debate ideas, not try to ban them.
- **Education SB1001 – Pronouns** – Passed Senate 4-3 by the education committee but no action since January. The bill by Senator Kavanaugh prohibits a teacher or other school employee from referring to a student by any pronoun other than that of their biological sex unless parental permission has been given. Even it has been, the teacher or employee is able to use the biological pronoun if it would violate their religious convictions to do otherwise. Transgender issues, especially when dealing with children, are very complex. But this bill is not about safety for children transitioning, or rights, or morality. The issue is whether this is an appropriate topic for state law, and the current bill does NOT fit a reasonable standard for state law. **Teachers should not be told what to do by the state legislature regarding pronoun use! Decisions about pronoun use should be settled among the student, parents, and teachers, not by state law. That is the fundamental issue. Is this an appropriate issue for state law? NO.**

Transgender

- **HB2312 – Transgender Women; Women’s Shelter** – Passed 5-4 on party lines. Arizona law currently holds an organization liable for violating anti discrimination laws. This bill allows a woman’s shelter who has an employee who has transitioned from male to female to deny the male who has transitioned the ability to be in the presence of women/families who are living in the shelter. In other words, only biological women employees can actually work with the women in the shelter and it is not discriminatory to deny a biological male who has transitioned the ability to be around the women. This is somewhat confusing, but here is the actual language: “Asserts that facilities that do not allow biological male employees to be in the presence of a woman or their minor children while living in the facility is not liable for gender discrimination if the facility's sole purpose is to provide a safe and stable shelter for women or women with their minor children.” These transgender issues are very complicated and the usual dividing line between liberals and conservatives do not always hold as biological women (whether liberal or conservative) may not want transgender women (biological males) in a woman’s shelter. RTS register of opinions as of Feb. 9 showed 21 for and 36 against. ACLU and National Association of Social Work were registered against the bill.
- **Transgender SB1040 – Restroom Accommodation / Biological Sex** - This bill will be passed 4-3 in the Senate Education committee. It is another anti-trans bill. It requires public schools to make reasonable accommodation for bathroom use, but not for persons who have transitioned. If a person has reasons that they cannot use the bathroom designated for their biological sex, they can request reasonable accommodation. The kicker, however, is “A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION DOES NOT INCLUDE ACCESS TO A RESTROOM OR CHANGING FACILITY THAT IS DESIGNATED FOR USE BY PERSONS OF THE OPPOSITE SEX WHILE PERSONS OF THE OPPOSITE SEX ARE PRESENT OR COULD BE PRESENT.” The bill then goes on to define a person’s sex as the biological sex, as designated on their original birth certificate. Furthermore, although a school apparently COULD make accommodation for a person who has transitioned from their biological sex, the school could be sued by any student who encounters someone of the opposite biological sex in a bathroom that is not designated for that biological sex. Again, rights of transitioners need to be protected, not constantly challenged. Also, the privacy of persons whose identity is aligned with their biological sex also needs to be protected. This bill does not help. The RTS opinion register as of Feb. 9 shows 367 for and 346 against.
- [SB1026](#) state monies; drag shows; minors – Passed 5-3. senate governance committee. No public money can be used for a drag show targeting minors.
- [SB1030](#) drag performers; drag shows; regulation. Bill passed 4-3 by the Senate governance committee – adds requirement (not just “may”) to the regulations required of cities and counties and adds drag shows or performances to what is prohibited.
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Education

- **Educ AEL Waiver PASSES committee. HCR2001. The waiver, which requires a 2/3 vote of both houses passed last week, just ahead of the March 5 deadline. HCR2001.** The good news is the waiver passed both houses. The bad news is that it is just a waiver, not a repeal and will have to come up again next year. The AEL is a Constitutional Amendment that was passed by Arizona voters in 1980 which created a spending limitation for school districts based on the aggregate expenditure of all districts.
- **Education HB2504 – Adds Foster Children to STO Eligibility -** Passed House Education committee, 6-4. An STO is a nonprofit organization that receives income tax contributions to fund scholarships for students to attend qualified private schools in Arizona. STOs must be certified by the Arizona Department of Revenue. This is a tax CREDIT, not just a deduction, so the taxpayer is able to reduce their tax to Arizona by the amount of their contribution and the money helps fund private schools. This bill adds foster children to those eligible. Current eligibility is for students who 1) attended a governmental school full-time or a preschool program that offers services to disabled students at a governmental school for at least 90 days of the prior fiscal year; 2) enroll in a qualified school in a kindergarten or a preschool program that offers services to disabled students; 3) are a dependent of a U.S. Armed Forces member stationed in Arizona; 4) are homeschooled; 5) moved to Arizona from out of state; 6) participated in an ESA and did not renew the ESA; or 7) received other specified STO scholarships. This is another way to direct taxpayer money into private schools. (Note: The Arizona Legislature sometimes uses the term “government school” instead of “public school.” This probably in an attempt to get those who dislike “government” to also dislike “public schools.”)
- **Education SB1044 – non attendance at school.** Senate education committee passed this bill 4-3 and Rules cleared it also. It requires a school to provide a place on the school ground and assign academic work for any students who has been expelled for non attendance.
- **Colleges: Free Speech Zones SB1013 – Free Speech Zones on University Campuses. Passed Senate committee 5-2 with all Republicans and one Democrat supporting and passed Rules committee.** This bill, also sponsored by Sen. Kavanagh, prohibits colleges and universities from limiting speech to specific “free speech” zones, but instead says that any person who is lawfully on the campus is able to engage in lawful speech anywhere on the campus. This may sound like a bill in support of free speech on college campuses, but the inability to have a designated safe space for unpopular speech sometimes (perhaps often) leads to cancellation of a demonstration or invited talk because opposition gets “out of control” and the demonstration or talk has to be cancelled. Thus, prohibiting “free speech zones” does NOT promote greater freedom of expression, as it allows groups (left or right)

to so completely disrupt a class or speaker or demonstration that the event has to be cancelled. Free speech zones are a useful practice to protect unpopular points of view.

- **SB1706** – Empowerment Scholarship Accountability – This bill passed committee with one Republican and all Democrats voting for it (4-3) (Senator Bennett ® voting for it). It requires the Department of Education to produce a quarterly report showing number of empowerment scholarships awarded, number declined, reasons for those given, costs, and other information. ESAs were made universal by a vote of the Legislature and are rapidly removing funds from public education to allow students to attend private and religious schools.

Elections / democracy –

SB101 city partisan elections kavanath passed 6-1-1
1 permitted

· Cities currently CANNOT allow partisanship to be indicated on a ballot for a local election, but this bill would allow them to do so.

SB106 8	election board workers; political party	Kavanagh	passed 5-3 1/30	requires only one of the minority party, not equal number
SB109 5	early ballot envelope; notice	Carroll	passed 5-3 1/30	notice to voters that they are delaying vote count if turn in ballot later than Friday. Might be confusing, but otherwise, not a big problem
SB110 5	early ballots; election day tabulation	Carroll	passed 5-3 1/30	county must have way to count ballots on site
SB113 5	spoiled early ballots; election day	Kavanagh	passed 5-3 1/30	bill with multiple provisions that severely limit early voting and requires valid "excuse" to be absent to use early voting
SB114 0	elections; voting centers prohibited	Senate Elections	passed 5-3	prohibits county recorders from establishing additional election centers. Will increase long lines!
SB114 1	early ballot drop off; identification	Hoffman	passed 5-3	Senate Elections committee: requires "affadavit" to be submitted with early ballot. Does it have to be notarized?
SB114 3	voting registrations; ballot requests; source	Hoffman	passed 5-3	This is a hard bill to understand. . Removes the ability of a candidate, political committee or other organization to distribute an early ballot or AEVL request form to a voter. Allows only a political party, county recorder or election official to distribute early ballot request forms or AEVL request forms to voters.

SB114 4	electronic ballot adjudication; prohibition	Hoffman	passed 5-3	requires that spoiled ballots cannot be "fixed" by electronic equipment but county must appoint an "adjudication board" to review
SB117 0	ballot drop boxes; prohibition	Hoffman	passed 5-3	Prohibits drop boxes unless they are monitored 24/7. Would severely reduce use and increase lines on election day.
SB117 5	registrations; observers; counting procedures; verification	Kavanagh	passed 5-3	Bill appears to expand access to voter registration files but not for commercial use; and outlines procedures. Not clear what the implications are.
SB117 8	early voting; identification; signature	Bennett	passed 8-0	This is a good bill. It says if a person is voting in person and shows ID to get a ballot, then the ballot can be tabulated without further ID
SB118 0	voter registrations; payment prohibited	Bennett	passed 5-3	prohibits paying persons who are collecting signatures by the number of signatures collected.
SB120 1	early ballots; signatures; electronic pollbooks	Kavanagh	passed 5-3	Prohibits a county recorder or officer in charge of elections from comparing the signatures on the voter's early ballot affidavit with the signatures from the e-pollbook. An epoll signature book has the signature showing the person voted. Very confusing bill
SB121 3	legislative council; procedures manual	Kern	held	Defines Secretary of State (SOS), notwithstanding any other statute, as the Legislative Council for the purpose of the Election Procedures Manual (EPM). There have been disputes over this manual.
SB125 8	public officers; announcements; report	Mesnard	passed 5-3	Requires a public officer to publish a quarterly report on their website outlining the amount of money spent for any publication, resource or public service announcement that contains the public officer's name or likeness. Probably a good bill to prevent public funds from being used for campaigning.
SB126 4	officials; political action committee prohibition.	Mesnard	passed 5-3	Prohibits any official election officer or person overseeing elections from being part of a political action committee. Good idea.

SB126 5	voting; elections; tally; prohibition.	Kern	passed 5-3	Prohibits ranked choice voting. Ranked choice voting removes the lowest vote-getter from the tally until one candidate has over 50% in a single winner district.
SB127 3	early ballot delivery; instruction requirements	Bennett	passed 5-3	requires instructions on early voting to mention that collecting ballots from others and turning them in is a felony unless the person is a relative or caregiver of the voter. Ok to do this.
SB128 7	election returns; canvass; review	Kaiser	held	Bill says that if the results of an election are in question, then the official canvas and certification has to be postponed. Apparently, the county Board of Supervisors is the group that must ascertain the facts if there are questions. Probably ok.
SB130 3	campaign finance; contributions; reporting	Mesnard	passed 5-3	Requires financial disclosure to include persons (in state) contributing over \$100 during the election cycle. Probably ok.
SCR10 02	constitutional amendments; sixty percent approval	Kern	passed 5-3 1/23	changes would require 60% instead of majority to pass'
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SB104 8	campaign finance; reporting threshold; lobbyists	Kavanagh	passed 5-3	Raises limit from \$100 to \$200 for lobbyists having to report.
SB114 2	voter registration events; posting	Hoffman	passed 5-3	"Requires the Secretary of State (SOS) and each county recorder to post a list on its website of each event the SOS's Office or the county recorder's office attends." This may be to monitor whether the officials are attending events to registrar new citizens or to monitor their attendance at events that include immigrants.
SCR10 15	initiative; referendum; signatures; legislative districts	Mesnard	passed 5-3	requires that the required percentage of signatures be gathered from EVERY Legislative district proportionately to meet the total needed to get a petition on the ballot. Would dramatically reduce likelihood of getting on the ballot.

HB230 5	ballots; signature verification; observers	McGarr	passed 6-4	must allow observers to see ballot verification
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HB2308	secretary of state; election; recusal	Jones	passed 7-3	SOS cannot participate in oversight of election if a candidat in it
HB2319	elections; rule of construction	Kolodin	passed 6-4	Must use "aggressive" interpretation (e.g., strickt) instead of "liberal" interpretation of election rules
HB2322	early ballots; signatures; guidelines; challenges	Kolodin	passed 6-4	Designates the SOS signature verification guide as the standards for comparison.
HB2378	officials; political action committee prohibition	Biasiucci	passwed 10-0	Public officials working in an election cannot belong to political action committees
HB2477	electoral college; support	Montenegro	Passed 6-4	notify feds to keep the electoral college
HB2231	absentee voting	passed 6-4	Passed 6-4	early voting limited to those with legitimate "absentee" excuse
HB2233	election contests; procedures	Harris	passed 6-4	expands access to examine ballots
HB2304	voting locations; precinct-based	McGarr	passed 6-4	all voting has to be in your own precinct; no county voting centers allowed;
HB2305	ballots; signature verification; observers	McGarr	passed 6-4	must allow observers to see ballot verification
HB2307	elections; hand counting; machines; prohibition	McGarr	passed 6-4	all votes have to be hand counted
HB2415	active early voting lists; removal	Biasiucci	passed 6-4	remove if missed one election, not two
HB2078	counties; elections; state audits	Diaz	passed 6-4	anyone can request an audit??
HB2231	early absentee voting; limitations; conflicts	Harris	passed 6-4	have to have actual absentee excuse
HB2560	images; voter lists; records; contest.	Toma	passed 6-4	requires county recorders to post list of all persons registered to vote; requires image posted later of the "cast vote record"- the ballots, without signatures, but showing the votes. All of them.
HCR2033	primary elections; eligible candidates	Smith	held	direct primary election requires each party to nominate no more than the number of slots available apparently to prohibit ranked voting.
SB1074	election; contest (Borrelli)		passed 5-3	prohibits use of electronic equipment to count votes unless a set of standards are met including provision of source codes
SB1140	elections; voting centers prohibited (Hoffman: Borrelli, Farnsworth, et al)		passed 5-3	prohibits voting centers and allows only voting in election districts

<u>SB121</u> <u>3</u>	legislative council; procedures manual (Kern: Kolodin)	passed 5-3	establishes secretary of state as the "legislative council" for electio procedures
<u>SB132</u> <u>4</u>	images; voter lists; records; contest (Bennett: Burch, Fernandez, et al)	passed 5-3	Requires a county recorder to publish a list of eligible voters, on the county recorder's website 10 days before a primary and general election. Requires the Secretary of State (SOS) to digitally publish a list of all persons who voted in an election, all ballot images and a sortable cast vote record. a "cast vote record" is a record of how an anonymous person voted on every contest on the ballot
<u>SB133</u> <u>2</u>	cast vote record; public records (Shamp: Wadsack)	passed 5-3	Requires the "cast vote record" to be a public document.
<u>SB138</u> <u>9</u>	ballots; pollbooks; instructions; tabulating; storage (Bennett)	passed 8-0	provides for how ballots are to be handled and stored
<u>SB145</u> <u>5</u>	office vacancy; discharge of duties (Shope)	passed 5-3	office determined to be vacant 45 days after a person stops doing the work (reduced from 60 days)
<u>SB147</u> <u>1</u>	ballot tabulation; hand count comparison (Kavanagh)	passed 5-3	county recorders required to conduct hand count of all contests by sept 1 into two precincts or 2% of precincts
<u>SB151</u> <u>8</u>	ballots; election day; identification (Bennett)	passed 5-3	Requires an early ballot be received by the county recorder or deposited at a polling place by 5:00 p.m. on the Friday preceding an election to be counted and valid and requires a voter to present valid identification before depositing the voter's early ballot into the ballot box. Allows an early voter to only deliver the voter's own ballot. Exempts early ballots from signature verification if valid identification is presented and confirmed.
<u>SB156</u> <u>5</u>	ballot processing; electronic adjudication; limitation (Carroll: Bennett, Gowan, et al)	passed 5-3	prohibits use of technology in elections that includes learning software or artificial intelligence
<u>SB156</u> <u>6</u>	voter registration; reregistration; ten years (Carroll: Gowan, Kaiser, et al)	passed 5-3	everyone's registration is cancelled after 10 years and they have to reregister to vote

<u>SB159</u> <u>3</u>	recall; requirements; petitions (Bennett)	passed 6-2	increases from 90 to 130 days the time after an election in which a recall petition can be called
<u>SB159</u> <u>5</u>	early ballots; identification; tabulation (Mesnard: Bennett, Carroll, et al)	passed 5-3	bill alters what is required for early voting. If mailed, it has to be received by 7 p.m. on election day. If dropped off, it has to be in by 7 pm the Friday before election day. If delivered by a voter's agent, the voter has to provide ID within 5 days if a federal office or 3 days if a local office.
<u>SB159</u> <u>6</u>	polling places; public office spaces (Mesnard)	passed 5-3	local public office has to provide space if asked
<u>SB159</u> <u>7</u>	early ballot on-site tabulation; requirement (Mesnard)	passed 5-3	county recorders have to be able to tabulate a ballot on site
<u>SB159</u> <u>8</u>	elections; observers; federal candidates (Mesnard)	passed 5-3	allows each candidate for partisan office to have an observer; candidates for nonpartisan offices cannot have an observer
<u>SCR10</u> <u>37</u>	presidential electors; constitutional appointments (Kern)	passed 5-3	tightens up and adds new standards for the components of voting machines

Environment –

The Sierra club has listed dozens of bills that they would like readers to oppose. You can find their assessment, so far, here:

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/sandy.bahr%40sierraclub.org/FMfcgzGrcjLZgpXMgTfXLSDblsQNzbKm>

- **SB1500** – Government Investments. Passed committee. This bill prohibits government investments from being invested in any way other than maximizing pecuniary benefit. It probably is intended to prohibit investing in any fund that is boycotting fossil fuels.
- **SB1115** - land sales; foreign entities; prohibition Passed 5-3. Rules committee next. Will prohibit Chinese citizens from buying land. Purpose here is to prevent water being shipped out of Arizona.

GUNS / Firearms

- **HB2705** schools; safety training; pilot program - Passed committee on party line vote. Creates a training program for schools that includes firearm safety training.

- HB2667 – Prohibits higher education from banning guns on campus if the person has a valid permit. . Passed House Judiciary 2/15 on party line vote.
- Sb1300 – Guns on Campus – Passed Senate MAPS committee on party line vote The bill prohibits higher education institutions from banning weapons if a person has a valid permit.
- **Guns** – SB1096 firearm contracts – Passed 4-2. This bill prohibits public entities from discriminating, in their contracting work, against firearms companies or ammunition companies.
- **Guns HB2394** – firearms – sovereign authority. Passed 4-2-1. The bill prohibits any public entity at any level of government from cooperating with any federal law regarding gun ownership that is aimed directly at firearms or ammunition and not common too other goods and services that “might reasonably be expected to create a chilling effect on the purchase or ownership of those items by law abiding citizens. “ In other words, don’t enforce any federal gun laws.
- **HB2332** firearm safety training; schools Sponsor: Rep. Bliss LD1. Passed 8-7. This will require schools to provide, through the National Rifle Association, firearm training for students in grades 6-12. Among other arguments against, there is the issue of whether training with firearms actually reduces the possibility of irresponsible use or whether familiarity increases propensity to experiment with guns.
- **SB1331** schools; parents; firearm possession Sponsor Sen. Shamp (LD29). Passed 4-3. This bill would allow parents with concealed weapons permits who have students in public schools, high schools and universities/community colleges to carry their weapons on school campuses. There is NO good reason to allow guns in schools.

Health and Welfare

- **SB1300 Passed senate judiciary** Cities will be required to eliminate homeless encampments and clean out the area. Homeless people who are there will be charged with a misdemeanor.
- **Health / Welfare HB2227 – Eligibility for child care** money – Passed 7-2. This bill directs the Department of Economic Security to change its child care program to allow it to collect federal money for child care for some out of school provider organizations that are not currently eligible.
- **Health / Welfare HB2284 – Housing for Homeless** – HELD. This might pass through appropriations, but it may be dead. Requires the Arizona Department of Housing, beginning in January, 2024, to accept and use funds for services to persons experiencing homelessness. Requires the money to be used for shelters, parking lots, camping and other places where homeless people often gather. Requires certain criteria such as water and some services at these designated sites. It also limits homeless persons ONLY to these

places that have been designated. Also enables the agency to use the money for permanent housing but only after funding these other locations.

- **Health / Welfare SB 1022 and SB 1024 – Restricting Begging.** (Both passed 4-3. . Both of these bills (Sen. Kavanagh), were passed by the Senate Military Affairs, Public Safety committee Wednesday 2/8. **HB1022** prohibits a pedestrian from selling goods, soliciting donations or begging on a painted or raised traffic island or median and makes it a misdemeanor to do so. **HB1024** adds to the definition of loitering. It prohibits a person from lying, sleeping or otherwise remaining in a sitting position on a public street, highway, sidewalk or other right-of-way, with certain exceptions and makes it a misdemeanor to do so. Both bills are intended to criminalize the practice of persons asking for donations along streets and highways. Surely, there would be better ways of dealing with people seeking money along traffic lights than charging them with a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment not to exceed six months and a fine not to exceed \$2,500.

Health and Human services committee bills that may be helpful to low income persons.

- **HB2211** – opens up the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) to persons convicted of felony drug use if they are in compliance with all terms of probation, including any applicable drug testing requirements. Passed committee 9-0.
- SB1138 - Banks - Prohibits banks from discriminating and apparently prevents them from discriminating on the basis of the source of a person’s income (e.g., welfare). It passed 5-3, but not clear why Democrats voted against it.

Taxes

- **HB 2061 and SB1063 – City tax on food.** **HB2061 passed House committee 6-4** The Senate companion bill **SB 1063 passed 4-3.** Currently, cities have the option of taxing food for home consumption or not. Some do, some do not. This bill would prohibit a city from taxing food. The fiscal impact is estimated to be \$182.9 million in 2024. Generally, it is not good practice in terms of fairness and justice to tax food as these taxes fall heavily on low income persons. On the other hand, high income persons spend far more on food than low income, which contributes to city budgets that are used to pay for education and social services. .

Taxes SB1108 – Tax Credit. Passed 4-3. This bill would “punish” a city or county that pays above the state minimum wage by allowing employers to claim a tax credit for certain labor costs if they are required by city/county law to pay above the state minimum wage. Tax credits are a dollar-for-dollar exemption, not a deduction, and therefore take considerable funds away from the public sector and are especially damaging for education. The State Treasurer would withhold monies from the city's or town's Urban Revenue Sharing Fund (URS Fund) distribution to reimburse the state for a portion of the Credits claimed for the taxable year.

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Here's contact information for House Members:

<https://www.azleg.gov/MemberRoster/?body=H>

Here's contact information for Senate Members:

<https://www.azleg.gov/MemberRoster/?body=S>

REQUEST TO SPEAK: This lets you express your opinion, for or against, any bill that has been filed: You need to know the bill # and committee. And, you have to get an account. To do so, you have to activate it at the capitol. But if you have had one before, it should still be there for you. Just click on this link and follow directions!! You can get help doing that through Civic Engagement Beyond Voting on Feb. 6 and other dates. . [Here is their sign-up link.](#)

[Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation](https://www.vuu.org/) – <https://www.vuu.org/>

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Might U be a UU? VUU welcomes everyone! Athiests, agnostics, deists, theists, zorasterianists and many who have left other faith traditions are all welcome here. VUU is a lively, interesting, friendly, non-judgmental community of people who take seriously the [seven UU principles](#) that serve as aspirational guides to the way we live. Our minister is **Rev. Sarah Oglesby-Dunegan**. Other regular staff include Music Director, Katie Seifert; Director of Faith Formation, Marci Beaudoin and Todd Serrine, Administrator. VUU is located at 6400 W. Del Rio Drive, Chandler, AZ 480 899 4249 VUU holds services at 10:30 to 11:30 on Sunday. Join our Service on zoom: this [link](https://zoom.us/j/92747785894?pwd=V01TR0h3dzJoZTZhcjZqL1BiRWWhXZz09#success): <https://zoom.us/j/92747785894?pwd=V01TR0h3dzJoZTZhcjZqL1BiRWWhXZz09#success>