

— June 7, 2025 —

Caucus Newsletter

57th Legislature, 1st Regular Session



Arizona State Senate Republican Caucus

Weekly Newsletter

Welcome to the Official Arizona Senate Republican Caucus Newsletter! Stay informed with our weekly publication: Your go-to source for the latest session updates and insights. Get your news straight from the source and into your inbox every week!





Governor Hobbs Again Endangers National Security

By Majority Leader Janae Shamp

With every politically motivated veto of public safety legislation put on her desk by Republicans, Governor Katie Hobbs continues to violate the oath of office she swore to uphold by endangering the lives and livelihoods of all Arizonans. This week, she killed a bill I sponsored to ensure enemies of the United States would not have easy access to our military bases and critical infrastructure to carry out harm. SB 1109 would have banned the People's Republic of China from purchasing, owning, or acquiring land in Arizona. In recent years, China has acquired large tracts of land and other property near essential installations, including military bases, critical infrastructure, and sensitive corporate areas, with a goal of conducting surveillance and collecting data on important U.S. assets, as well as to monitor the leaders and workers who manage those assets. Luke Air Force Base recently faced this very real danger. By having access to this land, China can also position autonomous arsenal, such as drone swarms, and would have the ability to launch an attack on military bases or other sensitive areas considered critical to national security in the event of a conflict. It is utterly insane that Arizona's top elected official would rather be an obstructionist against safeguarding our citizens from threats than to sign legislation giving our state a fighting chance at preventing attacks. Earlier this year, Hobbs vetoed SB 1027, which would have banned critical telecommunications infrastructure within the State of Arizona from using equipment manufactured by a foreign adversary. Needless to say, Hobbs is a total disgrace.





Trump Expedites Border Wall Construction

By Senator Tim Dunn

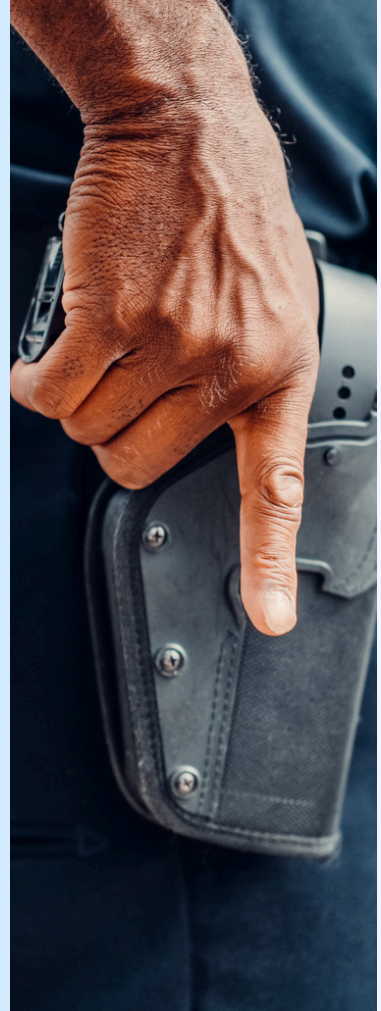
I'm honored to share the HUGE win that Arizonans have been begging for! President Trump just issued a series of federal waivers aimed at expediting construction of additional border wall segments in Arizona. These waivers bypass several regulations, clearing the way for faster development in targeted areas heavily used for illegal crossings. This project, ensuring "expeditious construction of approximately 36 miles of new border wall in Arizona and New Mexico," is a necessary step to better help secure our southern border and improve overall national security. The waivers are being issued pursuant to Section 102 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996. As construction moves forward, we'll be watching closely to see the great impact it has on the citizens of Arizona and the communities we serve. While the Biden Administration turned their backs on our law enforcement, President Trump is not. It's about time we have a President that will support the men and women who are putting their lives on the line to protect our communities from the deadly crimes associated with dangerous criminal illegal aliens. Arizona, your voices are being heard. Never has our border been more secure!



Major Victory for 2nd Amendment Rights

By President Warren Petersen

We're celebrating a legal victory for 2nd amendment rights and our nation's sovereignty after the Supreme Court issued a landmark decision protecting the American firearms industry from being dismantled by the Mexican government. The Arizona Legislature joined 26 states in an amicus brief last year urging the high court to end Mexico's frivolous lawsuit against U.S. firearm manufacturers for crimes committed by Mexican cartels in Mexico. In *Smith & Wesson Brands v. Estados Unidos Mexicanos*, Mexico alleged American gun manufacturers are liable for the harm caused from gun trafficking by cartels in their country. The Supreme Court agreed with our position and ruled the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act enacted by Congress protects against meritless litigation threatening to crush the firearms industry. I'm proud to have worked with Republican states to uphold our sovereignty, protect Americans' right to bear arms, and safeguard lawful gun manufacturers from attempts to destroy them. I'm committed to engaging in legal battles on matters threatening our constitutional freedoms when Arizona's Attorney General refuses to.





Behind the Scenes of State Budget Negotiations

By President Pro Tempore T.J. Shope

We're quickly approaching the conclusion of the legislative session. Budget negotiations are in the final stages. The official end of the fiscal year is June 30, meaning we must have a budget approved by then, but I anticipate we will have one sooner. Once a deal is reached, we will vote on the spending plan and send it to the Governor for signature, likely within the next two weeks. Despite the fake news some media outlets have pushed out regarding lawmakers "taking a break" or "going on vacation," this couldn't be further from the truth. A break for us means we've completed voting on all available bills. Instead of having members drive hours from their districts in the Navajo Nation or Sierra Vista just to appear on the Senate floor to pray, recite the pledge of allegiance, and adjourn for the day, we are letting everyone work on other projects while the budget is finalized with leadership from the Senate and the House, as well as the Governor. I remain optimistic on the budget; we always come together at the end, every time. Last year, we had over 20 members in the Senate and over 40 members in the House vote in support of the budget. I expect to see something similar this year. While we are not passing an extension of Prop 123 for K-12 funding this session, we will do so next year, and schools will not miss out on a dime because we are backfilling those dollars from the general fund.



Investigating Arizona's Department of Corrections

By Senator Kevin Payne

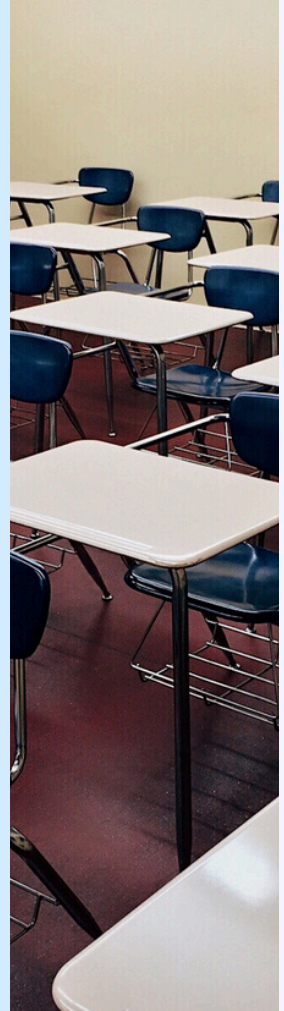
Over the past several months, I've received disturbing information about the Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation, & Reentry (ADCRR) policies and procedures that are allegedly leading to inmate murders, suicides, overdoses, confiscated weapons, assaults against correctional employees, and other atrocities. I have grave concerns that a disaster is unfolding right before our eyes. After the murders of three inmates at a facility in Tucson in April, I launched a probe of the agency and requested documentation from Director Thornell. While I appreciate his cooperation thus far, I am expanding my investigation. This week, I sent [a letter to the Director](#) requesting a variety of additional public records be provided to the Arizona Legislature by June 25, including reports on inmate deaths, Narcan administration logs, substance use disorder treatment records, restrictive housing reports, statistics on staff assaults, data on disciplinary actions taken against staff and inmates, data on confiscated weapons, and other items relevant to the operations and culture of ADCRR over the past four years. These details will be used in determining the next course of action to ensure the safety and security of both correctional employees and inmates within ADCRR facilities.



Auditing Arizona School Districts' Finances

By Senator Mark Finchem

As Chairman of the Joint Legislative Audit Committee, I am appalled at the ungodly amounts of financial mismanagement revealed at the hearing this week. Both Isaac Elementary School District (IESD) and Tolleson Union High School District (TUHSD) have gone beyond imaginable measures to misuse hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars. During the committee hearing, Lindsey Perry, Arizona Auditor General, provided information on the audit findings for IESD, a district in receivership. During presentations given by parents', details were revealed on how TUHSD used public funds to finance the IESD transaction of \$25 million to temporarily cover their deficit, prevent closure, and fund teachers' paychecks. It was also revealed that TUHSD is graduating students at the 90% level, yet their reading and math proficiency level is at 26%. Making matters worse, TUHSD is focused on spending \$280 million on a new football stadium, over their students' academic growth. Both the IESD and TUHSD were requested to appear at the JLAC committee to answer questions. One week before the hearing, I received an email from TUHSD saying how due to "a scheduling conflict," the superintendent and board president were not attending. I find this shameful, giving me reason to believe this may be a massive coverup.



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