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Justice is not only the absence of oppression; it is the presence of opportunity. Although imprisoned people have made mistakes, we have an obligation to increase the possibility that they can get their lives back on the right track. And part of that starts with fixing the conditions of our prisons and offering more job training for inmates.
Barack Obama

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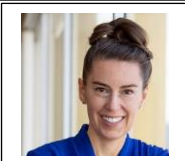
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 **BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE** 

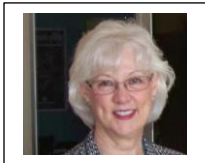
JULY ZOOM MEETING - Guest Speakers Laura Conover & Susan Bickel



Pima County Attorney Laura Conover

Laura Conover, who was elected as the Pima County Attorney in 2020 has a unique perspective on Southern Arizona’s criminal justice system. She is the third woman to hold the office, the second defense attorney, and the first victims’ rights attorney. She has assembled a diverse senior leadership team and plans to revolutionize operations.

Reform, transparency, and accountability are Laura’s core objectives. She endeavors to reform cash bail, end all use of capital punishment, divert cases of substance use and mental illness to treatment programs, and protect people with vulnerable immigration statuses. She is fortifying units in Conviction & Sentencing Integrity and Fraud & Consumer Protection to safeguard against unethical and exploitative behaviors. She is building the first adult restorative justice program in the state.

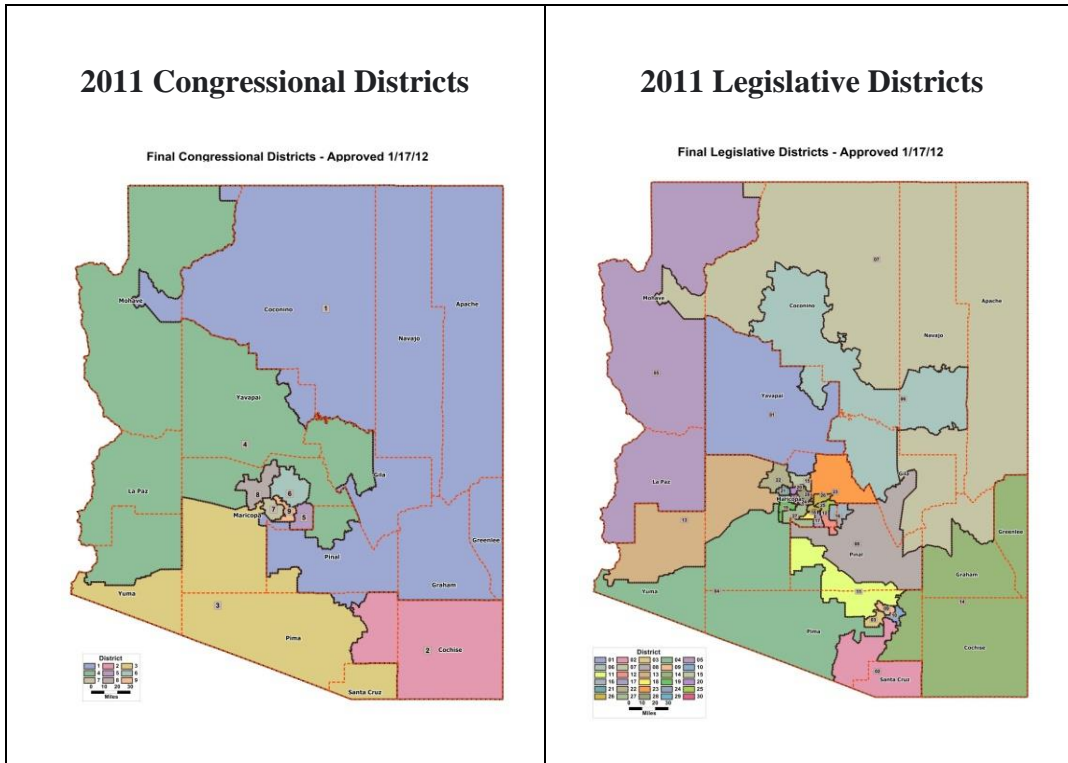


Chair of LD9 Democrats Susan Bickel

The chair of LD9 Democrats, Susan Bickel has been on the board for the past seven years and is currently serving on the Pima County Democratic Party Redistricting Committee as well.

Susan became actively involved in Arizona politics while living in Douglas, where she successfully motivated rural residents to vote Democratic by identifying three key issues: the economy as it relates to copper mining, the border wall, and immigration.

After moving to Tucson Susan immediately became active in LD9. In addition to her present positions, she has served as LD9 Elected PC and State committee member, Pima County Democratic Party 2nd vice-chair, Co-chair PCDP PC & Volunteer Development Committee member, LD9 PC & Volunteer Development Committee member, Corresponding Secretary, and LD9 Communications Team member.



Fair Voting Districts are Crucial to the Success all our Other Priorities *by Dee Maitland*

Which outrage from the Republicans in this last session is your favorite? Voter suppression? Lowering taxes to sabotage Prop 208? Using the federally funded surplus to lower taxes instead of improving roads or helping people? A 2/3 vote needed to recover funds? Overriding federal gun laws? Crippling our Secretary of State?

There are only two ways for us to counter the perfidy by Arizona Republicans:

- Citizen initiatives, such as Prop 208 and the Finchem recall petition
- Fair legislative districts that ensure our votes will count over the course of the next ten years

The success of citizen initiatives has been a mixed bag and our legislature continues to pass laws that make initiatives more difficult to get on the ballot and laws that override voter intent, such as the recent budget sabotage of Prop 208’s fundraising formula. That leaves establishing fair voting districts as the most powerful means of ensuring that future legislation will represent the will of the voters, not the power of one party.

As of April 2021, the 4.2 million registered voters in the state are 34.87% Republican, 32.01% Democrat, and 32.33% other. Currently there are 4 safe Republican districts, 2 safe Democrat districts, and 3 competitive districts. 2022 fair district maps should be an even 3 districts for each. This will require our vigilance, because the 2021 Independent Redistricting Commission is not showing the initiative and balance of the previous IRC.

First, Chair Erika Neuberg campaigned on achieving unanimous votes on all important issues. However, when it came to engaging mapping consultants, those who were chosen had faced numerous lawsuits for drawing discriminatory maps. Likewise, when it came to the hiring of an executive director, the one chosen has strong political ties and limited administrative experience. Each decision was passed with 3 to 2 votes along party lines.

Second, Ms. Neuberg’s naïve wish “to hear from everyone, including legislators” resulted in the following comment:

The League of Women Voters of Arizona urges you to carefully consider the purpose of meeting with legislative leaders. The IRC was created specifically to remove redistricting from the legislature. Your responsibility is to create districts fairly and independently. Legislative leaders represent partisan views but may not represent all Arizona residents. And legislators are given an opportunity to submit comments on draft maps at a specified time in the process. The IRC draws maps independently of the legislature; the legislature does not approve the maps you produce. You must consider the interests of all Arizonans, not political parties. You should not provide an opportunity to unfairly weight the scales. Again, we urge you to carefully consider this step.

Fortunately, the commissioners decided against the meeting.

Finally, there are also indications that the commissioners may be abdicating their responsibilities and deferring to the already suspect mapping consultants and the inexperienced executive director, as per the following public comment from an observer of the meeting:

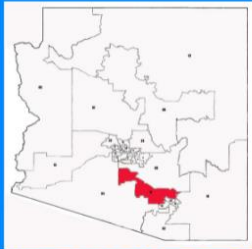
I found today's update from the mapping consultants and the subsequent discussion very disturbing. The commissioners are obviously in the dark about what is being planned and discussed by the consultants and the Executive Director. Isn't there regular communication between meetings from the consultants to the Commissioners? Commissioners need to be brought into those talks immediately and provided with draft planning documents and the opportunity to comment. The IRC appears to be yielding too much of its responsibility and authority to its mapping and legal consultants. With respect, the Commissioners need to be driving the process. One reason given for hiring Timmons Group/NDC was that they would be able to work quickly because Arizona would be their only state redistricting client. They have not appeared to be moving quickly and the information they provide each week is amazingly sparse. For example, for two or more weeks Mark Flahan has reported they are working on a social and economic database but said nothing about the source of the data they are using. It is the Commissioners who need to come to an agreement about definitions of communities of interest and competitiveness, based on information that is presented and subsequent discussion among the Commissioners. On behalf of the League of Women Voters of Arizona, I urge the current IRC to agree on and publish such definitions. It would provide clarity for the Commissioners, their staff and consultants, and the public. As an example, the first IRC (2001) adopted the following definitions which appear on the archived 2001 Commission website at <https://azredistricting.org/2001/Definitions.asp>.

The 2011 IRC did well by Pima County based on voter demographics, except for the Town of Marana and Oro Valley where voters ended up in districts unlike Tucson where they share interests and services. In two other districts Pima County voters similarly aligned with Tucson represent less than 20% of voters; Congressional District 1 and Legislative District 4 are both distinctly rural and indigenous. These are two examples of what we want to avoid in our new redistricting effort.

If you are looking for an opportunity to communicate directly with the IRC about preserving our congressional and legislative districts and bringing Marana and Oro Valley into the Tucson sphere of influence, go to the IRC website at <https://irc.az.gov>. where you will find pull-down selections entitled "Newsroom" and "Listening Tour Schedule 2021." There you can access a PDF indicating that IRC will be holding two meetings in Pima County on August 7 and 8. However, the place or time are not listed. Unfortunately, Arizona law only requires a 24-hour notice of public meetings, so you will have to be on your toes.

I strongly encourage you to join us on Monday, July 12 at 6:30 pm for Susan Bickel's presentation on behalf of Pima County Democratic Party. She will be sharing more information on the IRC and how you can make your voice heard.

LD 11



Legislative District 11 is one of 30 in AZ and covers parts of Pima and Pinal counties. LD11 is about 100 x 30 miles, includes two metro areas, four cities, two towns, 11 unincorporated places, 3 congressional districts, and 29 zip codes. There are 61 precincts in LD11, 34 in Pima and 27 in Pinal. Our legislative district determines our state representation. Unfortunately, our one state senator and two state representatives are all Republican.

LD11 IS A SOLIDLY REPUBLICAN DISTRICT

There are currently about 168,674 registered voters in LD11 of which 38.7% are Republican, 28.9% are Democrat and 32.4% are Other.

LD11 was drawn to be a Republican safe district

LD11 registered voters on January 9th of 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018

LD11 precincts & competitive measure 1A/112

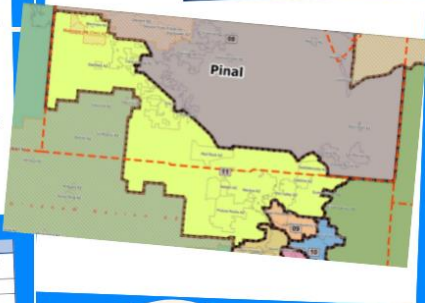
Should Oro Valley remain in a Republican leaning district?

LD 11 HAS 4 SPLITS

Of the 441 AZ census places with populations under 100,000, only 13 were split across Legislative Districts and LD11 has **four** of them. LD8 also has four of the census place splits with populations under 100,000 with all of them in Pinal county.

Splits make it difficult to identify shared community concerns and interests which result in hampered mobilization in common cause. This is especially true of places with smaller populations.

PLACES IN LD11



LD 11 Census Places					
Place not split in LD11	% of place in LD11	county	Places split in LD11	% of place in LD11	county
Maricopa	100%	Pinal	Casa Grande	21.1%	Pinal
Saddlebrooke	100%	Pinal	Eloy	2.5%	Pinal
Arizona City	100%	Pinal	Picacho	56%	Pinal
Red Rock	100%	Pinal	Marana	96.8%	Pima
Al-Chin Village	100%	Pinal			
Stanfield	100%	Pinal			
Oro Valley	100%	Pima			
Picture Rocks	100%	Pima			
Catalina	100%	Pima			
Avra Valley	100%	Pima			
Nelson	100%	Pima			
Rillito	100%	Pima			

Should our new LD consist of fewer small place splits?

ORO VALLEY

The median age in Oro Valley is 53 years with a balance across age groups. 48% of our residents work in the civilian labor force. Oro Valley is home to over 10 high tech firms and many thriving businesses both large and small.

Should Oro Valley be in a district with places that have similar economies, urbanization, and demographics?

CHANGING BOUNDARIES

According to AZ state's demographer, district boundaries will need to change to keep each district's population equal in the redrawn legislative maps. Pima County's percent of the population is projected to remain the same. However, Oro Valley's population is estimated to have increased 12.2% since the last census.

Your voice needs to be heard at the upcoming IRC Listening Tour scheduled to be in Tucson on the mornings of August 7th & 8th. Susan Bickel will be providing guidance at our July meeting.

INFORMATION SOURCES

- AZ Democrats, Franny Sharpe Elections Director
- Susan Bickel, Chair LD9 Democrats
- United States Census Bureau
- AZ Secretary of State
- AZ Independent Redistricting Committee 2010
- AZ Commerce Authority, Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO)
- Statistical Atlas

It's Only Raining: On Budgets, Sinema & Political Trickle Down

by Tom Meconi

Here is what our State Legislators could have done with Arizona's budget surplus: fully fund public education, expand Kid Care to practically eliminate child poverty, invest in green infrastructure, increase the public housing fund, and save for the water shortages we know are coming. Here is what they did: gave it to millionaires.

How bad is the recently passed budget? It depends on who you ask. Ask a Republican, especially a really, really rich Republican, and you'd probably hear: "Is that all?" Ask anyone with empathy and a sense of fairness, and you will hear wailing and gnashing of teeth. The budget starts with a flat tax that would make bankrupt Kansas blush, giving 44% of the tax cuts to the top .03 %. While Arizona's richest 1% will save over \$30,000 per annum, the average taxpayer, anyone making \$70,000 or less, will save between \$2 to \$96. The result is nothing more than a colossal shell game that moved millions from public education and civic welfare into the pockets of wealthy Republicans.

Then, there are the add-ons to the budget, provisions that have little or nothing to do with a budget but much to do with keeping the deplorables happy. Their new, regressive laws include more voter restrictions, anti-transgender laws, \$1.5 million to finance anti-abortion ministries, and Proposition 208 workarounds. As bad as these are, this one takes the cake: students must now be taught about whites fleeing communist regimes, while making it illegal to teach the history of the rampant, systemic racism that remains after 250 years of slavery and 150 years of Jim Crow laws, a history which has resulted in the median wealth of white households being 10 times that of black households in America.

In this bizarro world of theirs, there is apparently no racism, no climate catastrophe, no voter suppression. There was no insurrection, only America-loving tourists beating up cops and calling for the execution of the Vice-President and Speaker of the House.

These are the people Senator Sinema says we must embrace to accomplish President Biden's promises. Why would a Democrat, especially a Democrat with a history of supporting progressive causes, refuse to commit to the protection of our democracy while clutching onto the Jim Crow procedural relic of the filibuster? We do not really know. For Sinema, her presence in the Senate has been all about posturing, prosthetic canes, and F#%k Off rings. She has voted against a federal minimum wage and even failed to appear for the vote on the January 6th Commission.

This disregard of the will of the voters and the well-being of the public has become second nature to Republicans. Yet, they continue to assure us that they are not really peeing on us, it's only raining. And if you ask Sinema, it must be okay because now it's a bipartisan tinkle.

Let her know what you think at Sen.sinema@sinema.senate.gov. Sure, she will probably send you a vapid email asking for contributions but maybe, just maybe, there is a tipping point where the voices of the constituents who put her in office become louder than those of her big money donors.

The United States Supreme Court has just ruled that Arizona and the rest of the Republican-controlled states are free to pass voter suppression laws and time is of the essence. Remind Sinema that our democracy hangs in the balance. If that does not work, remind her that they are HER voters who are being marginalized.

Nationwide: Building Back Better

Economy

- As the pandemic continues to recede, employers added 850,000 jobs in June, well above the average of the last three months. Wages have also increased with a solid 3.6% rise in average hourly pay compared with a year ago, and Wall Street has responded to the jobs report with stock indexes hitting record highs.
- US economy grew a solid 6.4% in first quarter of the year, setting the stage for the strongest year in 7 decades.
- Biden is working to ensure the passage the American Jobs and American Families Plans with his efforts to build bipartisanship in the Senate.
- Biden signed two laws ending restrictive rules on how the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission settles claims and blocking payday lenders from avoiding caps on interest rates.

Infrastructure

- Infrastructure Investment plan: A signal to ourselves and the world that American democracy can come through and deliver for all our people. The plan includes
 - Addressing the critical need to improve crumbling infrastructure from overwhelmed power grids to lead-filled water pipes and traffic-clogged roads, as well as combatting climate change
 - Generating jobs, 90% of which would go to blue-collar workers to rebuild America
 - Repairing roads and bridges, which in turn will give companies that make machinery, concrete, asphalt and paint a solid foundation for long overdue growth

Gun Violence and Public Safety

- Due to Biden's expanded background checks, over 300,000 people have been stopped from buying guns, an all-time high according to the FBI.
- His administration has developed a comprehensive strategy of preventive measures proven to reduce crime and attack its root causes. The strategy includes
 - Stemming the flow of firearms and holding rogue dealers accountable
 - Supporting law enforcement with federal tools and resources
 - Investing in evidence-based community violence interventions
 - Expanding summer employment programs and employment opportunities for teens and young adults
 - Helping formerly incarcerated individuals to successfully reenter their communities

Immigration, Environment, and Social Justice

- Biden has ended the strict asylum rules of the last administration that made it nearly impossible for immigrants to win asylum for domestic violence, gang violence, and threats to families.
- He signed a law restricting climate-warming emissions from oil and gas drilling.
- He declared Juneteenth a new national holiday commemorating the end of slavery.

Worldwide: A return to International Leadership and Global Approval

- During the G-7 Summit Biden and other leaders of the world's wealthiest nations agreed to pledge 1 billion vaccines to poorer nations, help developing countries grow, fight climate change, and back a minimum tax on multinational corporations.
- Following the EU summit, Biden represented his fellow NATO leaders by pressing Russian President Putin to halt cyber attacks against the West, end violent suppression of political dissidents, halt the use of chemical weapons, and cease interfering in elections outside his borders.
- Biden and Putin did reach an agreement to return their respective ambassadors to their posts and work toward a treaty limiting nuclear weapons.
- Biden has nominated 28 ambassadors to represent our interests in Central America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. To date, only the ambassador to the United Nations Thomas-Greenfield has been confirmed.

help wanted

Writing letters to the Editor is one of the most powerful ways to persuade voters. They have been found to be more effective than calling, emailing, and texting.



Join our team of letter writers to:

- 1** educate, persuade & inspire others to take action
- 2** meet with likeminded progressives at convenient times
- 3** preview letters, give gentle suggestions & get support

Please consider joining our Letters to the Editor group, in association with Indivisible Tucson Action Alliance.

Email jacolyn@comcast.net to sign up.

From the Chair of the Democrats of Oro Valley Mike Dayton writing in praise of our Letters to the Editor group:

I want to thank you for your contribution to save our Democracy. Without true patriots like yourselves penning well-written letters to the editor, radical right lies would cloud the minds of many casual or uninvolved citizens. Great job. Please continue in your superb effort. Our way of life depends on it.

Up-Coming Guest Speakers

August 9: County Supervisor Rex Scott
September 13: Arizona League of Women Voters
October 11: CD 1 Representative Tom O'Halleran

Topic: Pima County Update
Topic: Redistricting & Fair Maps
Topic: Legislative Update

OPPORTUNITIES, PLEASE BE GENEROUS HELP OUR LOCAL FOOD BANK SUPPORT OUR TROOPS!

* Please consider donating some non-perishable food items or making a cash donation to one of our local food banks during this stressful time.

*The Democrats of Oro Valley care about the health and well-being of our community.

* Thanks to all of you who support our brave troops.

**Please donate any of these items to one of our local veterans groups for distribution: deodorant, shaving items, toothpaste, tooth brushes, pocket novels and puzzle books.*

August Meeting

Monday, August 9
6:30 pm

Speaker: Rex Scott
County Supervisor

Topic: County Update