



Democrats of Oro Valley

Newsletter
February
2022

NIL CARBORUNDUM ILLEGITIMI

Serving Democrats in Oro Valley and Greater Northwest Tucson
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On every front, there are clear answers out there that can make this country stronger, but we're going to have to break through the fear and the frustration people are feeling. Our job is to make sure that even as we make progress, we are also giving people a sense of hope and vision for the future.
Barack Obama

2022 Dues Still Only \$20

DOV Tee Shirts \$20

Dues accepted at: <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/dovdues>

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BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE



FEBRUARY ZOOM MEETING –Guest Speakers: Deborah Howard & Nicky Indicavitch

Deborah Howard



Deborah's first political engagement started with campus-based voter registration as a college student in 1978. Voter registration remains her favorite political act. Her introduction to redistricting came 10 years ago when she monitored the inaugural citizen's redistricting commission in California. She found it to be a little like voter registration - on steroids.

Now in Arizona since 2017, she once again totally immersed herself Arizona's independent redistricting effort serving as the lead for the Arizona Indivisible Statewide Redistricting Team.

Her focus in 2022 is shifting to electoral politics.

Nicky Indicavitch



Nicky Indicavitch is a mother of five children who all attend public schools in Yavapai County. She is a strong supporter of public schools and currently works as the Statewide Outreach Director for Save Our Schools Arizona.

She will present us with an overview of the current condition of our public schools, and how all of us can help SOS address the dire issues threatening our children's future by demanding that our legislators override the outdated, 40-year-old Aggregate Expenditure Limit.

Arizona Republican Legislators Wish You and Your Children Harm

In the past week over 500 bills have been proposed as February 25th approaches, the last day legislation can be considered. We hope you have subscribed to Civic Engagement Beyond Voting (CEBV) and the League of Women Voters bill tracking blasts and are submitting your thumbs up or down on Request to Speak (RTS). Below is a summary of the most egregious bills against voters and schools. Republican gun legislation is included as it could endanger our public schools even more than Covid.



VOTER SUPPRESSION BILLS

This past week there were 23 voter bills being followed through committees by the League of Woman Voters of Arizona and Civic Engagement Beyond Voting. Only one garnered support: requiring a system for citizens to track their early voted ballot. The rest were what we would expect from Republicans enthralled with the Big Lie. Most add unnecessary work and hurdles to elections. To this batch of bad bills our Despicable Finchem and Leach sponsored 25 additional bills this week running the gamut from demanding partisan designation of election clerks; micromanaging voting machines, paper, and ink; limiting registration and voting services; making ballot images and voter registration info available to private companies; shortening the voting period; and making citizen initiatives even more difficult. In response to the Republican's financially devastating 60+ losses on Big Lie lawsuits, Leach has sponsored SB1541 which would limit to \$5,000 the attorney fee reimbursement the losing side of an election lawsuit would have to pay the prevailing side. Finchem's Big Lie assist is HCR2033 which would decertify the 2020 Biden electors.

GUNS AND SCHOOL BILLS



Six of the 12 gun bills allow concealed weapons on public property, including K-12 public schools and universities, and other gun free zones. One bill makes gun training mandatory for all children from 4th grade and above. Try to envision attracting teachers when they know there will be guns in the hands of their students as young as 10. SB1037 removes the prohibition on silencers so at least they'd know where the gun fire is coming from. Then,

there's my favorite bill that labels guns as "essential" which removes them from any sales tax. Obviously, funds are not needed for mitigation after a shooting. And finally, there are Leach's two bills to prohibit any "discrimination" against gun companies in contracts or financial services. No protections for students, just gun shops.

So, school shootings are OK with these guys, but students and educators are not. Of the 14 bills in committee, one bans the sale of all computers and cell phones that can't block pornography. Others say no to Critical Race Theory (aka history) but yes to teaching the "brutality" of communism. Of course, there are the bills to expand charter schools and ESA vouchers, but none that would increase the spending limit for the 93% of our students who attend our public schools that are still suffering from the effects of Covid. And then Finchem and Leach proposed 9 more bills which dictate how the Pledge is recited; what learning materials can be used; how teachers communicate their lessons; and rules for extracurricular and interscholastic activities. We can only hope that Leach's anti-education stance will not play well with his new constituents on the east side of LD17 which is known for its good public schools.

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE CALL, WRITE, EMAIL, TESTIFY, REQUEST TO SPEAK AND CAMPAIGN FOR AND DONATE TO DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES!

The Voters' Right to Know' Act: Keeping Elections Clean and Fair

The Stop Dark Money Initiative is in the home stretch, and we need your help!

A healthy democracy is only as healthy as its informed voters. Knowing the funding sources of campaign-related activities keeps the vote fair, because voters will know if special interests are influencing campaigns and representatives.

The Voters' Right to Know Act has one shot this spring to get enough signatures to get it on the ballot. The great news is we need only 21,945 signatures in Pima county! We already have 204,000 signatures statewide, 2/3 of the 300,000 that we need. With your help, we can do this! We found that many circulators are successfully gathering signatures from their inner circle of friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers.

Note that even if HR1 passed, it would not cover states, only federal elections. We must get this done now in Arizona, and recent polls show that 92% of Arizonans support this initiative, a true step to a healthier democracy.

Our Stop Dark Money team will distribute petitions, help you find notaries, and share successes in our collaborative meetings. Please sign up by emailing me at chrisazorganizer@gmail.com. Some petitioners are holding COVID-safe, outdoor driveway parties and backyard gatherings. There are statewide events listed, along with other helpful documents on the Stop Dark Money Volunteer hub: <https://tinyurl.com/SDMVolunteerHub>

There are many ways to volunteer. Join us at the petition drive **11am -1pm every Saturday at the Pima Dems office at 4630 E First**, which is right off Swan one block south of Speedway. I will be there personally on the 12th, and either myself or a volunteer will be there through April to assist you.

We look forward to meeting you!

Chris Hawkins
Southern Arizona Coordinator & Collaborator
chrisazorganizer@gmail.com
650-766-4257 text/call anytime

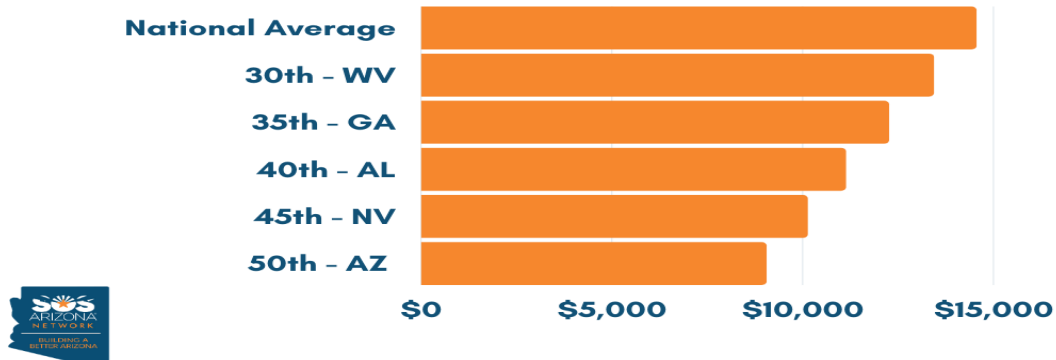


Protect our Right to Know Who's Funding Whom!



Arizona Legislature must override the Aggregate Expenditure Limit

AZ K-12 PER-STUDENT SPENDING



Source: EdLaw Center, "Making the Grade" (2020)
Cost-adjusted funding level per pupil by state

Impact of Funding Cuts

- 2nd highest class sizes in US
- Highest teacher turnover in the US
- 1:905 counselor to student ratio is worst in the nation
- Lack of nurses, librarians, and counselors
- Unfunded arts programs
- Outdated computers and textbooks
- Antiquated buses, A/Cs, roofs.



Upcoming Legislation

- **Constitutional spending cap:** The legislature must override the Aggregate Expenditure Limit, which is based on 1980 numbers.
- If the legislature fails to make this fix, school districts could be forced to cut spending by \$1.2 billion for the last 3 months of **this** school year.

Contact our state legislators and urge them to **override the Aggregate Expenditure Limit** for Arizona's public schools.

Our 1.1 million children attending public schools deserve better than this.

Candidates Cannot Collect Online Signatures in their New Districts *by Evelyn Lathram*

Since the E-Qual system is unable to accommodate two sets of districts simultaneously, candidates will not be able to collect online signatures from voters in their new districts at any point this year. Therefore, several candidates who filed under their new districts have already switched back to the old ones. Likewise, E-Qual does not yet allow candidates to collect signatures or qualifying contributions for Clean Elections funding under their new districts.

So, what happens if a voter has already signed a petition for candidates in one district and is reassigned to a new district? According to the AZ Secretary of State's office, a voter can only vote for candidates in one district and therefore can only sign petitions one district- even if you signed the petition of a candidate whose district you no longer live in and can no longer vote for. You would have to submit an Affidavit of Signature Withdrawal to the Secretary of State's office first in order to sign another petition.

Oro Valley is in the new legislative district LD17. The 2 State House seats are vacant, and there are 2 Democrats running for those seats: Dana Allmond from Marana, and Brian Radford from Catalina. Please visit their websites, sign their petitions, and donate to their campaigns.



Dana Allmond, Candidate for Arizona House of Representatives

Arizonans come first, and I want Arizonans to have a brighter future across all our communities, so I am running as a Democrat for AZ State House Representative for LD11 which will become the new LD17.

My top priorities are 1) protecting human/civil rights starting with voting rights, 2) restoring the K-12 education budget so our children receive a quality education and our educators are treated with dignity and respect, 3) improving mental health care quality and access across the state to reduce the burnout, fatigue, and trauma exacerbated by the pandemic, and 4) ensuring federal dollars make it to the many infrastructure projects needed to make it safer for Arizonans.

I am a veteran, retired Army Lt. Colonel, and 1994 West Point graduate who takes "Duty, Honor, Country" seriously. My more than 23 years of active-duty service has uniquely prepared me to become a lawmaker because I will not back down from a fight. See more at Allmond4az.com



Brian Radford, Candidate for Arizona House of Representatives

If you ask Arizonans what they want most from elected leaders, they respond with "truth" and "cooperation." Also high on their list is a "desire to be heard."

I'm running for Arizona House in LD17 so that we can accomplish just that... a desire to be heard. Our current representatives are busy jockeying for national attention by spreading conspiracies about past elections while nothing gets done here in our communities.

Working families and seniors are being left high and dry wondering how they will put food on the table and pay for rising medical and prescription expenses. Many families are struggling to keep children in public schools and daycare so that the parents can continue working. Schools are struggling with funding promises being ripped away by the current governor and legislature.

We can change all that by voting. The 2022 midterms are critical for democracy. The right is continually attacking voters' rights, public education, and every social program you can think of. We can do better. Arizonans demand progress! See more at Radfordforaz.com

Andy Biggs Wronged Talonya Adams, Not Katie Hobbs by Michael Bryan

Dear Ms. Adams,

You were done an injustice. The courts have established that your pay was sexually discriminatory and that you were wrongly terminated, and the jury did what they could to rectify that wrong.

Secretary Hobbs did not set your pay, nor your conditions of employment, nor the procedures to hire and fire staff. The Senate President at the time had complete and sole control of all that.

That person was then-Senate President Andy Biggs, now Representative Biggs.



The courts found the defendant, the Arizona Senate, discriminated against you in pay and conditions of employment because of your sex, but *not due to your race*. Nowhere in the record is ANY evidence that you complained to decision-makers about disparate pay based on your race.

Senate President Andy Biggs allocated the staff budgets, and set the sexually discriminatory pay, and fostered the discriminatory work culture that resulted in the injustice you suffered. Not Secretary Hobbs.

Secretary Hobbs was not a defendant in your lawsuits and bore no liability for the compensation the jury awarded you. Secretary Hobbs was merely a fact witness, listed on your own witness list, whose testimony helped you win your case.

Aren't you really just angry at Secretary Hobbs because she lost faith in your judgment and professionalism, *and said so publicly*?

I can't help but think that your poor judgment, belligerence, and lack of professionalism (and I would add vindictiveness), which got you fired in the first place, are also the reasons that you are publicly castigating Secretary Hobbs, instead of the real culprit here – Andy Biggs.

Final Note: Secretary Hobbs was not a defendant in Adams's lawsuit, and she bore no liability. Secretary Hobbs was merely a fact witness, whose testimony helped Adams win her case.

Source: Blog for Arizona 12/10/21 <https://blogforarizona.net/dear-talonya-adams/>



The Best of Biden by Jacolyn Marshall

Health

- CDC announced three studies have shown vaccines are standing up to the omicron variant among those who have received booster shots. 87% of US population 18 and older have gotten at least one dose.
- Health authorities strongly urged teens as young as 12 get Covid boosters as soon as they're eligible to avoid the highly contagious omicron variant.
- Biden administration announced schools will receive 5 million rapid tests and 5 million lab-based tests to ease supply shortages and promote safe schools.
- FDA authorized two new Covid pills by Pfizer and Merck based on studies showing that they cut the risk of severe disease and death when taken shortly after symptoms appear.
- Biden announced Americans can request free Covid tests at COVIDTests.gov, with a limit of four per household.
- Biden announced the government will provide 1 billion free rapid, at-home tests to Americans, along with N95 masks, and 1,000 military medical personnel will be deployed to help medical facilities ease staff shortages.
- Biden's vaccine mandate for health care workers has resulted in 81% of nursing home staff being fully vaccinated.
- DOD announced that Army and Air National Guard members must get vaccinated or lose their Guard status.

Economy

- Commerce Department reported a 6.9% annualized increase in US gross domestic product in 2021, the strongest increase in 38 years.
- Treasury Department announced the smallest monthly budget deficit in two years thanks to a rebounding economy that helped boost tax receipts.
- Biden nominee for the Federal Reserve said that combating high inflation is the central bank's top priority and she believes the Fed could reduce it without sacrificing economic growth.
- House passed the America Competes Act which will strengthen supply chains, reinvigorate American manufacturing, and position the US to outcompete China and the rest of the world for decades to come.
- Biden issued an executive order that includes the "right to repair." Apple and Microsoft are rewriting their policies.
- Biden signed an executive order to promote competition and build an economy that works for everyone. His Competition Council will accelerate their work to lower costs for working families.
- The Federal Reserve will start raising interest rates to temper economic growth and lower inflation without raising unemployment.

Environment & Climate Change

- Biden administration announced plans to hold its first offshore wind auctions that would power 2 million homes.
- Other clean energy actions include solar, onshore wind and geothermal energy, and new transmission lines.
- Biden announced plans to build 500,000 charging stations for electric vehicles.
- EPA has ordered coal-fired plants to stop dumping coal ash into unlined storage ponds, stop leakages, and speed up closures of dangerous coal ash sites. US coal plants annually produce 100 million tons of coal ash which contains toxic compounds that pollute waterways, poison wildlife, and cause respiratory illness.
- EPA announced plans to disburse \$7.4 billion to upgrade water and sewer systems and has resumed enforcement of the rule that limits power plant emissions of mercury and other hazardous pollutants.
- EPA announced new tailpipes rules for cars and trucks and the Interior Department announced two large-scale solar projects in California and opened more public lands to other Western states for solar development.
- Biden administration plans to double the use of controlled fires and logging to curb out of control wildfires in California, Colorado, Oregon, Washington state, and Arizona.
- Biden administration issued its first clean energy loan guarantee up to \$1 billion to aid production of clean hydrogen to convert natural gas into commercial products. The Energy Department's loan office manages over 30 projects that generate over \$500 million in interest income for the federal government annually.

Justice

- Justice Department announced the creation of a specialized unit focused on domestic terrorism in response to elevated threats of violence from extremists in the US.
- Justice Department announced its largest financial seizure of more than \$3.5 billion and the arrests of a couple accused of laundering billions in cryptocurrency stolen from a virtual currency exchange in 2016.
- Supreme Court rejected Trump's bid to withhold documents from the January 6th House investigation committee.
- The Justice Department announced the founder and leader of the far-right Oath Keepers militia group and 10 other members have been charged with sedition in the violent attack on the Capitol.
- So far, more than 700 people have arrested and charged with federal crimes in connection with the insurrection.

Government

- Biden's White House Task Force moved to protect scientific and statistical agencies like the US Census Bureau from political interference.
- Transportation Department launched a \$27 billion program to repair and upgrade 15,000 bridges and distributed \$56 billion to improve highways, airports, and shipping ports.
- Biden administration broadened Covid relief uses, allowing cities and counties greater flexibility in spending on more types of construction and a wider range of high-speed internet projects, among others.
- Biden presented governors with a guidebook to access infrastructure funds, urging them to begin construction.

International Relations

- US and NATO rejected Russia's demands to withdraw troops from countries bordering Ukraine but left open the possibility of future talks on arms control, missile deployments, and preventing armed conflict.
- US and Germany vowed to block the Nord Stream 1 Russia-to-Germany gas pipeline if Russia invades Ukraine.
- Biden administration invoked sanctions on North Korean officials in response to their latest ballistic missile test.
- Biden announced \$308 million will be given to independent humanitarian organizations to provide shelter, health care, emergency food aid, water sanitation and hygiene services in Afghanistan.
- Biden designated Qatar a major non-NATO ally for their assistance in the evacuations in Afghanistan.
- US and United Arab Emirates military intercepted two ballistic missiles fired by Yemen rebels at Abu Dhabi.



Tom Meconi 1951 – 2022 In Memoriam

Mike and Chris Dayton:

Tom Meconi began working with the Democrats of Oro Valley at the Northwest Democrats' office during the 2016 election. He organized, instructed, and cheered on volunteers and then comforted them after Trump's disastrous win. Tom became a DOV member soon afterwards. There were good fights to be had and Tom was ready to jump in. Later, he joined the DOV Leadership Council. His fresh ideas included: VOTE t-shirts and masks, letters of accountability to Sinema and others, postcards to Independents, and helping Get Out the Vote during the 2018 mid-term election. Tom led a voter registration drive via Field Team 6 and was instrumental in the successful Oro Valley petition drive of 2021.

Tom brought heart to our club with his warmth and caring. Our eyes well with pride as we remember a life well lived but taken too soon.

Susan and Brian Bickel:

Tom brought a unique talent to our group. He could write exactly what we were all feeling, whether it was annoyance or rage, humor or sarcasm, Tom could say it. Brilliantly.

Tom mentored a group of high school students interested in hands-on learning about politics. We believe they will look back on their experience and realize Tom played a profound part in their personal growth and maturity.

Tom loved people. He believed in America and our way of life. He was smart, analytical, and politically savvy. We will never forget Tom's genuine goodness. He was a true friend, mentor, and colleague. We will miss him enormously.

Evelyn Lathram:

Tom ran the 2018 Northwest Campaign Office with dedication and efficiency. That is where I first met him, and I was impressed with his warmth and openness. He was the kind of person you wanted on your side, as he fought passionately for the causes he cared deeply about. I felt that DOV hit the jackpot when he and his wife joined our Leadership Council. We are going to miss him terribly.

Jacelyn Marshall:

I will remember Tom as a smart, compassionate, dedicated, and articulate man with a ready smile and a passion to serve others. Whether he was out registering voters, writing articles for our newsletter, spearheading DOV's petition drive to protect voting rights and public schools, volunteering at the Community Food Bank or serving as a child advocate, Tom worked hard to make our world a better place. And he did just that. He made a difference.

Jean Meconi:

Tom lived his life with passion and unwavering direction. He was a man of principles.

Obituary of Thomas A. Meconi

Thomas A. Meconi, Tomac, passed away peacefully on January 27th, 2022. Tom lived his life with passion and unwavering direction. From protest marching, resisting IRA recruitment, excelling in the honors writing program at the University of Michigan, advocating for disadvantaged youth at the Wayne County Juvenile Defender's Office to practicing law for his clients, not for his pockets, Tom lived by his principles. Tom was an avid water skier, pool player, photographer, music theorist, musician, Italian wine connoisseur, Italian cook, scuba diver, progressive advocate, fly fisherman and vessel of arcane information.

He is preceded by his father, mother, and brother in death. He leaves a vacuum for his wife, Jean, daughter, Amy, and son, Mike which cannot be filled. His family was beside him throughout life and asks you to embrace your better self.

Adair Funeral Home:

<https://adairfuneralhomes.com/tribute/details/253384/Thomas-Meconi/obituary.html#tribute-start>

To send flowers to the family or plant a tree in memory of Thomas Meconi, please visit [Tribute Store](#)

Peers by Tom Meconi

In the greater scheme of things

we are inconsequential;

our impact brief,

our time briefer.

When the wind scatters

the clouds across the sky

and they reflect at your knees

in the pool where

you are standing, remember

the trout are too.

Build the rods,

Tie the flies and

cast the thousand casts

but at the strike and fight

you are only important

to each other.

OPPORTUNITIES, PLEASE BE GENEROUS

HELP OUR LOCAL FOOD BANK

* 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.

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS!

* 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, toothbrushes, pocket novels and puzzle books.*

March Zoom Meeting

Monday, March 14
6:30 pm

Guest Speakers:
Jim Pederson & Willi Waltrip

Topic: New Congressional & Legislative Districts