



Democrats of Oro Valley

Newsletter
March
2025

NIL CARBORUNDUM ILLEGITIMI

Serving Democrats in Oro Valley and Greater Northwest Tucson
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We're going through something right now. Every single time we've experienced this as a country, we've gotten through those moments because of two things: engaged citizens and principled leaders. Americans share three core beliefs: that the middle class is the engine of our country, that strong national security protects us from harm, and that our democracy, no matter how messy, is unparalleled and worth fighting for. *Senator Elissa Slotkin*

2025 Dues Still Only \$20

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Speakers: Dustin Williams, Hunter Holt, Joshua Polacheck



Dustin Williams, Pima County Superintendent of Public Schools

As Pima County School Superintendent of Schools for the past 12 years, Dustin has been serving our schools and our community well.

Dustin earned a Bachelor's degree in Education from the University of Arizona and a Master's degree in Educational Leadership from Northern Arizona University. Before becoming Superintendent, he taught in an elementary school and later became an assistant principal.

Dustin is strongly committed to facilitating positive educational change and ensuring that all students regardless of race, ethnicity, and/or socioeconomic status have the opportunity to receive an outstanding education. He is dedicated to improving the lives of students and teachers and he actively advocates for increases in student funding and teacher salaries.



Hunter Holt, Candidate for State Senate in LD17

Hunter serves on the Marana School Board and is Vice Chair of the Pima County Democratic Party.

As a high school senior, Hunter took a bold step in his commitment to the community by running for the Marana Unified School District Governing Board, securing his first term in 2021. During his initial term, he served as Vice President for two years, demonstrating strong leadership and dedication to the district. In 2025, Hunter was re-elected and was honored to be elected as President of the Governing Board, continuing his mission to advocate for students, educators, and the community.

Hunter has been a dedicated advocate, lobbying in Washington, D.C. and working tirelessly at the Arizona State Capitol. He has testified before the state legislature on critical issues impacting students, educators, and working-class families. Hunter has built strong relationships with policymakers to push for policies that support quality education, resources, and opportunities for all children. His commitment to advocacy ensures that the voices of our community are heard at every level of government.

As a young leader, Hunter is committed to amplifying new voices and ideas while honoring Arizona's values and traditions. He represents the next chapter of leadership, bold, driven, and ready to fight for a better future.



Joshua Polacheck, Vice Chair of the Arizona Democratic Legislative Campaign

Last year, Joshua ran for the Arizona Corporation Commission to secure Arizona's climate and water future for our families and has been fighting for common sense solutions for the common good ever since.

During his statewide campaign Joshua heard heartbreaking stories of people dying due to excessive heat. That and other pressing concerns motivated him to step into party leadership.

Joshua contends that during the last election cycle, our Democratic Party did not make the contrast between those who serve corporations and those who serve the people clear enough; that we need a concrete plan to retake control of the Arizona government at all levels in all 15 counties; and that we must communicate credibly to the voters that entrusting Democrats with power means reclaiming power over their future.

US Department of Education is Under Attack

House Bill 938 would abolish the US Department of Education. Why should that matter to all of us?

The US Department of Education provides all of the following:

- Title I funding based on poverty rates
- Funding for special education programs
- Funding for school improvement programs
- Prohibitions against discrimination based on race, sex, and disability
- Civil rights authority and enforcements
- Data on K-12 educational institutions so schools and researchers can analyze enrollment, finances, and performance metrics between schools and districts.
- Pell Grants to college students based on their family's ability to pay.
- Federal student loan programs with more generous loan terms than available elsewhere.
- Support for disabled adults.
- Support for career and technical programs offered in high schools, community and technical colleges, and adult education programs like GED and adult literacy programs.

The Department of Education generally receives **2% of the federal budget** and is the smallest cabinet level department.

The Department of Education performs services that will not and **cannot be duplicated** by just giving some funding to the states.

*You can check the status of the bill at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/938>

Call Ciscomani's offices today at **520-222-6874 & 202-225-2542** asking him to vote **NO on House Bill 938**.



Democracy MUST fight back by Chair Mike Dayton

We must push elected Democrats into action to slow down the Trump-Musk bulldozing of our rights and Democracy itself. All the chaos, lying, lawlessness, and blaming that Trump has done are meant to confuse and distract us so we will not notice that he has done absolutely nothing to improve the lives of Americans. Prices have risen in the grocery aisle; the price of gas is up, and Snap/Medicaid/ACCESS have been curtailed, making it harder to eke out a living. Our Civil Rights are under attack. Immigrants are already being harassed, detained, and shipped elsewhere.

Here's our plan for Action:

- Email your Congressional representatives expressing your opposition to a specific bill or action taking place. Then, follow up with a call to their staff who must record your comments.
- Donate to the ACLU and other **Blue** organizations that are suing Trump/Musk/Republicans.
- Donate to our new US House of Representatives candidate for CD6 Joanna Mendoza to help her defeat Juan Ciscomani in the next election.
- Donate to Save our Schools to prevent our public schools that serve 95% of Arizona's K-12 students from closing due to a lack of funds.
- Donate to NPR/PBS 5 and find an option to get your daily news from such sources as BlueSky, Meidas Touch Network, NPR, and PBS.
- Protest! Bring attention to the uninformed about the dismantling of our government wherever and whenever you can.

Support our Public Schools

- Trump and his allies want an ignorant population where only the elites get educated. VOUCHERS are dangerous and serve only 15% of our school population.
 - Your tax dollars are going to wealthy parents to pay for private schools they can well afford.
 - Private schools receiving vouchers have no oversight or accountability; they do not have to accept students of color, the handicapped or those with learning challenges.
 - Title 1 programs, Pell Grants, Head Start, Special Education, Bi-lingual and Native American programs will be gone under Trump/Musk.
- What can you do?
 - Donate to our local public schools directly and receive a Tax Credit for doing so. The more you donate, the more you will save on your income taxes.
 - Donate to Save our Schools, Treasurers for Teachers, and Literacy Speaks.
 - Donate to Head Start
 - As an elementary Public-School Educator, I found that children who attended Head Start entered school ready to learn. They could sit in their seats, write their name, know their alphabet, know their numbers, follow directions, and play well with others.

Let MAGA Know our Discontent *by Mike and Chris Dayton*

Chris and I have been out carrying our protest signs 6 times recently. Our friends and DOV members Mitchell Anderson and her husband Phin have organized the Musk Protests at the Tesla dealership. The spontaneous first one garnered nearly 52 people. The second time, with the help from Indivisible and DOV getting the message out, we had 271. 67 the third time, and on March 1st 1,320 +!!! We were excited and amazed at the numbers with our latest event. Although Chris and I made a half dozen homemade signs, Paul Butler donated a trunk-full of signs he had purchased. It was so good to see so many familiar faces and friends attend these protests to help get the word out: "Musk Must Go!"

Protesting at Ciscomani's office was different as we started out with 300 showing up on President's Day. Downtown Tucson had a competing rally that had close to a thousand protesters. His office was closed but we heard he was hiding out at Ventana Country Club with a few cronies. I was told that approximately 70 showed up to picket there. Chris and I joined the follow up protest a few days later, 52 showed up. Our patriots with walkers and canes and mostly retired participants let everyone know our discontent. Our phone calls to Ciscomani did not garner a guarantee that he would not support the Trump budget. Spineless!

More protests will be scheduled. If you have seen our notices about these events, please consider joining us and/or sending the notice to all your friends and like-minded neighbors. We must make a statement that will send the message that we are aware of their fascist attempts to take over our government. We know if we do not act now, we will lose our democracy. The only thing necessary for the Trump/Musk evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing. So, turn off the TV, get off the computer, jump out of your recliner, and join us at the next rally or protest! Watch for the notifications.

Thank you to Phin, Mitch, Paul, Rachel, Amy, Chris, Cindy, Brent, Evelyn and all those like-minded friends who helped make these events successful. Thank you to the other Club Chairs for sending out our notices to your membership.



Good News for Democracy *compiled by Jacolyn Marshall*



From the Associated Press:

- 2/8: Federal judge blocked the Trump administration from placing thousands of the US Agency for **International** Development (USAID) employees on paid leave that would negatively impact 120 countries across the globe.
- 2/9: Federal judge blocked Musk's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) from accessing Treasury Department records containing sensitive personal data, including Social Security and bank account numbers.
- 2/22: Federal judge extended a block of the proposed drastic cuts in medical research funding that would endanger patients and delay new lifesaving studies of Alzheimer's, cancer, and heart disease.
- 2/22: Associated Press is suing Trump administration officials over blocking journalists from access to presidential media events as an unconstitutional violation of their freedom of speech.
- 2/22: Federal judge extended a temporary block of Trump's cuts to National Institutes of Health funding as she considers a more permanent ruling.
- 2/24: Key agencies including the FBI, State Department, and the Pentagon have instructed their employees not to comply with Musk's demand to prove their worth or risk losing their jobs.
- 2/25: Some FDA employees overseeing medical devices, food ingredients and other key areas were notified their terminations had been rescinded days after being fired, the latest example of Trump and Musk's chaotic approach to cost-cutting that also included rehiring those responsible for nuclear weapons, national parks and other government services.
- 2/25: Apple announced plans to invest \$500 billion in the US over the next 4 year, hire 20,000 people and build a new server factory in Texas, shifting it's manufacturing from Mexico to avoid paying tariffs.
- 2/25: Judge temporarily barred the Department of Education and Office of Personnel Management from disclosing records containing personal information to Musk's Department of Government Efficiency.
- 2/25: Federal judge blocked immigration agents from conducting enforcement operations in the houses of worship of the plaintiffs who represent the Quakers, Baptist churches and Sikh temples.
- 2/25: Days after the government suspended the program that provides legal services for unaccompanied migrant children the order was rescinded.
- 2/26: Federal judge continued to block the Trump administration from freezing grants and loans to thousands of nonprofits and small businesses that could total trillions of dollars.
- 2/26: Federal judge blocked Trump's effort to halt the nation's refugee resettlement program.
- 2/26: Federal judge gave Trump administration less than two days to release billions of dollars in US foreign aid, saying they offered no sign of complying with his two-week old court order to remove the funding freeze for USAID for even the most urgent life-saving programs abroad.
- 3/4: Democrats filled Republican town halls across America protesting Trump's power grab.
- 3/4: House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries praised his party's united opposition to the GOP budget bill and the more than 100 lawsuits brought against the president.
- 3/4: ACLU sought to represent two workers in a gender identity discrimination lawsuit against a Culver's restaurant when the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission dropped the case in response to Trump's order targeting transgender people.
- 3/5: Supreme Court rejected Trump's bid to freeze \$2 billion in foreign aid already allocated.
- 3/5: Panama President accused President Trump of lying when he said in his address to Congress that his administration was "reclaiming" the Panama Canal.

From Capitol Media Services/ Arizona Daily Star/ Arizona Republic:

- 2/8: Attorney General Mayes is suing a major drug maker for gaming the system by renaming an asthma drug to avoid a federal Medicaid law that prevents excessive charges and increase its profits.
- 2/11: Federal judge blocked the Trump administration's effort to defund the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and cap medical research spending after Kris Mayes and 21 other attorneys general filed a lawsuit challenging the plan. UA stands to lose \$40.5 million a year if the cap takes effect.
- 2/19: Governor Hobbs vetoed HB2703 that would end the Active Early Voting List and disenfranchise voters by adding additional steps for 265,000 voters who vote by mail.
- 2/22: Attorney General Mayes joined 21 other states in a lawsuit against the Trump's plans to pause federal funding to multi-agency operations including the National Drug Trafficking program that works with the FBI, DEA, and Joint Terrorism Task Force.
- 2/24: Federal judge ordered the Office of Personnel Management to inform federal agencies that it has no authority to order firings of probationary employees, including the Department of Defense, granting temporary relief to a coalition of labor unions and nonprofits suing the Trump administration.
- 2/24: Five former secretaries of defense called on Congress to conduct an immediate hearing on Trump's firings of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other senior military leaders.
- 3/2: Backed by the ACLU, civil rights attorneys sued the Trump administration to prevent it from transferring 10 migrants detained in the US to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.
- 3/2: US District Court Judge extended a restraining order that blocked Trump's plan to pull federal funding from institutions providing gender-affirming care.
- 3/2: A group of American citizens and immigrants sued the Trump Administration for ending humanitarian programs that allow people fleeing wartime or political instability to enter the US.
- 3/4: UA announced a \$20 million investment for research in space, water and energy, biomedicine and health care, and mining from the Board of Regents' Technology and Research Initiative fund.

From the Guardian:

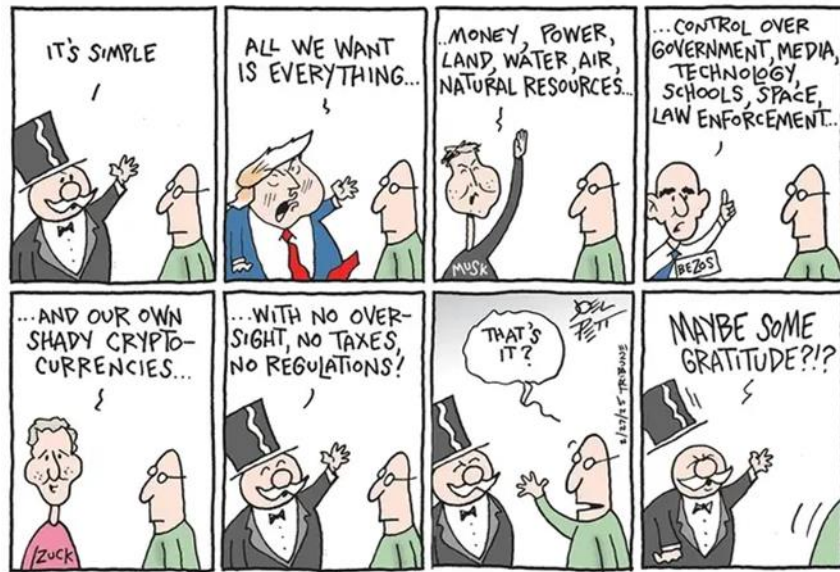
- 2/8: Amanda Litman, the cofounder of Run For Something, a progressive group that helps young people run for local office noted our new leaders are addressing everything from immigration to climate change to abortion access and education. Moreover, since election day, Run for Something has had more than 17,000 people express interest in running for office, including 4,000 since inauguration day and there are early signs that the next four years could yield a new class of Democratic leaders, as happened during Trump's first term.

From Andea Strack, LD17:

2/30: "What an amazing protest yesterday at the Tesla Dealership!! The 1320 participants made Tucson the largest protest in the country. And we were supported internationally as there were protests in Barcelona, Spain; London, England; Lisbon, Portugal and Reykjavik, Iceland. I do believe our movement will continue to grow and gain support."



Please join us at our in-person monthly meetings in the large meeting room of the Oro Valley Library from 6:00 – 7:30 pm. We look forward to seeing you!



Hold our Legislators Accountable by Dee Maitland

It doesn't matter which word we use for what is happening now. Whether it's fascism, oligarchy, or plutocracy, our two state legislators are their minions. Leach has been a creature of the Koch donor network. He was on the board of ALEC, the American Legislative Exchange Council, which created model bills for our state legislators who served the Republican billionaire agenda. He also colluded with Sean Noble, a "dark money" man for the Kochs who disrupted our 2010 Independent Redistricting Commission by filing multiple lawsuits. And we must never forget Leach's millionaire friend on the 2020 Independent Redistricting Commission who designed LD17 for him, and CD6 for his party.

Rachel Keshel, formerly Rachel Jones, is now married to Seth Keshel of Stop the Steal fame who was among the very first group of conspirators who dreamed up lies about the 2020 election. He went on to testify and give speeches about how the election was stolen and earned Trump's praise.

This term the Vince Leach/Rachel Keshel pair have aggressively advanced the Republican playbook. Leach has been the prime sponsor of 17 bad bills and co-sponsor of 23. Keshel was even busier. She was the prime sponsor of 23 and co-sponsored 83. Most of these bills are against public schools, women's health, the LGBTQ community, voter initiatives, government departments and taxes. Their bills advocated for parental rights to take away ours, school vouchers, private ownership of our water and voter suppression. Keshel is so dedicated to voter suppression she has proposed bills to ban voting centers.

The most egregious bill HB2201, while not sponsored by Keshel, received her vote last week. It is being heard in the Senate this week and true to form will most likely get Leach's support. It would exempt utilities from litigation as long as they have a wildfire mitigation "plan". It doesn't have to be a good plan since "a failure to comply with an approved plan does not constitute negligence per se." The 5 most destructive fires in California were triggered by power companies. This bill will be devastating for homeowners. Combined with Musk's national actions, we could lose our primary asset with no recourse: 1) we couldn't sue a utility with a "plan" for damages to homes even if they cause them; 2) Trump and his Muskrats are doing away with agencies such as FEMA which has been a source of disaster mediation; 3) tax cuts will make it difficult for local governments to have sufficient funds to assist with restoration; 4) insurance companies in disaster prone areas such as our dry lands can leave, refuse coverage, or charge exorbitant rates; and 5) the Arizona Corporation Commission which oversees our utilities is controlled by Republicans.

Republican mega-donors are using our elected officials to protect themselves from liability for their bad actions and protect their profits from oversight and taxes. Remember all the disasters where Republicans protected corporations: the Valley of the Drums; 3-mile Island; the Valdez oil spill; gun companies' faulty guns; and Flint water poisoning, to name a few. Now, we could join the ranks of uncompensated disaster victims along with Floridians and Angelenos.

Our state has long been a ground zero for other dangerous conservative organizations. The Kochs funded the establishment of "Freedom Centers" at all our three state universities and over 300 nationwide to sell their capitalist anti-government, free-markets philosophy to students. Charlie Kirk, founder of Turning Point USA, has infiltrated our college campuses brainwashing students to the MAGA cause. And there is a Phoenix chapter of Leonard Leo's Federalist Society which gave us five conservative Supreme Court Justices.

Another obscenity is that public goods are being offered to moguls for profit and power. Where will we get good information if news organizations and universities are blocked and censored? Think about what Besos is doing to the Washington Post and about the Associated Press being banned from the White House. How will we communicate nationally if the internet becomes a profit center censored by tech bros? What happens when the 250-year-old US Postal Service is sold to private companies? Will stamps currently costing us \$.73 increase to **\$12.76, the lowest rate for the UPS**? Will daily home deliveries stop? How will we receive lifesaving drugs and official notices? Will educating our children only be available based on one's ability to pay? Will we have to pay for severe weather warnings and other disaster alerts?

With so many horrors flooding the zone, I suggest we focus on harassing and firing our MAGAT legislators beholden to Republican oligarchs: Vince Leach, Rachel Keshel and Juan Ciscomani. **Hold them accountable** by calling Vince Leach (602-926-3106), Rachel Keshel (602-926-3558), and Juan Ciscomani (520-222-6874) & (202-225-2542) and voicing your outrage.



THAT SOMEBODY IS US!

Biden's "Investing in America" Still Delivering for Arizona



His historic investments to improve Arizona's infrastructure include:

- **I-10 Expansion Project:** Arizona Department of Transportation awarded \$95 million to widen I-10 in the Gila River Indian Community and Pinal County
- **Reduced Flood Risk on the Little Colorado River:** Army Corps of Engineers invested \$65 million to reduce flood risks along the Little Colorado River, protecting the 5,000 people in the flood plain.
- **San Luis I Land Port of Entry Modernization:** \$200 million allocated to modernize and expand the Port of Entry, doubling vehicle inspection lanes, boosting pedestrian inspection capacity by 40%, and creating good-paying jobs for local communities.
- **Gila River Indian Community Water Projects** received \$118 million for a reclaimed water pipeline and crop irrigation project to conserve a critical 200,000 acre-feet of water to help alleviate drought.
- **Pima County Regional Fiber Optic Ring:** \$43.3 million awarded to Pima County to create a 134-mile fiber network ring to carry large amounts of data over long distances to ensure that affordable, reliable high-speed internet in the greater Tucson area and surrounding rural communities.
- **Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport** awarded \$36 million to upgrade the airport's decades-old Central Utility Plant, replacing chillers, pumps, piping, heat exchangers, and cooling towers.
- **West Valencia Road:** \$20 million awarded to Pima County to improve 1.3 miles of West Valencia Road to increase vehicular capacity, support the economy, and create jobs for Tribal communities and nearby low-income populations.
- **Electric Boiler & Microgrid System:** \$51.2 million awarded to Kohler to install electric boilers and a microgrid that reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 7,865 metric tons per year and demonstrate the viability of a renewables to decarbonize heat emissions from a wide range processes.
- **Willcox Open Space and Riparian Area Conservation Project:** awarded \$10.7 million to preserve Cochise Lake as a wetland sanctuary for wildlife, boost tourism and economic development by modernizing its water delivery system, adding a visitor's center and recreational and camping facilities.

His historic private sector **manufacturing and clean energy** investments include:

- **TSMC** is investing \$65 billion, the largest investment in state history, to build new leading-edge semiconductor manufacturing facilities and will create over 25,000 jobs.
- **Intel** is investing \$32 billion to build new leading-edge logic fabs and modernize an existing fab in Chandler, creating 3,000 manufacturing jobs and 7,000 construction jobs.

- **LG Energy** is quadrupling its initial planned investment to \$5.5 billion to build a new plant outside of Phoenix to produce enough batteries to power 350,000 electric vehicles per year.

His historic “Investing in America Workforce” brought industry, government, educators, non-profits and unions together to help workers in Arizona access good jobs, include:

- \$5 million from **private sector investments** to establish a new semiconductor technician apprenticeship program.
- \$5 million from **philanthropic investments** to provide 1,500 Arizonans with supportive services to enter in-demand jobs of the future
- **New partnerships** between unions and community colleges to expand access to apprenticeship and credentialing programs, and more.

End results for Arizonans:

- Over \$154 billion invested in manufacturing and clean energy projects
- Over 378,800 new jobs were created, decreasing Arizona’s unemployment rate to 3.7%
- 466,000 approved applications to start new businesses
- 52,320 Arizonans approved for \$2.6 billion in student debt cancellation
- 348,000 Arizonans enrolled for health insurance through the Affordable Care Act
- 1.5 million seniors and other Medicare beneficiaries saved on prescription drug costs.

“Together, we launched a new era of American possibilities. It will take time to feel the full impact of all we’ve done together. But the seeds are planted, and they’ll grow, and they’ll bloom for decades to come.” **Joe Biden**

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, toothbrushes, pocket novels and puzzle books.*

April Meeting

**Monday, April 14
6:00 -7:30 pm
Oro Valley Library**

**Speakers:
Kevin Volk, Rex Scott**

**Topic:
Updates**