



# 2024 Legislative Re-Cap

Children's Action Alliance Priority Bills

*Presentation to Maricopa Family Support Alliance*

*16 August 2024*



# Children's Action Alliance

**An Arizona where all children  
and families thrive.**



Children's Action Alliance is an independent voice that identifies and eliminates barriers to the well-being of children and families and creates opportunities through partnerships and policy solutions.



# Big Picture

- 160 days—with delays for a week of more for budget talks and a trip to Israel
- 6 House Democrats resigned during session and a 7<sup>th</sup> immediately after.



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2024 Statistics	
Bills Signed	259
Bills Vetoed	73
Ballot Referrals	7



# Early Childhood Education





# HB 2808: Child Care Assistance; Eligibility

HB 2808 would have waived the work requirement for state child care subsidies for full time college students so they could access assistance paying for safe, quality child care for their children.

- Sponsored by: Representative Jennifer Pawlik
- CAA position: **Support**
- Bill Status: **Dead** (Assigned to Health and Human Services Committee but never heard)



# HB 2850: Child Care; Federal Poverty Level

HB 2850 would have raised income eligibility limits for state child care assistance from 165% to 300% of the federal poverty level to increase access to quality child care so parents can work and their children can be safe and learn.

- Sponsored by: Representative Jennifer Pawlik
- CAA position: **Support**
- Bill Status: **Dead** (Assigned to Health and Human Services and Appropriations Committees but never heard)



# HB 2170: Full Day Kindergarten; ADM

Currently, all kindergarten students are counted as half-time students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership for school funding purposes, even when the student attends a full-time kindergarten program. The bill would have authorized districts and charter schools to count kindergartners as full-time students if they provide a full-time program with at least 712 instructional hours over the course of a 180-day school year. Kindergartners that enroll in programs with less than 712 hours would have continued to be counted as half-time students.

- Sponsored by: Representative Jennifer Pawlik
- CAA position: **Support**
- Bill Status: **Dead** (Assigned to the Education and Appropriations Committees but never heard)





# HB 2217: Preschool Pilot Program; Appropriation

HB 2217 would have appropriated \$3M to create a preschool pilot in 5 school districts for the 2025-2026, 2026-2027, and 2027-2028 school years.

- Sponsored by: Representative Laura Terech
- CAA position: **Support**
- Bill Status: **Dead** (Assigned to the Education and Appropriations Committees but never heard)





# SB 1363, HB 2752: Child Care Assistance; Appropriations

SB 1363 and HB 2752 were “mirror bills” that sought to advance Governor Hobbs executive proposal to appropriate \$100M from state general fund and \$91M from federal child care development fund to DES for child care assistance. Without these critically needed appropriations, low income working parents will have to endure a waiting list when they go to apply for child care assistance, adversely impacting children’s access to safe, quality early learning environments, parents’ ability work, and Arizona’s economy.

- Sponsored by Senator Priya Sundareshan and Representative Analise Ortiz
- CAA position: **Support**
- Bill Status: **Dead\*** (Assigned to Appropriations Committee in the Senate and Health and Human Services and Appropriations Committees in the House but never heard in either chamber.)

\* For the first time in many years, the state appropriated funding for child care—though only \$12M.



# Health





# HB 2513: AHCCCS; Preventative Dental Care

HB 2513 would have provided limited preventive oral health services to adults enrolled in AHCCCS. Currently, AHCCCS covers dental care only for children and not adults, not even during pregnancy. Yet, oral health disease before and during pregnancy can lead to preterm births and low birthweights, and children often are exposed to their parents' oral health germs.

- Sponsored by: Representative Amish Shah
- CAA position: **Support**
- Bill Status: **Dead** (Assigned to the Health and Human Services and Appropriations Committees but never heard)



# SB 1037: AHCCCS; Comprehensive Dental Care

SB 1037 would have allowed AHCCCS recipients to use their \$1,000 emergency dental benefit for other comprehensive non-emergency dental services, including in outpatient settings that are less expensive. Oral health disease before and during pregnancy can lead to preterm births and low birthweights, and children often are exposed to their parents' oral health germs. Yet AHCCCS covers dental care only for children and not adults, not even during pregnancy.

Sponsored by: Senator T.J. Shope

- CAA position: **Support**
- Bill Status: **Dead** (Passed Health and Human Services Committee 5-1, Appropriations 6-2, and full Senate 19-9; Held in the House)



# SB 1191: Developmental Disabilities; Prader-Willi Syndrome

Arizona is one of only a handful of states in U.S. that still relies on a medical diagnosis list to determine who is eligible for Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) services. As medical science has advanced and new discoveries have been made, using a list of five diagnoses in state statute has become woefully inadequate and out of date. Many kids who functionally need DDD's critical services end up falling through the cracks and are deemed ineligible. SB 1191 would have expanded the definition of who is eligible for developmental disability services to be inclusive of those with a severe, chronic disability attributable to a pathogenic mutation associated with neurodevelopmental disabilities, including Prader-Willi syndrome.

- Sponsored by: Senator T.J. Shope
- CAA position: **Support**
- Bill Status: **Dead** (Passed Health and Human Services Committee 7-0, Appropriations 7-2, and full Senate 25-5; Held in the House)



# SB 1397: Paid Family Leave Study Commission

SB 1397 would have created a study committee to explore the feasibility of paid family medical leave. It also outlined who should be part of that committee and included a framework for what the committee should consider.

- Sponsored by: Senator Mitzi Epstein
- CAA position: **Support**
- Bill Status: **Dead** (Assigned to Government Committee but never heard)





# SB 1632, HB 2349: Family and Medical Leave; Coverage

About 80 percent of workers in Arizona do not have paid family leave. SB 1632 and HB 2349 would have created a state Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) program for all participating Arizona workers to access up to 26 weeks of paid and job-protected leave when they need to take time to bond with a new child, recover from a serious illness or care for a family member for medical reasons. As of January 2024, nine states plus the District of Columbia are operating paid leave programs at low-cost to employers, employees and self-employed people who participate. Four more states will begin their PFML programs within the next two years.

- Sponsored by: Senator Juan Mendez and Representative Stephanie Stahl Hamilton
- CAA position: **Support**
- Bill Status: **Dead** (Assigned to Finance and Commerce in Senate and Health and Human Services and Commerce committees in House but was never heard in either chamber)



# Child Welfare







# HB 2447: Child Safety; Department Continuation; Procedures

HB 2447 authorized the continuation of the Department of Child Safety through July 1, 2028, and included additional requirements regarding use of a standardized hotline assessment tool, investigations related to prenatal exposure to medically prescribed cannabis, and procedures for increases to the child placement rate for a child welfare agency or group foster home.

- Sponsored by: Representative Steve Montenegro
- CAA position: **Support**
- Bill Status: **Passed** (Signed by Governor Hobbs on April 10, 2024)



# HB 2645: Foster Children; High School Transfer

HB 2645 requires the State Board of Education to develop guidelines for school districts and charter schools to use in the creation of policies for academic credit, including partial credit, for students in foster care who had to transfer high schools. It further requires schools to meet with foster students within 10 days of enrollment to review and update the student's graduation plan and prohibits school districts and charter schools from imposing graduation requirements beyond the minimum requirements of the SBE on students in foster care who had to transfer high schools. The bill also requires school districts and charter schools to adopt policies regarding the transfer of educational records for students in foster care.

- Sponsored by: Representative Rachel Jones
- CAA position: **Support**
- Bill Status: **Passed** (Signed by Governor Hobbs on April 8, 2024)



# SB 1388: Temporary Assistance; Child Only Case

Previously, any child who was being cared for by a relative without a parent present in the home was eligible for a “child only” Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) benefit, whether the child was in foster care or not. During the budget cuts of the Great Recession the “child only” benefit was limited to children in foster care who were placed with a relative by DCS. SB 1388 would have restored the “child only” TANF benefit for children who are in the care of a relative but not in foster care.

- Sponsored by: Senator Lela Alston
- CAA position: **Support**
- Bill Status: **Dead** (Heard in and passed out of Senate Health and Human Services but did not advance further)



# SB 1458: Congregate Care; Dependent Children; Procedures

Arizona has the country's highest rate of congregate care placements (shelters, group homes, and institutions) for young foster children. SB 1458 would have required DCS Director approval prior to the placement of any child under the age of 12 in a congregate care setting.

- Sponsored by: Senator Ken Bennett
- CAA position: **Support**
- Bill Status: **Dead** (Passed through the Senate and House Health and Human Services, but failed to pass out of the House)



# SB 1664: DCS; Tiered Central Registry; Hearings

Arizona's central child abuse and neglect registry lists more than 150,000 people who have a substantiated report of child maltreatment. Before a person can foster, adopt, or get certain jobs working with children, DCS checks the applicant against the central registry. In theory, these are people who shouldn't be working with children. But, in practice, the central registry sweeps in many people who do not pose a risk to their own children or to other people's children. Currently, all person's placed on the registry remain on it for 25 years. SB 1664 reforms Arizona's central registry by requiring DCS to:

- Adopt rules to establish a tiered central registry based on the nexus between the act of child abuse or neglect and potential risk to children posed by that act, and
- Create a pathway for early removal from the registry upon demonstration of rehabilitation.

Finally, the bill enhances due process by increasing the evidentiary standard for administrative central registry hearings from “probable cause” to “preponderance of the evidence.”

- Sponsored by: Senator David Gowan
- CAA position: **Support**
- Bill Status: **Passed** (Signed by Governor Hobbs on April 9, 2024)

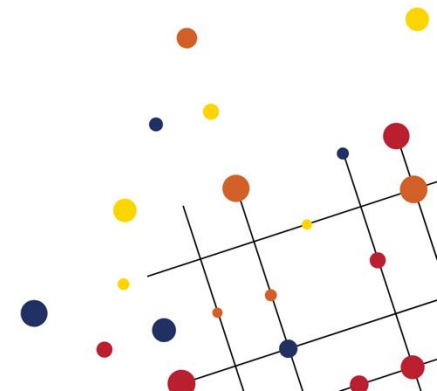


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# 2024 Legislative Update

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**August 16, 2024**





# State budget

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# Small budget wins

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- Sets lower student tuition organization (STO) cap for corporate contributions
- Temporarily lifts the K-12 school spending cap
- Invests **\$3.8 million** to waive the reduced-price fee for school meals
- Adds **\$15 million** to Housing Trust Fund
- Makes overdue **\$12 million** investment in child care



# New appropriation still far behind the highest General Fund investment in child care in twenty years

General Fund appropriations for traditional child care from FY 2004 - 2025

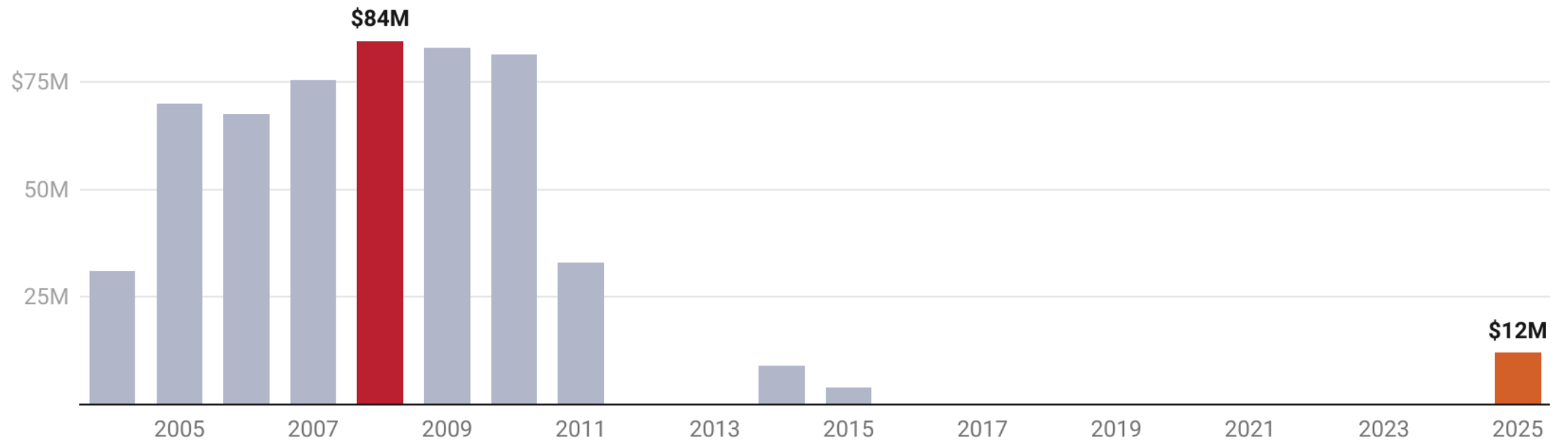


Chart: Arizona Center for Economic Progress • Source: Joint Legislative Budget Committee, Appropriations Reports and Summary of FY2025 Budget Legislation • Created with Datawrapper



# Budget shortfall during a growing economy

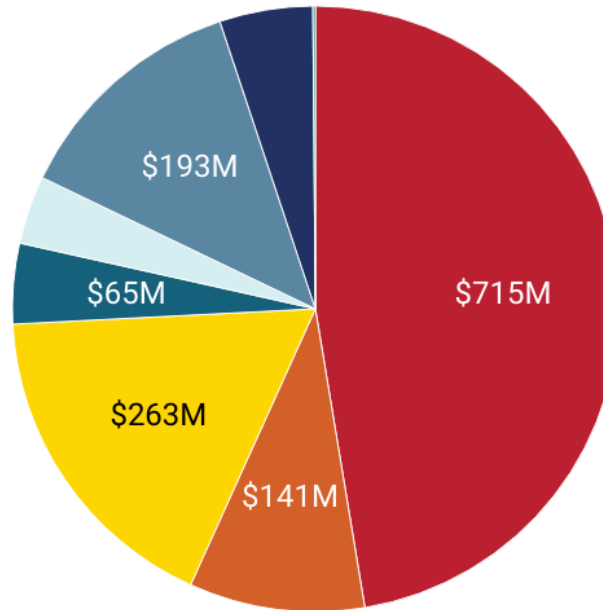
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- **\$1.6 billion deficit** at a time of...
  - ✓ Gross domestic product growth
  - ✓ Low unemployment rate
  - ✓ Higher personal income
- Largely driven by decline individual income  
flat tax revenue

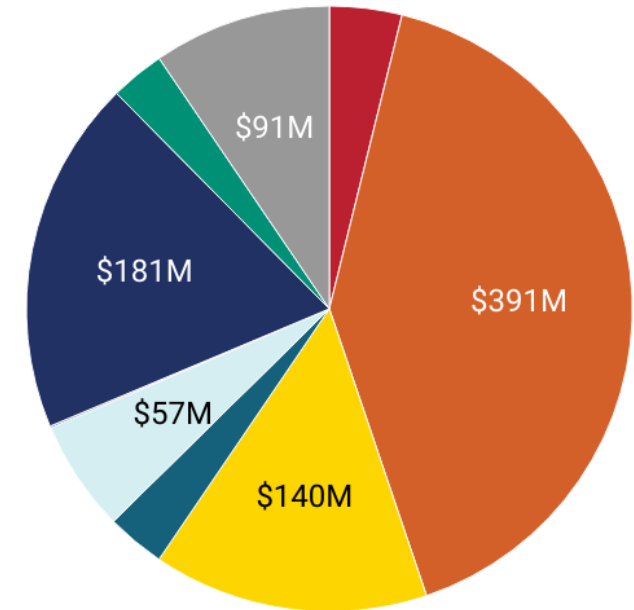
# Fund transfers were mainly used to balance current budget while complete line item cuts will mostly balance the FY2025 budget

Types of budget tricks used to balance FY2024 and FY2025 budgets

- Fund transfers
- Complete cuts
- Partial cuts
- Surplus transfers
- Savings
- Delayed costs
- Cost shifts to other funds
- Repurposed costs
- Moves from ongoing to one-time



FY2024



FY2025

Chart: Arizona Center for Economic Progress • Source: Joint Legislative Budget Committee, Summary of FY2025 Budget Legislation • Created with Datawrapper

# Uses ongoing revenues to cover future one-time spending

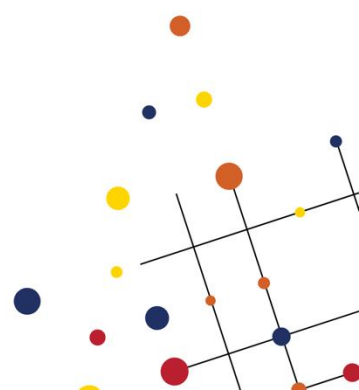
	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027
Ongoing balance	\$13M	\$40M	\$6M	\$327M
One-time balance	\$626M	\$55M	\$13M	(\$320M)



# **Economic well-being & education depriorizations**

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- Moves **from ongoing to one-time**
  - Healthy families program
  - Opportunity weight
  - Adult workforce programs
- Reduces investment for Teachers Academy **from \$15M to \$1M**
- Institutes **minor reform** for Empowerment Scholarship Accounts (ESAs)
- **Fails to extend** Proposition 123



# General Fund appropriations for K-12 education have recently come close to Proposition 123 49% and 50% triggers

Percent of K-12 education General Fund appropriations from FY 2014 - 2025

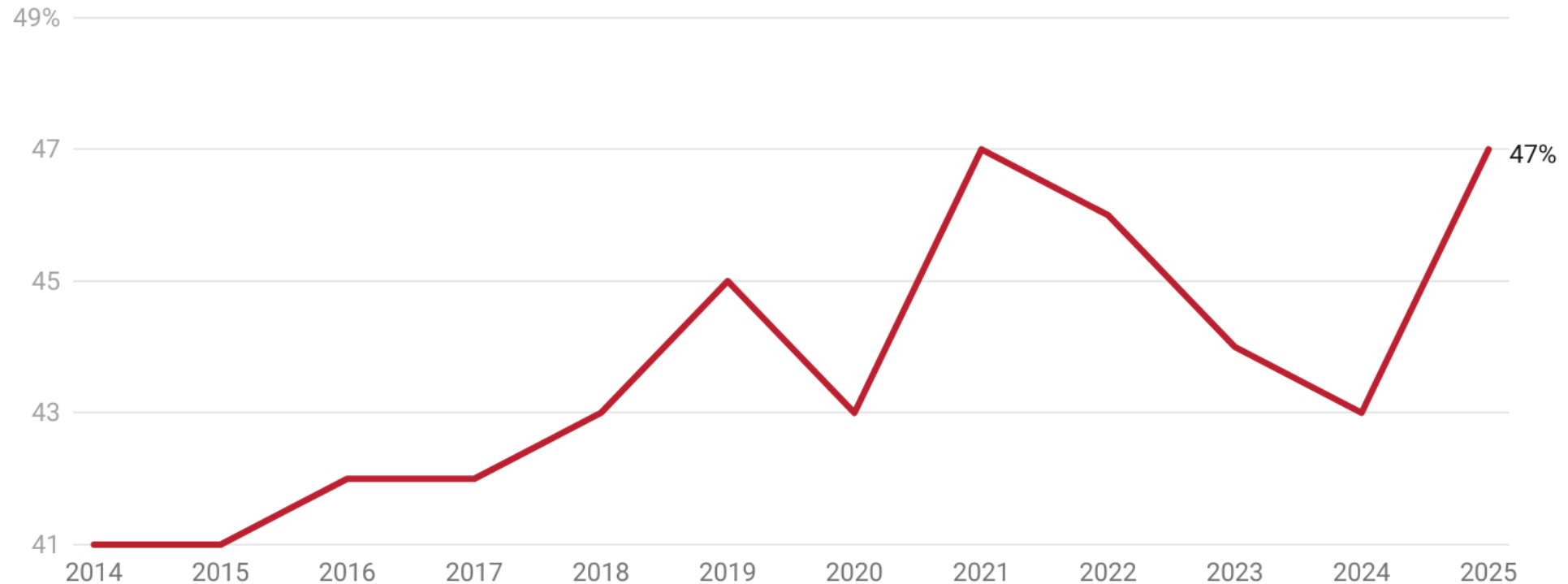


Chart: Arizona Center for Economic Progress • Source: Joint Legislative Budget Committee, Appropriations Reports • Created with Datawrapper



# Non-budget priorities

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# **Bills affecting economic well-being**

## **Opposed threats to safety net programs**

- **HB2502 SNAP; mandatory employment; training**
  - Would make SNAP Employment & Training (E&T) participation mandatory for people between the ages of 16-59, including parents of children under 6 years old
- **HB2503 SNAP; waivers; exemptions**
  - Would require DES to obtain legislative approval to request administrative waivers of work requirements for people ages 18-54 without dependents
- **HB2282 Unemployment; requirements; disqualifications; shared work**
  - Would institute additional red tape to access the Unemployment Insurance program
- **HB2375 Guaranteed income program; prohibition**
  - Would prohibit counties, cities and towns from establishing guaranteed income programs





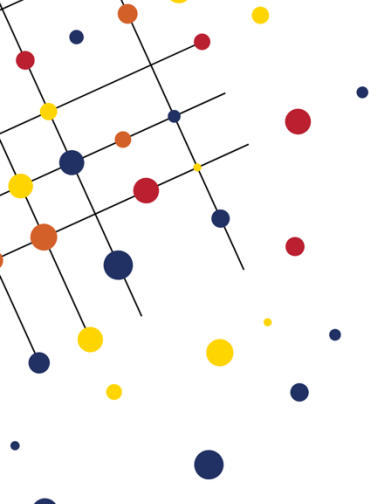


# Ballot referrals

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## Opposed to..

- **HCR2060 - Prop 314**
  - Would subject immigrants to state charges for not entering through an official port of entry and submitting false documentation when applying for employment and public benefits
- **SCR1040 - Prop 138**
  - Would reduce minimum wage for tipped workers as whose hourly wage (including tips) is \$2 above the state minimum wage regular minimum wage increases
- **SCR1015 (2023) - Prop 134**
  - Would add new burdens that require that a certain percentage of qualified voter signatures come from each Legislative District for a voter initiative to appear on the ballot



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# Stay Connected

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## Geraldine Miranda

Economic Policy Analyst

[gmiranda@azeconcenter.org](mailto:gmiranda@azeconcenter.org)

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