

The Arizona Legislative Alert – special report

Petition Time (Again)

UUJAZ and VUU. Giving Voice to UU Values in Arizona

June 2, 2018

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Shining a bright light for social justice! Downloadable PDF [here](#).

To be added to the email list, or to be taken off send request to legislativeadvocacy@vuu.org.

Just a quick update about two petitions that should improve social justice in Arizona and, don't forget about Gun Safety! Everyone can help! Remember, the Proposition 305 petition is ALREADY on the ballot and a NO vote will put an end to the expansion of the voucher program for K-12 (the "empowerment scholarship program). VOTE NO on Prop 305.

INVEST IN EDUCATION

TODAY Saturday, June 2. AZ101 Presentation on Education Funding! 2-3:30.

Chandler Public Library, 22 S. Delaware St., Chandler, AZ 85225

If you still need information on why to support this? Why are Arizona's public schools **STILL** starved for funding? **Why** does this year's increase in funding **STILL** fall short? **Why** does Arizona **STILL** have a shortage of 2,000+ teachers? **Why** does Arizona **STILL** spend less per pupil now than 2008 when adjusted for inflation? Come and find out. Plan to participate in **AZED101** (Arizona Education 101). This presentation will answer these and many more questions. Meet others like you who are interested and concerned. You can find information about AZED101 at their website: www.azed101.org and on their Facebook page under AZED101.

HAVE TIME TO GET INVOLVED? Help collect Signatures at a Diamond Back Game: June 12, June 13, June 14, June 15. This petition needs 150,642 valid signatures by July 5, 2018 to put this solution on the November ballot and we could use your help. You can help collect (or sign) *petitions at the Arizona Diamondbacks' games on June 12, 14 and 15 from 5:30pm to 7:30pm. Also, signatures will be collected at an afternoon game on June 13 from 11:30am-1:30pm.* If you are at least 18 years old, eligible to vote in Arizona and would like to help us

gather signatures for two hours at one or more of these games, [sign up here](#) and please share with others who may be interested.

STOP GUN VIOLENCE. WEAR ORANGE THIS WEEKEND! Click on this link to find some events, and regardless, wear orange! Let's not give up the fight for gun safety.

http://act.everytown.org/event/wear-orange-2018/11385/signup/?source=emne_WearOrange&akid=&zip=

OUTLAW DIRTY MONEY. Here are places to return signed petitions and get more. Click here for more information, [Outlaw Dirty Money](#).

We will notarize any petition and we will also collect for #InvestInEd as well! Join us at an event and help us #Outlawdirtymoney in Arizona!

How to return petitions, get more!

- June 2: 3-5 State 48 Brewery 18323 w bell rd. surprise
- June 3: 3-5 Arizona Wilderness Brewing co. 721 N. Arizona ave. Gilbert
- June 5: 9:30 to 11:30 The Breakfast Joynt, 6245 E. Bell rd. Scottsdale
- June 7: 4:30 to 7 Mac's Broiler & Tap 6430 S. McClintock Dr. Tempe
- June 9: Day of action event... see outlaw dirty money FB page for locations
- June 13: 5-7 Barrio Queen 21001 N. Tatum phoenix..

TMI about these petitions: Quick Review:

Proposition 305 – vote NO on 305. Proposition 305 already has enough signatures to be on the ballot. This is the one led by Save Our Schools and if enough people vote NO, it will “veto” the voucher expansion bill passed by the Legislature in 2017. That bill, 2017's SB1431 would expand vouchers (called Empowerment Scholarship Accounts, ESAs) to ALL K-12 students – the most significant move toward privatizing K-12 education in the United States. Even the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC, an ultra-right-wing organization sponsoring

privatization of public services, including education) has praised Arizona for its “leadership” in this, which many progressives believe is all the wrong direction! The work going forward is to explain to people that a NO vote kills vouchers; a YES vote extends the Education Scholarship program to all K-12 students, although capped at 30,000. The ESAs literally take money from the public school that the student could have attended, and put it on a debit card, to be used for tuition at a private or religious school or to be home schooled, or for other qualified expenses. The argument for? To give “parental choice” and the hidden argument is that government should not be providing public services such as education, but that people should pay their own way, or charities or wealthy people should provide this kind of service. The arguments against? Too many to even mention. Free, quality, public education is the rock solid basis of democracy. The vouchers go mainly to middle and upper middle class people because they are not enough to pay the tuition at private or religious schools. These privatization schemes will eventually destroy public education, most observers say, unless they can be stopped. We will end up with two systems of education – one for the wealthy and one for everyone else. For most progressives, that is NOT a good move because it threatens the integrity of free public education, the greatest equalizer the world has ever known.

Outlaw Dirty Money. This initiative, led by Terry Goddard, former Democratic Attorney General, and now joined by Tom Horne and Grant Woods, former (Republican) Attorney Generals of Arizona, needs enough signatures to be on the November Ballot. It would require the original donor of all significant campaign contributions to be named rather than hidden from view. If enough signatures are gathered, this would be a “yes” vote in November to outlaw “dark” money. Arguments against are endless! Money is not speech, regardless of what Citizens United Supreme Court decision said, and even in that decision, the justices agreed that money was okay in elections IF EVERYONE KNEW WHO WAS PAYING. This initiative would make sure we know who is trying to buy an election.

Invest in Education This is the proposal that would create a permanent stream of money from income taxes for education. The money would go into the classroom site fund and be used 60% for teacher and other educational employee salaries and 40% for other uses determined by the district, but all for education. Time line is late June for all signatures to be in. Google “investineducation” to find more

information on how to volunteer. Sign up

here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdt7ureXNpps71ZpmMezJGkTG69p4d_gE0BoRPXXKzPgyN_KQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

The initiative would increase income taxes on income above \$250,000, raising money for teacher salaries, school support salaries, general operations. The short description on the Secretary of State site says:

The Invest in Education Act increases the classroom site fund by raising the income tax rate by 3.46% on individual incomes over a quarter million dollars (or household incomes over half a million dollars), and by 4.46% on individual incomes over half a million dollars (or household incomes over a million dollars); designates 60% of new funds for teacher salaries and 40% for operations; adds full day kindergarten and pay raises for student support services personnel as permitted fund uses; requires governing boards seek teacher and personnel input on fund use plans; defines teacher and student support services personnel.

You can read the full petition at this site:

<http://apps.azsos.gov/election/2018/general/ballotmeasuretext/I-16-2018.pdf>

Don't be misled by opponents who will argue this is just a "soak the rich" way to fund education. Remember:

- **Arizona's overall taxation policies currently are the 8th most UNFAIR in the United States, according to the Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy, when all forms of local, state, and federal taxes are taken into account.**
- **The unfairness in the current system is because so much of Arizona's taxes come from sales and property taxes that are "regressive" in that people with low incomes pay the same taxes on (for example) a washing machine as a millionaire.**
- **Consider these data in Arizona:**
 - Currently: Lowest 20% Income - pays 12.5% of their income in taxes**
 - Currently: Richest 1% Income - pays 5.5 % of their income in taxes**
 - Next Lowest 20% - pays 11.3% of income in taxes**
 - Next richest (2-5%) – pays 6.7% of income in taxes**

AFTER the new taxes are in place, on incomes above \$250,000 (individual) and \$500,000 (individual) the system will be somewhat fairer, but low income individuals and families will still be paying more in overall taxes than the very rich.

Here's the estimates for AFTER the new taxes are in place (*estimates are from the Flagship Educational Association, thanks to Derek Born, President of FEA*). The system is still unfair, but it is a start.

Lowest 20% Income - will still pay 12.5% of income in taxes

Richest 1% Income - will now pay 8.25 % of income in taxes

Next Lowest 20% - will still pay 11.3% of income in taxes

Next richest (2-5%) – will now pay 8.0% of income in taxes

- **Some of the reports make it sound like the new tax would be 8% on people making \$250,000 and up or 9% on those making \$500,000 and up. That is incorrect. This is a progressive tax, which means that EVERYONE pays exactly the same tax rate on the first \$10,000 of their income; including the millionaires; EVERYONE pays exactly the same tax rate on the second \$10,000. In fact, everyone – including a billionaire – pays exactly the same rate on the first \$250,000 of their income. A progressive tax is an EQUAL tax rate on each portion of income. The additional 3.4% and 4.6%, added to the current income tax, mean a tax of 8% is on the surplus above \$250,000 and 9% on the surplus above \$500,000.**
- **This is the best opportunity in years to provide a steady income for education and it would bring in an estimated \$688 million a year.**

The Arizona Center for Economic Progress put the initiative together. The Center is a state-wide advocacy group organized about a year ago with support from Children's Action Alliance and most of the public education advocacy groups. The center is headed by David Lujan, Director, and Karen McLaughlin, Director of Budget and Research. Lujan is an attorney who served in the Legislature for many years (law degree from the ASU Sandra Day O'Conner school) and McLaughlin (MPA from ASU School of Public Administration, is an experienced budget analyst who has studied Arizona budgets for the Children's Action Alliance for years.

Remember: You can find a wrapup of the 2018 legislative session at <http://www.vuu.org/legislative-advocacy>

[Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation](#) –

Senior Minister, Rev. Dr. Andy Burnette; Music Minister, Rev. Kellie Walker; Director of Faith Formation, Marci Beaudoin; Administrator, Sue Ringler. Located: 6400 W. Del Rio Drive, Chandler, AZ 480 899 4249 www.vuu.org
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. VUU holds services each Sunday at 10:30. You are welcome here.

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