



NEWS RELEASE

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Keeping the Legislature at Bay *Stopping the Big Bad Wolf Bills and More*

Phoenix, Ariz. – Today, Sierra Club released its *2014 Environmental Report Card for the Arizona Legislature and Governor*. Despite starting off as one of the worst sessions for weakening environmental protections, the 2014 legislative session ended up being a bit better than expected – three terrible bills were vetoed, two were defeated in the Senate, and numerous bills died because they did not advance to a full vote in one house or the other. Several bills were amended to at least address some of Sierra Club’s concerns.

Governor Brewer had her best year yet on Sierra Club’s report card, earning a “C+,” as she vetoed two anti-wolf bills and a bill that would have harmed wilderness areas, plus she signed into law a small funding measure for State Parks.

“It is appalling that Arizona legislators continue to try to harm wildlife by limiting the recovery of endangered wolves and weakening habitat protections, plus show no respect for federal public lands or federal environmental laws,” said Sandy Bahr, chapter director of Sierra Club’s Grand Canyon Chapter. “This year, however, the Legislature’s attempts to limit recovery of Mexican gray wolves were thwarted when Governor Brewer vetoed both [SB1211](#) and [HB2699](#), as was an attempt to bulldoze wilderness areas contained in [HB2541](#), another bill she vetoed.”

Senators defeated [HB2700 federal acquisition; state lands; monitoring](#) (Thorpe), an attempted federal public land grab by legislators. It would have required the State Land Department to identify which state trust lands have been transferred to the federal government since statehood and then would have required compensation from the federal government, even though most of these areas were acquired via land exchanges. It also directed the Legislature and Attorney General to take all steps to recover and acquire these state lands.

Legislators did not pass any of the attacks on clean energy but also did nothing to help promote energy efficiency or roof-top solar.



“Arizona legislators should be supporting and promoting solar energy and energy efficiency programs,” said Bahr. “Instead, our legislature continues to promote energy sources such as coal that pollute our air and water and contribute to climate change, while our state has more than 300 days of sunshine. Each session, legislators generate attacks on energy efficiency, even though it is the cleanest and cheapest energy resource. It is past time for those attacks to stop and for efforts to support clean energy to advance.”

Surprisingly enough, legislators did not re-enact the voter suppression and anti-citizen initiative provisions in HB2305, a measure the Legislature passed in the 2013 session. Because of the anti-democracy provisions in HB2305, a broad coalition of interests organized a referendum on the bill. Voters signed petitions to stop HB2305 and refer it to the ballot. Rather than see HB2305 on the ballot as a referendum, legislators repealed it early in the 2014 session.

The Legislature did undermine enforcement of election laws by limiting the Clean Elections Commission’s ability to enforce non-Clean-Elections violations. It remains to be seen if this bill, [SB1344 contribution limits; clean elections authority](#) (Pierce: Biggs), will withstand a legal challenge, however.

This year, all 36 Republican House members received failing grades, as did 13 senators, meaning they voted correctly on two or fewer bills. On a positive note, six representatives earned an “A+,” which means they voted 100 percent pro-environment and also did not miss a vote on the key bills Sierra Club scored. Ten senators and 13 House members also received an “A.”

Senators were graded using 12 bills, and House members were graded using 11 bills. Governor Jan Brewer was graded on eight bills. Everyone was graded on a curve. The bills focused on Mexican gray wolves, public lands, land use, importation of waste, elections, and citizen initiatives, among other issues.

Sierra Club is one of the country’s oldest grassroots environmental organization with more than 35,000 members and supporters in Arizona as part of the Grand Canyon Chapter. At the end of each legislative session, the Grand Canyon Chapter develops its report card in order to inform Arizonans about their legislators’ voting records on key environmental issues.

The Sierra Club report card is available on the website at <http://www.arizona.sierraclub.org> or go directly to this link [2014 Environmental Report Card Final.pdf](#)

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