



"I'm disappointed in my government. Things are continuing to get worse, with more and more people being impacted by climate change. When will the U.S. government pay attention and stand up for our lives?" -- Jaime Lynn Butler, one of the plaintiffs with Our Children's Trust suing the government over its failure to act on climate



Hi everyone!

Today, please join me in supporting the Youth Climate Strike with words of support, a retweet, or other share on social media. If you are in the area, please come to the Arizona Capitol at 4pm for a rally. All are welcome!

Speaking of the Capitol, it was a contentious week as the majority in the House and Senate blocked action on the Equal Rights Amendment, resurrecting the same tired stories and excuses for not recognizing that women should get equal pay for equal work and generally should be equal. There was also the continued attempt to pay young people less as a backdoor way to undermine the minimum wage. That bill was held, for now. Finally, the efforts at voter suppression and evisceration of our right to engage in citizen initiatives continue. Now is a good time to speak up on many of these issues.

Also this week, there was an attempt to resurrect one of several bad water bills in the House. [HB2609 Harquahala non-expansion area; groundwater transfer](#) (Petersen: Cook) allows private water companies in the Harquahala Irrigation Non-expansion area (west of the Phoenix area) to withdraw water to a depth of 1,500 feet rather than 1,000 feet and transport it into an active management area. This is being promoted for water investors who are part of a Manhattan-based hedge fund, among others. Speaker of the House, Rusty Bowers, is leading the effort to jam this through over the objections of La Paz County and any who are concerned about further privatizing water. We stand in solidarity against opening this up to even more pumping and exporting of water to feed the growth machine in Maricopa and Pinal counties. **Please call your representatives and ask them to oppose HB2609. If they say they are opposing it, thank them.** You can find their numbers [here](#).

Finally, a bill we are supporting to ensure that those who lease their rooftop solar systems or schools that have solar via a third-party are not taxed unfairly has hit a snag in the Senate (see Senate Finance below for more details). A tax group based in North Carolina has hired former legislators to lobby against it, saying it benefits a few companies, rather than recognizing that taxing only those who are leasing is punishing those who cannot afford the upfront costs for a system.

Please call or email the following members of the Senate Finance Committee and ask them to support HB2493. If they say they are supporting it, also thank them.

[Senator Lela Alston](#)
[Senator Sean Bowie](#)
[Senator Paul Boyer](#)
[Senator Lupe Contreras](#)
[Senator David Farnsworth](#)
[Senator Vince Leach](#)
[Senator David Livingston](#)
[Senator JD Mesnard](#)
[Senator Martin Quezada](#)
[Senator Michelle Ugenti-Rita](#)

If you have not already, please use the button below to send a message to your representatives, asking them to oppose [HCR2005 initiative; referendum; signatures; legislative districts](#) (Kavanagh). The bill refers to the ballot a measure to require that signatures be collected proportionately from every legislative district in the state, making it much more difficult to qualify a ballot measure.

Take Action!

Please sign in on the [Request to Speak system](#) to support SB1241, SB1442, and HB2493 and to oppose SB1090, SB1145, SB1302, SB1451, HB2475, HCM2003, and HCR2018.

To see more on bills we are tracking, go to [Sierra Club Legislative Tracker](#).

To set up a Request to Speak account, just select [Request to Speak](#), then select "Create An Account" and fill out the information. You will need to go to the Capitol or to the Tucson legislative offices to activate it or you can contact me and I will help you activate it. Here is a short [YouTube video](#) on how to set up an account as well.

Thank you for working to support solar energy and our democracy.



Sandy Bahr
Chapter Director
Sierra Club -- Grand Canyon Chapter



Senator Victoria Steele speaks in support of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) photo by Sandy Bahr

Coming Up This Week

Monday, March 18th

House Rules Committee at 1:00 PM

Senate Rules Committee at 1:00 PM

Senate Committee on Government in SHR3 at 2:00 P.M.

- [HCR2018 NOW: private property rights; supporting protections](#) (Griffin) talks about how property rights are being threatened by government and "extremist organizations." Do they mean the federal government that is condemning private property to build a wall on the border? It is likely not what they have in mind and instead are focusing on environmental and public health and safety protections. **OPPOSE.**

House Committee on Regulatory Affairs in HHR5 at 2:00 PM

- [SB1145 corporation commission; securities; subpoena](#) (Leach) places limits on the Arizona Corporation Commission related to subpoenas for securities related matters, including to keep additional information confidential. It further limits transparency in the process. **OPPOSE.**

Tuesday, March 19th

House Committee on Elections in HHR4 at 2:00 PM

- [SB1090 emergency voting procedures; board action](#) (Ugenti-Rita) erects hurdles for a voter to vote early as the result of an emergency and stipulates additional requirements for establishing emergency voting centers. Again, this is unnecessary and clearly intended to limit voting. **OPPOSE.**
- [SB1154 primary date; first August Tuesday](#) (Gowan) moves the Primary Election to the first Tuesday in August.
- [SB1451 statewide ballot measures; circulators; procedures](#) (Leach) erects additional barriers for signature gathering and provides for more reasons to disqualify signatures, including petitions that are not properly grouped by circulator and that don't have the paid circulator number on them. The Legislature has already made it nearly impossible for anyone other than wealthy interests to promote a citizen initiative. **OPPOSE.**

House Committee on Natural Resources, Energy, & Water in HHR1 at 2:00 PM

- [SB1241 state parks board; heritage fund](#) (Brophy McGee: Boyer, Carter, et al.) establishes the state parks board heritage fund for local parks, trails, open space, and historic preservation. This bill does not include an appropriation, but we are still supporting it. Our preference would be that the version with the funding attached pass. **SUPPORT.**

Senate Committee on Appropriations in SHR109 at 2:00 PM

- [HB2438 appropriation; Mount Lemmon fire district](#) (Griffin) appropriates \$750,000 for a water line for the Mount Lemmon Fire District. **MONITOR.**
- [HB2452 vehicle emissions program; remote inspections](#) (Griffin) authorizes the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality to establish a pilot program for remote vehicles testing using onboard diagnostics in vehicles. The pilot program would have to demonstrate that it was just as stringent as the stationary testing for it to be adopted or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency. We will want to keep an eye on how it is set up and the data analyzed. **MONITOR.**
- [HB2580 NOW: appropriation; invasive vegetation eradication; grants](#) (Osborne: Dunn, Peten, et al.) appropriates \$5 million for grants for nonnative vegetative invasive species eradication projects. **MONITOR.**

Wednesday, March 20th

House Committee on Transportation in HHR3 at 2:00 PM

- [SB1442 state fleet; neighborhood electric vehicles](#) (Pratt) states that when agencies request vehicles, preference will be given to electric neighborhood vehicles unless they demonstrate it will not fit their needs. This seems like a good idea to reduce pollution and burning fossil fuels. **SUPPORT.**

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy in SHR109 at 2:00 PM

- [HB2704 underground storage tanks; process](#) (Toma: Bowers) includes provisions for reducing the lien on property where corrective action has been taken and increases the reimbursement amount for noncorrective action. While we do not have any specific opposition to this bill, we do think that the Legislature should ask questions about how long the public will continue to pay for leaking underground storage tanks when private insurance should be picking up the tab for the clean-up and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality should be using these public dollars more to focus on oversight of the clean-ups, prevention, and on older tanks and historic pollution. We need to encourage more prevention and less leaking by shifting the burden of the cost of clean-up to those who continue to have leaky tanks. **MONITOR.**
- [HCM2003 uranium pollution; remediation](#) (Thorpe) includes inaccurate information about uranium mining, turning it into a promotional for the mining industry. Encouraging cleanup is something we do support, but this memorial does not reference the need to get the mining companies to clean up their messes, plus it says that there are no issues with "modern" uranium mining. **OPPOSE..**

Senate Committee on Finance in SHR1 at 2:00 PM

- [HB2493 appraisal methods; solar energy devices](#) (Cobb) clarifies that leased solar rooftop systems are not subject to property tax, just as those systems owned by the property owner are not subject to property tax. This is a question of equity. Why give a tax break to those who can afford to buy a system outright versus those who cannot afford to buy and who lease instead? Why make solar less affordable for those with lower incomes or less upfront capital? **SUPPORT.**

House Committee on Appropriations in HHR1 at 2:00 PM

- [SB1302 appropriation; Interstate 17; expansion](#) (Livingston) appropriates \$130 million for expansion of I-17 between Anthem and Black Canyon City. Isn't it past time to invest in rail? **OPPOSE.**

House Committee on Federal Relations in HHR4 at 2:00 PM

- This committee is again not meeting. Hooray!

Thursday, March 21st

Senate Committee on Water and Agriculture in SHR3 at 9:00 AM

- This agenda is not yet posted, but it is likely these two bills will be on it as they were held this past week.
- [HB2475 water use; criminal penalty; wells](#) (Bowers) says if you take someone else's surface water via a well, it is no longer a misdemeanor. While this stealing of water could still be addressed in the courts, it is ridiculous to sanction this by removing this provision. Besides not everyone can afford to go into court and should have some other recourse. **OPPOSE..**

House Committee on Land and Agriculture in HHR3 at 9:00 A.M.

- Agenda is not yet posted.

Senate Committee on Commerce in SHR1 at 10:00 AM

- Agenda is not yet posted.

For more information on what's happening at the Legislature, please contact Sandy Bahr at (602) 253-8633 or sandy.bahr@sierraclub.org.



To call your legislators, go to [Member Roster](#) and find their phone numbers. If you're outside the Phoenix area, you can call your legislators' offices at 1-800-352-8404. In the Phoenix area call 602-926-3559 (Senate) or 602-926-4221 (House) and ask to be connected with your legislators.

