

YELLOW SHEET REPORT

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·NEWS NOTES AND GOSSIP·

Here's one name making the rumor mill for AZGOP chair



A flier advertising the “ultra-grassroots” candidates for the AZGOP state committee is making the rounds and listing Corp Comm chair Jim O’Connor as a potential predecessor to DeWit. O’Connor previously told our reporter he would not be seeking re-election for the AZ Corporation Commission. O’Connor unsuccessfully ran for AZGOP chair in 2017

but ultimately lost to Jonathan Lines, who O’Connor dubbed an “establishment” Republican at the time. The [Arizona Ultra Grassroots members at large](#) are a slate of candidates for the Maricopa County Republican Party keen on America First policies. The group has received endorsements in the past from Lake, Harris, Rogers and “election integrity” group, We the People Arizona Alliance. In alignment with the “ultra-grassroots” wing of the party, O’Connor attempted to deploy ACC to investigate tabulation machines but was informed it was legally out of their purview. O’Connor did not respond to a request for comment. The AZGOP meets Saturday to elect a new leadership slate.

DeWit’s not the boss of Kari!

Lake’s campaign denies they blackmailed DeWit into leaving his position as AZGOP chair. In a written statement provided to our reporter, Alex Nicoll, a spokesperson for Lake, said, “No one from the Kari Lake campaign threatened or blackmailed DeWit ... DeWit’s false claims are just par for the course. The Arizona GOP must be relieved to have his resignation.” Lake went live on video site Rumble Wednesday to address the DeWit bribery scandal. She called DeWit’s resignation letter, “disgusting.” She confirmed she had been employed by [SuperFeed Inc.](#), a tech company that creates apps to curate newsfeeds and organize political campaigns, previously ran by DeWit. But Lake said DeWit was never her boss. According to [his LinkedIn](#), DeWit served as CEO of SuperFeed from March 2020 to Jan. 2023. The latest update to the [ACC profile](#) in late 2022 lists DeWit as president and CEO and Tyler Bowyer, chief operating officer of Turning Point USA and Turning Point Action and RNC Committeeman, as a director. Lake’s 2022 [financial disclosure statement](#) said she worked as a communications advisor. The livestream also provided a swell of donations from viewers on Rumble. She took the opportunity to plug her book too.

Court date trumps Freedom Fest

AZGOP cancelled key fundraising event [Freedom Fest](#) after Trump pulled out due to “court obligations” in his ongoing defamation trial in New York City. AZGOP’s Freedom Fest billed Trump, Biggs, Gosar, Crane, Lake, Abe Hamadeh, Charlie Kirk and Tyler Bowyer to speak at Dream City Church Friday evening. Tickets ran anywhere from \$12 to \$3,000. In the cancellation announcement, AZGOP said all tickets would be refunded and they “eagerly anticipate welcoming him back to Arizona in the near future.” All proceeds from Freedom Fest were slated to go to the party. And though the party boasted “record-breaking” fundraising last quarter and brought in \$670,345.91, they ended Q4 with [\\$159,435.53](#) on hand.

Horne, transgender plaintiffs dig in against settlement

While Horne appeals the injunction of the trans sports ban to the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, a joint status report from Horne and the two unnamed plaintiffs in the suit made it clear a settlement “is not likely at this time.” Two unnamed transgender girls sued Horne in April, challenging the state’s transgender sports ban. District Judge Jennifer Zipps granted a request for an injunction on the law as she found Horne, Petersen and Toma failed to produce “persuasive evidence ... that the Act is substantially related to the legitimate goals of ensuring equal opportunities for girls to play sports and to prevent safety risks.” Oral argument at the 9th Circuit is scheduled for March 14.

Just don’t write your winning brief with ChapGPT

The Arizona Supreme Court put together a steering committee to evaluate the impact and integration of artificial intelligence into the judicial system, noting the potential “to improve the efficiency of business processes, reduce case backlogs, enhance overall operational effectiveness, and improve access.” Chief Justice Robert Brutinel is slated to chair the committee with membership spanning superior and municipal courts, clerk’s offices, universities and the public. The administrative order establishing the committee notes the “unprecedented opportunities and challenges” associated with AI and outlines the purpose of the committee. The 20-member board will advise Arizona Judicial Council on how to implement and navigate AI responsibly and ethically and craft rules and procedures for the use of AI technologies “by judicial officers, legal practitioners, and judicial employees.” They also plan to recommend “specific products to be authorized as state standard technologies, for common work procedures in the judiciary.”

·WAKE UP CALL·

[House panel hears about bot attack on Taylor Swift tickets](#)

Arizona Capitol Times

A House panel passed two bills on Tuesday aimed at protecting event venue ticket buyers from price-gouging and fraudulent tickets like when a bot attack prevented thousands of people from buying tickets to see Taylor Swift during her 2023 “Eras” tour.

[Hobbs responds to Senate lawsuit over director nominations](#)

Capitol Media Services

State senators have no legal right to demand that Gov. Katie Hobbs immediately send them her nominations for directors to head more than a dozen state agencies, an attorney for the governor is arguing.

[LD17 shows GOP struggle between moderate, MAGA candidates](#)

Capitol Media Services

The national war over who is a true Republican is playing out in Southern Arizona, with a leading social conservative trying to kill the bid by a former senator to get his seat back.

[Arizona G.O.P. Chairman Resigns After Tape Suggests Attempt to Bribe Kari Lake](#)

The New York Times

The chairman of Arizona's Republican Party resigned abruptly on Wednesday, a day after the publication of a 10-minute recording of a conversation between himself and Kari Lake, a former nominee for governor, in which he appeared to offer a bribe to persuade Ms. Lake to drop her 2024 Senate campaign.

[Arizona GOP Official Accuses Kari Lake of Blackmail and Quits the Party](#)

The New Republic

A top Republican official in Arizona threw in the towel on Wednesday, resigning from his position amid a public feud with Kari Lake, who he claims is "on a mission to destroy" him.

[U.S. says it won't reintroduce jaguars](#)

Arizona Daily Star

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service turned down an environmental group's petition to reintroduce endangered jaguars into Southern New Mexico's Gila National Forest.

['Here for the long term': Lucid opens expansion after a decade of planning factory](#)

Phoenix Business Journal

Lucid Group Inc., a competitor for legacy auto makers and Tesla, said it's planning to keep its manufacturing roots in Arizona after unveiling the second phase of its Advanced Manufacturing Plant, or AMP-1 in Casa Grande.

[Legislature should evaluate influence of PBMs](#)

Arizona Capitol Times

Having read Helen Everett's recent commentary on the importance of affordable medications, I feel compelled to express my concerns regarding the role of pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) in driving up drug prices and creating unnecessary obstacles between patients and physicians.

[Psilocybin's pivotal role to reshape mental health](#)

Arizona Capitol Times

In the realm of mental health, we find ourselves in a distressing freefall. Over the past two decades, our nation has become a stage for an unfolding mental health crisis.

[Personal stories, not politics on issue of abortion](#)

Arizona Capitol Times

As I sit down to write this op-ed, I am acutely aware of the delicate nature of the topic at hand. Abortion is not merely a political debate; it is a deeply personal, often heartbreaking, and sometimes medically necessary choice that women and families face.

·PRESS RELEASES·

Attorney General Mayes Urges IRS to Reverse Decision Affecting Recipients of the Arizona Families Tax Rebate

PHOENIX – Attorney General Kris Mayes, in a letter sent to the IRS Commissioner earlier today, requested the agency reconsider its decision to tax the 2023 Arizona Families Tax Rebate. This state-provided family tax relief is part of Arizona's budget and mirrors tax relief efforts in other states where taxpayers were not subjected to federal taxation for their rebates.

"The IRS should act promptly to reverse this decision and provide clear guidance to Arizona taxpayers as tax season nears," said Attorney General Mayes. "If they do not, my office is prepared to examine all legal

avenues to ensure these dollars stay in the pockets of Arizona taxpayers."

Attorney General Mayes's letter highlighted the seemingly arbitrary and inconsistent approach by the IRS, arguing that Arizona taxpayers should not be taxed for rebates similar to those in other states where taxpayers have not been hit with a federal tax bill for state rebates they received.

Attorney General Mayes also argued that under the IRS's 2023 guidance, Arizona's rebate should be excludable from federal income under the general welfare exclusion—or, at a minimum, it should be excludable to the extent a Rebate amount does not exceed state taxes that a taxpayer actually paid and did not deduct from their federal income.

A copy of the letter is available [here](#).

###

Arizona Republicans Seek to Strengthen Punishment for Child Sex Traffickers to Protect Society's Most Vulnerable Members

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – Arizona State Legislative Republicans are taking action to address the urgent need for stronger measures against individuals who engage in child sex trafficking. Representative Selina Bliss and Senator Shawna LM Bolick today introduced mirror legislation, [HCR 2042](#) and [SCR 1021](#), a referendum that would allow voters to authorize a prison sentence of natural life with no opportunity for release for individuals convicted of the most egregious forms of child sex trafficking.

“Arizona must be a place where the innocence of our youth is protected, and justice prevails,” said Representative Bliss. **“That’s why it’s my honor to sponsor this legislation that would ensure that individuals convicted of sexual offenses involving child victims face severe and irrevocable consequences. Our society must stand firmly against those who seek to harm the most vulnerable among us. Those who prey on the innocence of the young will face the full weight of the law.”**

“We believe in holding traffickers accountable for their heinous crimes, and that's why we've filed legislation for a ballot referral to put convicted child sex traffickers behind bars for life,” said Senator Bolick. **“Our message is clear: our children are not for sale, and we will not tolerate heinous crimes against them. Join us in this fight to protect our most precious resource—our children. Perpetrators, not here, not now, not never!”**

Key Features of HCR 2042/SCR 1021:

- **Natural Life Sentencing:** The resolution proposes amending the Arizona State Constitution to mandate a natural life sentence for individuals convicted of paying for sex with a minor, receiving payment for placing a minor in another person’s custody for sex with another person, or providing or obtaining a minor with intent that the minor engage in sex with another person, sending a clear message that such crimes will not be tolerated.
- **No Eligibility for Commutation, Parole, or Release:** Convicted persons under HCR 2042/SCR 1021 would not be eligible for commutation, parole, or release from confinement under any circumstances, ensuring that the severity of the crime is met with an equally severe punishment.

Video of today’s joint news conference announcing the legislation is available here: <https://bit.ly/3HASxCR>

###

Sinema-Backed Bill Awards Congressional Gold Medal to Helicopter Ambulance Crews of the Vietnam War

WASHINGTON – Arizona senior Senator Kyrsten Sinema cosponsored the *Dustoff crews of the Vietnam War Congressional Gold Medal Act* – bipartisan legislation awarding a Congressional Gold Medal to the helicopter air ambulance crews, known as the “Dustoff” crews, of the Vietnam War.

“We’re honoring the men and women who risked everything to save American lives and protect our freedoms,” said Sinema, a member of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee.

Dustoff crews include the pilots, crew chiefs, and medics who served aboard helicopter air ambulances with call sign “Dustoff” during the Vietnam War from May 1962 through March 1973.

Despite the dangerous odds, Dustoff crews were responsible for evacuating nearly 900,000 sick and wounded servicemembers and civilians from the battlefield.

Arizona consistently ranks among the states with the [highest percentages](#) of veteran populations.

###

Attorney General Mayes Announces Major Fentanyl Seizure

PHOENIX – Attorney General Mayes today announced the seizure of over a half-million illicit fentanyl pills, the results of an investigation between the Arizona Attorney General’s Office, the Tempe Police Department, and the Phoenix Division of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). Last week, special agents of the Attorney General’s Office and law enforcement partners confiscated [525,000 illicit fentanyl pills](#) and \$66,000 in cash as part of the Attorney General’s ongoing effort to combat the state’s fentanyl crisis.

“This operation is a significant step forward in our ongoing fight against criminal drug distribution in our state,” said Attorney General Mayes. “The collaboration between my office and our local and federal law enforcement partners has been vital to our efforts at keeping this deadly drug off our streets. We will continue to aggressively investigate and prosecute these crimes to the fullest extent of the law.”

In addition to enforcement actions, the Attorney General's Office is also focusing its efforts to combat the fentanyl crisis on prevention and awareness. Last week, Attorney General Mayes [announced](#) a PSA contest on fentanyl awareness for college students across Arizona. This effort aims to educate and engage the public, especially youth, about the dangers of fentanyl. More information on this initiative is available [here](#).

###

Maricopa County to Provide Additional \$500,000 in Funding to Support Food-Insecure Populations

Phoenix, Ariz. (Jan. 25, 2024) – At their formal meeting on Jan. 10, the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors voted in favor of investing an additional \$500,000 in the Arizona Food Bank Network (AFBN) to assist food-insecure communities across the County. In 2021, [Feeding America](#) classified 9.2% of Maricopa County residents, or 400,830 individuals, as food insecure, or lacking regular access to “enough food for an active, healthy life”.

“Rising inflation has made it difficult for families in Maricopa County to afford basic necessities like groceries, housing, and gas,” said Jack Sellers, who serves as Chairman of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors and represents District 1. “While there is still work to be done to curb rising costs, this continued collaboration with the Arizona Food Bank Network is a meaningful way to put food on the table for households that are struggling to make ends meet.”

This funding, part of Maricopa County’s allocation of federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars, will be used to provide operational grants to distribute shelf-stable food, fresh food, federal commodities, grocery donations, and fresh produce to both food-insecure populations and agencies that play a critical role in serving food-insecure populations across the County.

The \$500,000 approved on Jan. 10 builds on the \$3 million that Maricopa County has already invested in Arizona food banks to help address this dire situation. AFBN partners have served nearly 700,000 households in the past year and provided more than 11.4 million pounds of food across Maricopa County with the funds already invested. The Jan. 10 amendment expands the County’s partnership with the AFBN to continue assisting food-insecure communities through the end of the fiscal year on June 30, 2024.

In December 2023, the Board of Supervisors also approved more than \$399,000 in Community Services Block Grant funding for the cities of Avondale, Chandler, Surprise, Tempe, and Tolleson to provide housing and nutrition assistance to income-qualified individuals and families within those communities. This funding was made available by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and administered by the Maricopa County Human Services Department.

Those funding awards included:

- City of Avondale: \$62,500 for Housing Stability Support Services
- City of Chandler: \$125,000 for Safe and Affordable Housing
- City of Surprise: \$125,000 for Safe Temporary Shelter
- City of Tempe: \$62,500 for Food/Nutrition Services
- City of Tolleson: \$24,750 for Food/Nutrition Services

For more information on programs and services available through the Maricopa County Human Services Department to assist residents of Maricopa County, visit [Maricopa.gov/HelpWithBills](https://maricopa.gov/HelpWithBills).

###

ALIENTO TO HOST EDUCATION DAY 2024 AT ARIZONA STATE CAPITOL

Over 200 students set to gather for a full day of educating Arizona decision-makers on issues impacting students in education and beyond.

WHAT: [Aliento](#), a leading voice for undocumented youth, DACA, and mixed immigration status families, is set to host its annual Education Day (“E-Day”) at the Arizona State Capitol on January 31, 2024. This annual event is expected to bring together over 200 students, educators, and allies to engage with state legislators on vital issues impacting Arizona's youth and immigrant community.

At the forefront of this year's agenda are Aliento's 2024 key legislative priorities, including **advocating for Occupational and Professional licenses for Dreamers, championing 'Driver Licenses for All,'** and **expanding the Arizona Promise Program in line with [Prop 308](#)**. In 2022, Aliento played a key role in the passage of Prop 308, which grants in-state college tuition & state-funded scholarships to all students, including Arizona Dreamers.

Highlights Include:

- Personal stories from community members affected by current immigration & education policies.
- Participants engaging in community-building activities and practice sessions outside the Capitol before they meet with legislators.

WHEN: Wednesday, January 31, 2024, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

WHERE: Arizona State Capitol, 1700 W Washington St, Phoenix, AZ 85007.

WHY: Education Day 2024 is a youth-led initiative designed to empower the voices of young people in legislative advocacy. This event is a vital opportunity for Arizona's immigrant youth and allies to actively participate in democratic processes and advocate for policies that directly impact their lives and communities. The focus is raising awareness and fostering a sense of agency and leadership among young advocates, illustrating how informed, engaged youth can influence policy and drive social change.

###

GIFFORDS PAC Endorses Slate of Gun Safety Challengers Running for US House

Washington DC — Today, [GIFFORDS PAC](#), the gun violence prevention organization founded by former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, endorsed its first wave of challengers running for the US House of Representatives in 2024 in key districts. This strong slate of candidates are proven champions in the fight to save lives from senseless gun violence and bring unique lived experiences and strong ideals to the campaign trail.

Former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords

"Over the last two years, House Republican leadership has done nothing to reduce crime or keep our communities safe. This fall, we must flip control of the House and install a gun safety majority that is committed to building a safer future for our children. I am proud to endorse these determined champions who have the talent to win in some of the toughest districts on the map. I know each of them will prioritize ending our country's epidemic of gun violence in office."

The slate of endorsed candidates include:

- Emily Busch (MI-10)
- Gil Cisneros (CA-31)
- Kirsten Engel (AZ-06)
- Mike Feuer (CA-30)
- Curtis Hertel (MI-07)
- Will Rollins (CA-41)
- Michelle Vallejo (TX-15)
- George Whitesides (CA-27)

###

Arizona State Senator Brian Fernandez, Yuma Councilmember Carol Smith to Rally for Strong Clean Truck Standards Alongside Clean Transportation and Agricultural Advocates to Propel Arizona Toward Zero Emissions

(YUMA, AZ) – On Friday, January 26, Arizona State Senator Brian Fernandez and Yuma City Councilmember Carol Smith will join Yuma leaders and clean transportation and agricultural advocates for a press conference to encourage public support for the adoption of robust Clean Truck (Heavy-Duty) Standards to help put Yuma on the path to zero emissions from the transportation sector.

As the leading domestic source of carbon pollution, the transportation sector's cleaner trucks address respiratory health issues and combat climate change. Amid growing concerns about environmental and public health impacts, the conference aims to highlight the urgency of the Biden Administration and EPA's recent proposal for heavy-duty vehicle emission standards. These new standards, set to begin in the model year 2027, are a significant stride towards reducing air pollution

Speakers will discuss how the proposed Clean Truck Standards are not only crucial for reducing greenhouse gas emissions but also for enhancing the economic vitality and health standards of the local Yuma community. They will call upon the Biden Administration and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to finalize the strongest possible version of the recently [announced draft standards](#) as soon as possible.

WHO:

- Arizona State Senator [Brian Fernandez](#), District 23
- Councilmember [Carol Smith, City of Yuma](#)
- [JoAnna Mendoza](#), Marine Corps Veteran, Board Member, VetsForward
- [Ethan Orr](#), Associate Director ANR and Economic Development, Cooperative Extension, University of Arizona

WHEN:

Friday, January 26
10:00 am MT

WHERE:

Robert J Moody Demonstration Garden
2200 W 28th St, Yuma, AZ 85364

(park in the south parking lot of the Yuma County Health Department Building @ W 28th St and S 21st Drive)

###

“QUOTE
OF THE DAY”

“I took the bait.” – Sun explaining how a lobbyist provoked her to say would bitch slap another lobbyist.