

Last Week at the Arizona Legislature **April 28, 2023**

Summary

This was a very short week at the Arizona Legislature with the Senate meeting on Tuesday and the House on Tuesday and Wednesday before adjourning again until May 3, 2023.

Budget negotiations continue and the Legislature awaits the appointments by the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors to fill the vacant seats caused by the recent expulsion of Rep. Liz Harris (R-Chandler) and the resignation of Senator Rachel Terán (D-Phoenix). Importantly, due to the vacant House seat, Republicans do not currently enjoy a majority in the House – causing the continued breaks and pauses in the legislative process as Republicans are unable to advance any bill without bipartisan support. As a result, floor calendars were extremely light on the days the legislature did meet this week advancing mostly non-controversial bills.

The week was also marked by a rare (and unsuccessful) attempt by House Republicans to override Governor Hobbs' veto of a bill relating to sale of home-prepared foods (HB2509 – which quickly became known as the “tamale bill”). This effort to override the veto ultimately failed without the support of at least 2/3 of House members when Democrats (most of whom supported the bill before the veto) voted against the motion to show their support for Governor Hobbs.

Legislative Session By The Numbers

Days of Session: 110 (as of April 28)

Bills Introduced: 1,632

Bills Passed: 176

Bills Signed: 93

Bills Vetoed: 63

Memorials/Resolutions

Introduced: 104

Memorials/Resolutions Passed: 19

Joe's Ramblings (May 2, 2023):

The legislature has taken two “spring breaks” during this session while they wait for the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors to select a Republican candidate to replace Rep. Liz Harris (R-LD13). One of the three people chosen by LD13 Republican precinct committee members is Liz Harris! She had the most votes of the three names submitted, though the Supervisors are not expected to choose her to replace...herself!

Legislators have too much time on their hands... Last week Rep. Stephanie Stahl Hamilton (D-LD21) was caught on security video hiding Bibles that are placed in the members only House lounge. When confronted by House leadership, she eventually apologized, defending her actions as a comment about the separation of church and state. This “prank” is particularly interesting given that Rep. Stahl Hamilton is an ordained minister. Apparently, an apology wasn’t enough for several House Republicans; they have filed an ethics complaint against her.

A teachable moment? ... State Senator Wendy Rogers (R-LD7) is asking a court to stop a reporter who is investigating claims she resides outside of the northern Arizona district she represents from contacting her.

On April 29th, Rogers filed a petition for an injunction against harassment in Flagstaff Justice Court asking the court to bar *Arizona Capitol Times* Senate reporter Camryn Sanchez from entering the Arizona Senate building. The court ordered Sanchez to not contact Rogers at her residence.

Rogers previously asked Arizona Senate leadership in March to revoke Sanchez ’access to the Senate floor. Senate President Warren Petersen declined, but Senate leadership directed Sanchez not to approach Rogers on the floor. At the time, a Senate Republican spokeswoman clarified that Sanchez was still allowed to contact Rogers in other areas of the Arizona Senate.

Rogers indicated she sought the injunction to teach Sanchez a lesson.

(source: Arizona Capitol Times)

And finally... budget negotiations continue between the Governor’s office and the legislature, specifically the House and Senate leadership. Most journalists and political observers predict a long, cantankerous session, with a budget by midnight on June 30th (maybe).

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