

2023 Legislative Agenda

With a newly elected Governor and legislators representing newly drawn districts, the 2023 legislative session in Arizona presents a fresh opportunity to make vital policy changes. Many challenges await incoming elected officials, from the growing cost of living crisis to potential cuts to K-12 public education. This year, legislators can build on their progress from last year by continuing to make long-overdue investments in Arizonans and address the challenges that households are facing right now. To accomplish this, the Arizona Center for Economic Progress (AZCenter) proposes the following legislative agenda for 2023.



Education

Arizonans strongly agree that well-resourced educational opportunities – from early childhood to beyond high school – are a top priority. Yet for years, Arizona’s public schools and students have not received the support they need. The results have been a shortage of qualified teachers, backlogs for school repairs, and unnecessary financial barriers to attending a community college or university. The AZCenter urges the legislature and Governor to:

- Lift the K-12 aggregate school spending limit for the 2022-23 school year and ask the voters to permanently eliminate the outdated limit.
- Reduce inequities in education funding.
- Improve affordability of and access to higher education.



Economic Well-Being

In a wealthy democracy, nutritious food, stable housing, quality health care, and other household necessities should not be out of reach for those with lower incomes or experiencing poverty. With higher prices, far too many Arizonans are struggling to afford the basics. And this often means Arizona families must decide between caring for a newborn or sick relative and returning to work because they cannot afford to forego their pay. The AZCenter urges the legislature and Governor to:

- Improve access to and adequacy of safety net programs like Medicaid, SNAP (formerly Food Stamps), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance, and unemployment insurance.
- Expand access to meals in schools.
- Stabilize rent now and in the long term, along with strengthening tenant protections.
- Enact a statewide paid family and medical leave program.



Taxes

Taxes are critical to creating a thriving economy and society, providing the resources for investments in education, highways and roads, education, health care and other supports that all individuals and families benefit from. Yet for years, Arizonans with the lowest incomes pay the highest share of their income in taxes. The AZCenter urges the legislature and Governor to:

- Make sure corporations are equitably contributing to state revenues.
- Strengthen oversight and accountability of tax credits.
- Replace the flat, regressive individual income tax with a graduated, progressive income tax.
- Increase state-tribal revenue sharing agreements to Arizona Tribes.