

Arizona Girls State Governor Lilly Steenhard statement on Bills written, passed, vetoed or sent back to committee for review during the 73rd Annual Arizona Girls State Session

Thank you all for taking the time to contemplate and write these very well thought out bills. It's been my honor to read through them and see all of the amazing ideas you have for our state. Each of you took time out of your day to think about how you could use your platform to help make an impact on our community, and it's so empowering to see all the bright ideas that were presented to me. It was no surprise that I would have a ton of great bills to read through, as we are all bright intellectuals who want to show leadership in our communities and continue to pave a stronger road for the future generation of women.

Bills that were passed:

The Wildlife Tampering bill introduced by Senator Seanna J. Engel pertaining to the protection of state and county wildlife and additional funding for training instituted through State Game and Fish departments along their guidelines. I passed this bill because I believe in the protection of our state's natural beauty, including all life within it. This bill will provide the necessary protection for our wildlife and will help ensure that they are no longer harmed.

The Drug Testing bill introduced by Senator Victoria Bennen pertaining to the distribution of drug tests for the common schools, high schools and for all welfare institutions that maintain educational facilities that offer sports to their students. I believe this bill will help promote a safe and drug free environment in all schools within our state and will keep our athletes healthy, responsible and accountable.

The combination of the Recycling in Schools bill introduced by Senator Sownya Viswanathan and the Environ-Education bill introduced by Senator Reaves. The Recycling in Schools bill pertains to the placement of recycling cans in all school facilities in addition to education on the importance of recycling by staff. The Environ-Education bill pertains to monthly online environmental education with differing levels of education based on grade level. I combined both these bills and passed it because it will help educate all of our citizens on the importance of keeping our environment clean and will take action towards creating a sustainable environment for all life in our state.

The Parks/Bike Trails bill introduced by Madeline Swapp pertaining to the enforcement of a bike trail/park system every 5 square mile of residential areas for the residents of Arizona Girls State. I passed this bill because it encourages citizens to use their public recreational areas and

helps promote a healthy lifestyle.

Senator Sara Whitmire's Police Reform bill involving the requirement of police officers to complete a 2 year training program before joining the force was also passed. This program would include detailed de-escalation training, study of the law, psychology and courses in Black history. I passed this law because I believe that it's extremely important for everyone in the police department to receive the highest level of training so that all of our citizens have confidence in the police's abilities to perform their duties as professionals and leaders of our community.

The Appropriations Committee bill introduced by Senator Le was also passed. This bill pertains to public health services and requires the development of, but not limited to, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, therapy and or mental health programs in or near all communities consisting of citizens that are struggling or of low income. I passed this bill because I firmly believe that everyone should have access to medical and professional support for both their body and their mind. I

The Unemployment Rate bill introduced by Senator Nicolle Conlogue pertaining to the funding towards communities/persons/companies for creating face masks approved by health professionals. I passed this bill because I believe it is important to give back to our community, especially during these hard times, and for all citizens of Girls State to have masks accessible to them in order to help prevent the spread of the virus.

The Testing bill introduced by Representative Isabella Valli-Doherty pertaining to the state providing a free SAT and ACT test to students once during their junior or senior year or the summer in between. I passed this bill because I believe every student deserves an equal opportunity to flourish their knowledge beyond high school and to obtain a sound education.

Providing this test for all students without a cost ensures that every student is given an opportunity to unlock doors past high school if they wish to do so.

The Prison Reform bill introduced by Senator Analeigh Lerma pertaining to the implication of a school district with the state prison that offers adult literacy, high school diplomas, post-secondary education and other opportunities to inmates who have been imprisoned for at least 3 months at the Arizona State Prison. It also implicates programs to help inmates re-obtain their social security card, a driver's license, or a state-issued photo ID prior to his/her return to the community. I passed this bill because I think offering educational programs to help these individuals to continue their education is great. I believe that everyone should be provided an opportunity to expand their knowledge if they desire to do so.

The Female Hygiene bill introduced by Senator Ma pertaining to the furnishing of all public facilities with complimentary female hygiene products. I believe it is important for all women to have access to these products wherever they are in public if they wish to use them.

Bills either vetoed or sent back for review:

While I passed many of the bills that I received, there are some that I vetoed or felt that they needed further review from their respected committee.

Vetoed - The Animal Safety and Welfare bill introduced by Senator Naina Misra was vetoed because of the health concerns presented with allowing pets inside all public places. While the bill presents that designated areas would be designed for the pets, every individual has different health concerns and should have the right to make the decision of whether animals are allowed inside their building based on what is best for their wellbeing.

Vetoed - Senator Alyssa Simms bill pertaining to forbidding the reproduction of men in Arizona Girls State. I vetoed this bill because I believe all individuals, including men, have something different and unique to offer in our community. It also would be very expensive for our state if women had to reproduce through scientific means.

Sent back to committee - The Student Netbook bill introduced by Senator Analeigh Lerma pertaining to all schools providing students with personal netbooks was sent back to the state education committee and board for further review. The bill requires students who wish to use their own device to comply with the installation of the same cyber-security software as the school provided netbooks. I sent this bill back to the committee to discuss whether the download of cyber-security software would be necessary on individuals' personal technology and whether or not they should receive academic discipline if they do not wish to do so.

Sent back to committee - The Unemployment bill introduced by Senator Analeigh Lerma pertaining to the implementation of an unemployment program to families and individuals who seek financial help due to the loss of a job was also sent back to its committee for further review. I requested this bill to be sent back to its committee because while I love the idea behind the program, I would like an outline of how the program would prove that its individuals are seeking further employment to be clearer so that we are not handing out free checks to people who claim they will look for work but have no intention of finding employment.

Sent back to committee - The Solar Panels bill introduced by Senator Gabrielle Roman

pertaining to the installation process of solar panels at all public schools in the state was sent back to its committee to review the budget necessary for this bill. I love the idea of installing solar panels for our source of energy however I am unsure whether we have the budget to cover these expenses. Therefore, I sent it back to the committee to discuss whether this could be accomplished or not based on our budget.

Sent back to committee - The Classroom Materials bill introduced by Senator Elyse Mielke pertaining to the state providing funds for basic classroom essentials for schools at the elementary level was sent back to its committee for further clarification. I was unsure what materials would pertain to the list of essential items, such as computers, considering the possibility of having school virtual this year. I sent it back to the education committee to discuss with the State Board of Education what the essential items would be for this school year and whether we would have the funds to provide everyone with these items.

Sent back to committee - The Maternity Leave bill introduced by Senator Analeigh Lerma pertaining to providing paid maternity leave to both males and females for up to 59 weeks and an additional 12 weeks upon returning to work post-childbirth. I sent this bill back to the committee to clarify the exact dates and times that this bill entails as it is not possible for businesses and companies to pay their employees over a year's worth of money if they are unable to attend to their job.

Sent back to committee - The Plastic bill introduced by Senator Elianna Caudle pertaining to the banning of single use, plastic, carry out bags was sent back to committee for further review. I sent this bill back to committee because I really like the idea of reducing the number of plastic bags consumers use and implementing reusable bags to help protect our environment. However, I do not think the funds to pay for reusable bags for each citizen should be paid by the top 10% of taxpayers. Rather, I would encourage the use of reusable bags through a taxation of plastic bags when checking out, and the exact amount could be discussed through the committee.

Sent back to committee - The DACA Tuition bill introduced by Jimena Marquez pertaining to those under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program who reside in the state as citizens of the state in regards to higher-level public education paying in-state tuition at a public university was sent back to its committee. In this bill I would add a pathway to citizenship program for those individuals, since they will be attending a state university.

Sent back to committee - The Free School Lunch bill introduced by Analeigh Lerma pertaining to the state providing free breakfast and lunch for all K-12 students during the school

year was sent back to its committee for further discussion. I think this idea is great if our state budget for education allows for it, therefore I sent it back to its committee to discuss with the State Board of Education on whether we have the money to provide this for every student.

Sent back to committee - The School Zone Speeding Fine bill introduced by Senator Cassidy Blaha pertains to the penalty of exceeding the stated speed limit in a marked school zone. This bill states that the penalty can include, but is not limited to, a fine of \$500-\$1000 dollars and possible jail time depending on the exact speed of the vehicle. I really like the idea that the profit from these fines can be used to better the Education department and that those speeding in a marked school zone will be penalized more than the standard speeding punishment. However, I think the decision on jail time should be based on the situation taken place rather than based on the exact speed of the car. I think rewording this bill to clarify that the penalty of jail time will be determined by the situation rather than the speed alone would be more effective in determining the punishment of the crime.

Sent back to committee - The Property Tax bill introduced by Senator Analeigh Lerma pertaining to exempting residents sixty-five or older and have lived in their homes for ten years or more from paying property taxes was sent back to its committee for further review. I sent this bill back to the committee to review the age for exempting individuals of paying property taxes because I believe our economy would take a big hit if we lost the income of money coming from individuals of this age. In addition, to compromise with this bill I asked the committee to develop a program for the disabled in which they could qualify to receive an exemption from paying property taxes.

Sent back to committee - The Banning of Abortions bill introduced by Senator Johnson pertaining to the banning of all abortions was sent back to its committee for further review. As you know, this is a very controversial and divisive subject. With the limited time we had together, I feel this important bill needs more discussion. Therefore, after much thought, I have decided to send this bill back to its committee for further review.

Thank you all again for taking the time to write these bills and submit them to me. You all have your own experiences that have shaped you into the strong, intellectual person you are today and as your Governor I value each of you and your story! I hope that we can one day all see each other and meet face to face, but until then I wish you all a happy summer and an amazing senior!!