



Pro-Business Voter Guide

General Election 2024



This voter guide is provided by the Gilbert Chamber of Commerce, a 501(c)(6) nonprofit organization. The information contained herein is for educational purposes only. We encourage all members and the public to engage in the electoral process and make informed decisions based on their own research and values.

At-A-Glance

Candidates: Pro-Business Designations

The Gilbert Chamber of Commerce has issued Pro-Business designations to candidates who participated in the evaluation process and were identified as having a strong understanding of and willingness to support the well-being and vitality of Gilbert's business community. The evaluations were conducted by representatives of the business community and approved by the organization's Board of Directors.

US Congress, District 5

- Andy Biggs

Maricopa County Supervisor, District 1

- Joel Navarro
- Mark Stewart

Legislative District 13

- J.D. Mesnard, Senate
- Jeff Weninger, House
- Julie Willoughby, House

Legislative District 14

- Warren Petersen, Senate
- Laurin Hendrix, House

Gilbert Town Council

- Kenny Buckland

Gilbert Public Schools Governing Board

- Jesse Brainard
- Blake Robison
- Sheila Rogers – *We are saddened by Sheila's recent passing. Her dedication and service to our community has had a lasting impact and we are grateful for her many years of service.*

Higley Unified School District Governing Board

- D. Taylor Francis
- Scott Glover
- Kathleen Richards
- Tiffany Shultz

Positions: Ballot Initiatives

Taking positions on ballot initiatives that impact business is crucial in representing the well-being of the regional and local economic environment. Gilbert Chamber of Commerce members have reviewed these ballot initiatives and evaluated how these measures might affect business operations, growth opportunities, and overall economic health. The positions presented below have been approved by the organization's Board of Directors. It's important to exercise caution with voter-protected propositions in Arizona, as these initiatives are highly protected against legislative changes. Once a proposition is approved by voters, altering it can be challenging, even when there are unintended consequences.

Support (Yes)

- Prop. 134 - Signature Distribution Requirement for Initiatives Amendment
- Prop. 135 - Emergency Declarations Amendment
- Prop. 479 - Regional Transportation Plan Excise Tax Continuation
- Prop. 486 – Maricopa Community Colleges; Expenditure Limit Increase
- Prop 497 - A Permanent Base Adjustment to the Town's current expenditure limit
- Prop 498 - A Capital Projects Accumulation Fund exemption that would exclude capital improvement projects from the expenditure limit
- Chandler Unified School District \$487.45 million Bond Program 2024
- Gilbert Public Schools 15% Budget Override Continuation
- Higley Unified School District 15% Budget Continuation and Bond

Oppose (No)

- Prop. 312 - Property Tax Refund for Non-Enforcement of Public Nuisance Laws Measure
- Prop. 314 - Immigration and Border Law Enforcement Measure
- Prop. 315 - Legislative Ratification of State Agency Rules that Increase Regulatory Costs Measure

No Position (Not expressly a business issue):

- Prop. 133 - Require Partisan Primaries and Prohibit Primaries Where Candidates Compete Regardless of Party Affiliation Amendment
- Prop. 136 - Legal Challenges to Constitutionality of Initiatives Amendment
- Prop. 137 - End Term Limits and Retention Elections for Supreme Court Justices and Superior Court Judges Amendment
- Prop. 138 - Wages for Tipped Workers Amendment
- Prop. 139 - Right to Abortion Initiative
- Prop. 140 - Single Primary for All Candidates and Possible RCV General Election Initiative
- Prop. 311 - Criminal Conviction Fee for First Responder Death Financial Benefit Measure
- Prop. 313 - Life Imprisonment for Sex Trafficking of a Child Measure

CANDIDATES: PRO-BUSINESS DESIGNATIONS

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IN MEMORY OF SHEILA ROGERS

Gilbert Public Schools Governing Board

We are saddened by Sheila's recent passing. Her dedication and service to our community has had a lasting impact and we are grateful for her many years of service.

ANDY BIGGS



US Congress, District 5
Interview | Written Response

JOEL NAVARRO



Maricopa County Supervisor, District 1
Interview | Written Response

MARK STEWART



Maricopa County Supervisor, District 1
Interview | Written Response

J.D. MESNARD



Legislative District 13, Senate
Interview | Written Response

JEFF WENINGER



Legislative District 13, House
Interview | Written Response

JULIE WILLOUGHBY



Legislative District 13, House
Interview | Written Response

WARREN PETERSEN



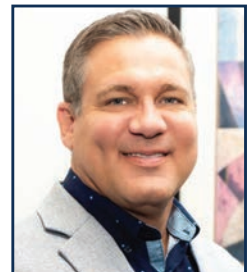
Legislative District 14, Senate
Interview | Written Response

LAURIN HENDRIX



Legislative District 14, House
Interview | Written Response

KENNY BUCKLAND



Gilbert Town Council
Podcast | Interview | Written Response

JESSE BRAINARD



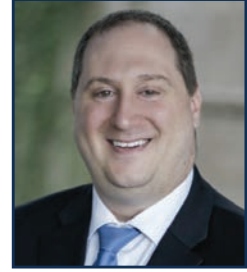
Gilbert Public Schools
Governing Board - Interview

BLAKE ROBISON



Gilbert Public Schools
Governing Board - Interview

D. TAYLOR FRANCIS



Higley Unified School District
Governing Board - Interview

SCOTT GLOVER



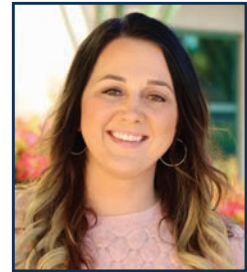
Higley Unified School District
Governing Board - Interview

KATHLEEN RICHARDS



Higley Unified School District
Governing Board - Interview

TIFFANY SHULTZ



Higley Unified School District
Governing Board - Interview

POSITIONS: BALLOT INITIATIVES

Key: Support YES, Oppose NO, and No Position NP

Taking positions on ballot initiatives that impact business is crucial in representing the well-being of the regional and local economic environment. Gilbert Chamber of Commerce members have reviewed these ballot initiatives and evaluated how these measures might affect business operations, growth opportunities, and overall economic health. The positions presented below have been approved by the organization's Board of Directors. It's important to exercise caution with voter-protected propositions in Arizona, as these initiatives are highly protected against legislative changes. Once a proposition is approved by voters, altering it can be challenging, even when there are unintended consequences.

NP Prop. 133

REQUIRE PARTISAN PRIMARIES AND PROHIBIT PRIMARIES WHERE CANDIDATES COMPETE REGARDLESS OF PARTY AFFILIATION AMENDMENT

Our Reasoning: This is not expressly a business issue.

YES Prop. 134

SIGNATURE DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENT FOR INITIATIVES AMENDMENT

Our Understanding: A "yes" vote supports establishing a signature distribution requirement for citizen initiatives, meaning that instead of requiring 10% of votes cast for governor statewide for initiated state statutes for the ballot, and 15% of votes cast for governor statewide to qualify initiated constitutional amendments for the ballot, the initiative would:

- Require signatures from 10% of votes cast for governor in each legislative district to qualify initiated state statutes for the ballot
- Require signatures from 15% of votes cast for governor in each legislative district to qualify initiated constitutional amendments for the ballot.

Our Reasoning: The Gilbert Chamber of Commerce supports raising accountability and transparency requirements for ballot initiative campaign management and signature collectors and increasing the required signatures.

YES Prop. 135

EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS AMENDMENT

Our Understanding: A "yes" vote supports providing for the state legislature to terminate a state of emergency or alter the emergency powers granted to the governor during a state of emergency, and providing for a state of emergency to automatically terminate 30 days after it is declared unless the state legislature extends the emergency powers granted to the governor, except in cases for a state of war emergency or an emergency arising from a flood or a fire.

Our Reasoning: The Gilbert Chamber of Commerce supports laws that protect businesses from nuisance or other unnecessary lawsuits that impact their ability to operate without unnecessary legal expenses. This includes continued business protections from lawsuits specifically related to public health crises.

NP Prop. 136

LEGAL CHALLENGES TO CONSTITUTIONALITY OF INITIATIVES AMENDMENT

Our Reasoning: This is not expressly a business issue.

NP Prop. 137

END TERM LIMITS AND RETENTION ELECTIONS FOR SUPREME COURT JUSTICES AND SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES AMENDMENT

Our Reasoning: This is not expressly a business issue.

NP Prop. 138

WAGES FOR TIPPED WORKERS AMENDMENT

Our Reasoning: Impact on businesses varies by interpretation. A voter-protected adoption would prevent the Legislature from changing the law for unintended consequences.

NP Prop. 139

RIGHT TO ABORTION INITIATIVE

Our Reasoning: This is not expressly a business issue.

NP Prop. 140

SINGLE PRIMARY FOR ALL CANDIDATES AND POSSIBLE RCV GENERAL ELECTION INITIATIVE

Our Reasoning: This is not expressly a business issue. **This measure is being challenged in the Arizona Supreme Court*

NP Prop. 311

CRIMINAL CONVICTION FEE FOR FIRST RESPONDER DEATH FINANCIAL BENEFIT MEASURE

Our Reasoning: This is not expressly a business issue.

NO Prop. 312

PROPERTY TAX REFUND FOR NON-ENFORCEMENT OF PUBLIC NUISANCE LAWS MEASURE OUR UNDERSTANDING

Our Understanding: A "yes" vote supports allowing for property owners to apply for a property tax refund if the city or locality in which the property is located does not enforce laws or ordinances regarding illegal camping, loitering, obstructing public thoroughfares, panhandling, public urination or defecation, public consumption of alcoholic beverages, and possession or use of illegal substances.

Our Reasoning: The Gilbert Chamber of Commerce opposes unnecessary tax burdens that could adversely impact the business community. This proposition, if passed, could have unintended consequences, which could severely cost taxpayers.

NP Prop. 313

LIFE IMPRISONMENT FOR SEX TRAFFICKING OF A CHILD MEASURE

Our Reasoning: This is not expressly a business issue.

NO Prop. 314

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER LAW ENFORCEMENT MEASURE

Our Understanding: A "yes" vote supports:

- Making it a state crime for noncitizens to enter the state at any location other than the port of entry;
- Allowing for state and local police to arrest noncitizens who cross the border unlawfully;
- Allowing for state judges to order deportations;
- Requiring the use of the E-Verify program in order to determine the immigration status of individuals before the enrollment in a financial aid or public welfare program;
- Making it a Class 6 felony for individuals who submit false information or documents to an employer to evade detection of employment eligibility, or to apply for public benefits, and;
- Making the sale of fentanyl a Class 2 felony if the person knowingly sells fentanyl and it results in the death of another person.

Our Reasoning: The Gilbert Chamber of Commerce supports reform that Strengthens border security by guarding the physical border and better tracking of expired visas; Offers a secure, reliable system for employers to verify the legal work eligibility of employees that is a federally based, user-friendly, low-cost, non-discriminatory method to ensure they comply in good faith with the law; Establishes a market-based immigration process to support workforce needs and respond quickly to U.S. businesses' employment demands; Develops criteria and establishes a guest worker/visa program for illegal immigrants already in the U.S. with no other criminal or arrest record in both the U.S. and their countries of origin, which is based on strictly enforced criteria, including payment of penalties.

NO Prop. 315

LEGISLATIVE RATIFICATION OF STATE AGENCY RULES THAT INCREASE REGULATORY COSTS MEASURE

Our Understanding: A "yes" vote supports prohibiting a proposed rule from becoming effective if that rule is estimated to increase regulatory costs by more than \$500,000 within five years after implementation, until the legislature enacts legislation ratifying the proposed rule.

Our Reasoning: The Gilbert Chamber of Commerce opposes unnecessary ballot measures. If approved, this measure could have severe unintended consequences for businesses and residents.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN EXCISE TAX CONTINUATION

Our Understanding: Prop 479 is the continuation of an existing, dedicated half-cent sales tax in Maricopa County to fund transportation. This dedicated half-cent sales tax was first established by voters in 1985 with the approval of Proposition 300 and subsequently renewed in 2004 with the voters' approval of Proposition 400. Its extension is on the November 5, 2024, Maricopa County ballot. A "yes" vote extends the tax until 2045. A "no" vote will discontinue the tax at the end of 2025.

If Proposition 479 is approved by voters, 40.5 percent of the sales tax will be allocated to freeways and highways, 22.5 percent to arterial roads and regional transportation infrastructure, and 37 percent to transit.

Funding for the projects and programs in the plan comes from more than just the continuation of the sales tax. State statute requires all funding sources available to the region be used to develop the plan. Combined, \$28.2 billion in revenues are projected through 2045 (estimated in 2020 dollars).

If Proposition 479 is not passed by voters, sales tax collections will expire and all transportation projects, programs and transit service included in the Regional Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Investment Plan are at risk due to a lack of funding.

Gilbert-area projects that will be built under the plan using these funding sources include:

- McQueen Road: North of Warner Road to Pecos Road - Arterial: Widen Roadway
- Germann Rd: West of Arizona Avenue to Cooper Road - Arterial: Widen Roadway
- Val Vista Road at Union Pacific Railroad Grade Separation - Arterial: Rail Crossing (grade separation)
- SR 202L (Santan): Val Vista Rd to US 60 - Freeway: GPL (widen)
- SR 202L (Santan) at Santan Village Parkway - Freeway: TI (improve)
- Warner Rd: Power Rd to Sossaman Rd - Arterial: Bridge (New)
- Sossaman Rd: 1/2 south of Guadalupe Rd to Warner Rd - Arterial: Widen Roadway
- Power Rd at Pecos Rd Grade Separation -Arterial: Rail Crossing (grade separation)
- Ocotillo Road: Greenfield Road to Higley Road (ST0540) - Arterial: New Roadway
- Recker Road: Ocotillo to Chandler Heights (ST0800) - Arterial: Widen Roadway
- Val Vista Drive: Riggs Road to Hunt Highway (ST1270) - Arterial: Widen Roadway
- Ocotillo Rd: Power Rd to Sossaman Rd - Arterial: Widen Roadway
- US 60 (Superstition): Corridor Multimodal Optimization - Freeway: Other
- SR 24: SR 202L to Ironwood Drive - Freeway: GPL (widen)

View an interactive map at: <https://www.azmag.gov/Prop479>

Our Reasoning: The Gilbert Chamber of Commerce supports Continued funding of regional roadways with priority given to the widening of I-10, completion of SR 24, Loop 101, Loop 202, and the Southeast Valley North/South corridor. The Gilbert Chamber supports more state and federal transportation dollars appropriated to the Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale metropolitan statistical area and northeast Pinal County based on revenue generated, vehicle miles traveled, population increase, and economic development opportunities. A loss of this funding would compromise the federal dollars received in matching funds.

MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGES; EXPENDITURE LIMIT INCREASE

Our Understanding: In 1980, the expenditure limit 'base' for Maricopa Community Colleges was set at the amount spent that year to serve students. Each year after, the amount is nothing more than a number in the formula and does not represent actual dollars being spent. By permanently adjusting the base on which the expenditure limit is determined, Maricopa Community Colleges can continue supporting students across Maricopa County with flexible, high-quality, and affordable education. Adjusting the base limit does not increase taxes or add any new funding to the budget - It simply allows Maricopa Community Colleges the flexibility to use its existing budget. Expenditure Limit: These are restrictions that state governments set on themselves to limit their spending and taxing. Expenditure Limits can be fixed dollar caps, or they can limit growth to match increases in population, inflation, or personal income.

Our Reasoning: The Gilbert Chamber of Commerce supports an effective long-term solution to the P-12 and post-secondary aggregate expenditure limit that eliminates the annual need to adjust the cap, allows for local budgeting, and respects the will of the voters. Furthermore, the Gilbert Chamber supports reform of the State Aggregate Expenditure Limit for public education to ensure district schools have the authority to access and spend legislative appropriations.

A PERMANENT BASE ADJUSTMENT TO THE TOWN'S CURRENT EXPENDITURE LIMIT

LEARN MORE: <https://www.gilbertaz.gov/departments/clerk-s-office/elections/expenditure-limit>

Our Reasoning: The Gilbert Chamber of Commerce recognizes that the state-imposed expenditure limit is based on each municipality's actual spending during the 1979-1980 fiscal year budget and that this spending cap was last adjusted in 1998 when Gilbert's population was 87,878. The proposed increase of \$1.5M in the town's expenditure limit base allows Gilbert to adjust its budgetary capabilities to meet current and future needs. This adjustment is essential given the significant population growth since 1998 (from 87,878 to the current population). Increasing the expenditure limit allows the town to utilize additional revenue from federal, state, and local sources more effectively. Even with the proposed increase, Gilbert's expenditure limit will remain comparatively low, indicating a fiscally conservative yet growth-oriented approach. This balance can make Gilbert an attractive location for new businesses and investments, offering a stable yet dynamic environment for business operations.

A CAPITAL PROJECTS ACCUMULATION FUND EXEMPTION THAT WOULD EXCLUDE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS FROM THE EXPENDITURE LIMIT

LEARN MORE: <https://www.gilbertaz.gov/departments/clerk-s-office/elections/expenditure-limit>

Our Reasoning: This proposition permits the accumulation of funds for capital projects without breaching the state-imposed expenditure cap. It enables Gilbert to avoid the costs associated with borrowing (e.g., interest payments and issuance fees), thereby preserving financial resources for other essential services or investments. This is particularly important in maintaining fiscal health and ensuring sustainable economic growth. By allowing the town to accumulate funds for capital projects without incurring debt, Prop 498 ensures that essential infrastructure projects can be completed in a timely and cost-effective manner. These projects might include road and transportation improvements or the development or improvement of new business districts, which directly enhance the operational environment for local businesses. Funding capital projects through accumulated funds allows for better planning and execution of long-term infrastructure improvements. High-quality infrastructure attracts new businesses and facilitates the expansion of existing ones, fostering a robust business ecosystem.

YES Chandler Unified School District \$487.45 million Bond Program 2024

LEARN MORE: <https://www.cusd80.com/bondfacts>

Our Reasoning: CUSD has a demonstrated history of responsible stewardship of tax dollars, serving more than 43,000 students as Arizona's second largest district, while accomplishing a 91 percent graduation rate and supporting academic programs which procured nearly \$200 million in scholarships for seniors in 2024.

Our local educators are charged with producing the high-performing and qualified workforce our employers have come to depend on. The 2024 Bond Program is crucial to supporting instructional, non-instructional, and transportation budget lines, including technology, equipment, and facilities modernization to support the workforce of the future.

Our business community recognizes the pivotal role of education in shaping our future workforce and stands firmly behind the importance of a premier education community. Businesses understand that funding is not just a necessity but a responsibility to meet the needs of our students and their families.

YES Gilbert Public Schools 15% Budget Override Continuation

LEARN MORE: <https://www.gilbertschools.net/about/election>

Our Reasoning: The existing budget override was approved in November 2019 and has been in place since the 2020/21 school year, generating approximately \$36 million annually.

GPS has served as a good steward of tax dollars, identified efficiencies, and continues to outperform districts across the State with 14 A+ Schools of Excellence while returning 73.5% of every dollar to the classroom to sustain academic programming.

Our local educators are charged with producing the high-performing and qualified workforce our employers have come to depend on. This talent pipeline requires diverse educational opportunities, including access to career and technical education; arts and culture; AP, honors, and dual enrollment courses; and specialized programs that meet individual students' needs.

The continuation of the budget override is crucial to retaining high-quality teachers and staff, maintaining diverse programming to meet the needs of all students, and supporting the future-ready success of more than 32,000 students in our community.

Our business community recognizes the pivotal role of education in shaping our future workforce and stands firmly behind the importance of a premier education community. Businesses understand that funding is not just a necessity but a responsibility to meet the needs of our students and their families.

YES Higley Unified School District 15% Budget Continuation and Bond

LEARN MORE: <https://www.husd.org/about-husd/bondoverrides>

Our Reasoning: The budget continuation will support special education, teacher salaries, maintain class sizes, and essential programming, while the Bond will fund needed maintenance for aging facilities, safety and security upgrades, and buses.

Higley Unified is rated A by the Department of Education, and the diverse programming they offer is integral to the qualified workforce our employers depend on. This talent requires educational opportunities and facilities that meet the standards of today's professionals.

The continuation of the budget override is crucial to retaining high-quality teachers and staff, and providing premiere education for 13,000 preschool through 12th grade students. The Bond will ensure those students have a safe and secure learning environment with access to the technology required for today's workforce.

We recognize that high-performing schools attract families and businesses, creating a thriving community that supports local enterprises. We understand that funding is not just a necessity but a responsibility to meet the needs of our students and families. By supporting these measures, we are ensuring a vibrant future for our community.



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