



Action alert

\$50m in COVID relief hung up in the House

The legislature is currently racing the clock to make a deal on tens of millions of dollars in coronavirus aid.

A relief package under consideration would provide \$50 million in discretionary spending to the Governor's office to:

- Prevent evictions and foreclosures
- Assist small businesses
- Pay for food bank operations
- Support organizations serving people experiencing homelessness.



The package also includes longer welfare payments and a waiver from work requirements.

This package quickly passed the Senate with wide bipartisan support. **However, the House was divided on the bill's scope on Friday, and Speaker Bowers adjourned his chamber without hearing the bill, pushing its discussion off to Monday.**

As supporters of sound science, we are listening to what CDC, AZDHS, and WHO are telling us— that immediate and sustained social distancing is needed to flatten the COVID curve. **This can only happen if Arizonans everywhere are able to stay home without fear of losing their homes or going hungry.**

Please join us by calling on your district's Representatives to set aside debate and swiftly pass the bipartisan Senate plan.

[Click to message lawmakers](#)

Legislative Updates

Our work at the State Capitol will soon be put on pause for the session.

Legislators have put controversial bills on



hold and spent the last week moving swiftly to pass a state budget including emergency COVID funding so that they may recess in light of the need to quarantine. The only non-budget legislation sent to the floor were non-controversial bills that had previously cleared committee.

In a silver lining to the pandemic, this means the contentious bills to which we have alerted you this session are temporarily defunct. This includes:

- HB2706— banning transgender athletes from girls' sports teams
- HB2388— funding for fake pregnancy clinics
- SB1143— overly-broad definition of anti-semitism
- SB1082— religious restrictions on sex education

It is uncertain whether the legislature will recess or sine die (close session) following the passage of a basic budget and coronavirus aid packages. (More on these issues below.)

Secular AZ will continue to monitor the rest of session in the event a secular issue still arises.

Secular Activism



A tale of two COVID responses

As secularists, we follow the science-based recommendations of the CDC, WHO, and AZ DHS in order to keep lives safe.

Earlier this week we emailed you to notify you **we have suspended all our public events and meetings, and are urging our supporters and liaisons to do the same.**

Our religious right counterparts at Center for Arizona Policy (CAP), however, seemed not to receive the memo about the importance of practicing proper social distancing. **A letter was sent to CAP supporters shortly after the Governor's emergency declaration inviting them to a fundraising dinner at a hotel.**

Secular supporters were quick to **call out CAP President Cathi Herrod** for her **disregard** of sound science, swiftly prompting the organization to **backpedal on the announcement.**

This episode is an excellent reminder how pervasive misinformation and science denial can be, and the power of the

secular community to help save lives. **Let's continue to be champions for sound science as this crisis unfolds!**

Other statewide and national news:

[Anti-Gay Lawmaker Voted Against Coronavirus Bill Because It "Redefined Family" by Providing Sick Leave to Domestic Partners](#)

[Some Tenn. Legislators Want To Name The Bible The Official State Book. It's Not A Good Idea](#)

[6 Ways Trump's Denial of Science Has Delayed the Response to COVID-19 \(and Climate Change\)](#)

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