

CENTER
FOR THE FUTURE OF
ARIZONA



The Arizona Voters' Agenda

FALL 2024 REPORT



The Arizona Voters' Agenda

A Data-Driven, Voter-Centric Path to Progress Reflecting Where Voters Agree

The Arizona Voters' Agenda is grounded in areas where voters show strong consensus—50% or more of likely voters across political affiliations and age groups must demonstrate agreement on each issue. This ensures that the Voters' Agenda reflects what matters to the majority of likely voters and highlights common ground.

As political rhetoric grows more divisive, it's vital to refocus on what brings us together—because that is how to figure out the way forward together. The Arizona Voters' Agenda, developed by Center for the Future of Arizona (CFA), is based on comprehensive surveys of likely voters in 2024. It reveals significant agreement among Arizona voters on many issues related to elections, water, education, state spending, immigration, and housing.

The Arizona Voters' Agenda provides a blueprint for the media, candidates, leaders, and all Arizonans—showing where real progress is possible. It's not about focusing on what divides us, but on priorities and actions the electorate wants for Arizona's future. Elections are a chance to shape that future, and the Arizona Voters' Agenda offers a clear path toward governance that reflects the outcomes Arizonans want.

Let's come together around where we agree, using the Arizona Voters' Agenda as a guide for progress that benefits everyone.

REFLECTING WHERE VOTERS AGREE

The Arizona Voters' Agenda is not about single-partisan issues where one group supports an issue, and another does not. To be included, a 50% or higher majority of all likely voters must show a "strong" level of agreement on the issue, and 50% or higher majorities of every political and age group must show "strong" or "somewhat strong" agreement. This ensures the Arizona Voters' Agenda is truly representative and highlights areas of broad agreement.

50%

OR HIGHER STRONG
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&

50%

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AMONG EVERY POLITICAL
AFFILIATION AND AGE GROUP



VOTER INSIGHTS

In addition to agenda items, the survey results provide insights that help build an understanding of the electorate's concerns and hopes for the future.

2024 Agenda Items By Topic

Based on Findings of 2024 Spring and Fall Surveys of Likely Voters



Election Issues

Arizona voters share broad support for accessible voting and changes to the partisan primary system.

Policy Items	Strongly Support	Total Support
Regardless of party affiliation, all voters - Democrat, Republican, independent, non-affiliated, or others registered - should have equal access to voting.	87%	96%
Our partisan primary system rewards the most extreme candidates who then need to keep their narrow base of primary voters satisfied while they are in office so they can get reelected. We need to make changes to our primary system so we elect leaders who represent more than just a small segment of voters.	51%	77%



VOTER INSIGHTS

- 91% of Arizona voters are “slightly,” “somewhat,” or “very concerned” about divisiveness and partisanship in current politics, with the majority in the latter category (69%). The vast majority, 80%, also believe, “Our democracy is under threat and at risk for future generations.”
- Despite concerns about the political climate, 81% of likely voters also believe that their vote can change things for the better, and their support for reforms suggests a motivated electorate.
- Nearly three-fourths of voters report finding it “very easy” to participate in Arizona elections, and another 20% say it is “somewhat easy.”



Water & Environment

Arizona voters continue to show high levels of support for sustainable practices that protect the state’s natural resources and quality of life, consistent with previous research.

Policy Items	Strongly Support	Total Support
Groundwater is essential for communities, farming, industry, and Arizona’s way of life. We need to do more to protect our groundwater and secure our long-term water supplies.	77%	93%
Arizona uses active management of state lands, including controlled burns, to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire. Active management of forest land is important and should continue.	72%	92%



VOTER INSIGHTS

- 67% do not believe that “Arizona’s current water policies are sufficient to ensure long-term water sustainability.”
- 70% of voters say, “Arizona is not ready for a major emergency, weather crisis, or the next pandemic to hit our state. We must do more to increase our planning and preparedness to ensure we are ready when the next disaster happens.”

Education

Arizona voters prioritize education and show consensus support for tangible actions to enhance the overall quality and outcomes of education in the state.

Policy Items	Strongly Support	Total Support
Ensure teachers are trained in the most effective approaches to teaching reading.	79%	94%
Ensure every student can access dual enrollment or other early college opportunities to earn college credit while in high school.	78%	93%
Private schools that receive state funding should be held to the same standards as public schools when it comes to financial reporting requirements, academic reporting requirements, and employment standards.	66%	80%
Increase funding for K-12 public education.	63%	79%
Increase the number of students who pursue and complete education or training beyond high school (including university, community college, or technical/trade school).	60%	85%
Increase need-based state financial aid to encourage more students to enroll in Arizona's public universities and community colleges after high school.	56%	77%

Value Statement	Strongly Support	Total Support
Every school should have the resources necessary to deliver quality education that prepares every child for the future, no matter their skin color, background, or zip code.	89%	96%
Our public universities and community colleges are critical to ensuring Arizona's success now and in the future. State investments in public higher education should be a priority.	53%	79%



VOTER INSIGHTS

- 64% of voters say Arizona's K-12 education system should be in the Top 25% Nationally.
- in rating K-12 Education in Arizona, just 10% describe the current K-12 public education system as "excellent" or "very good," while 35% say "ok," and 46% say "poor" or "failing."
- On whether the K-12 public education system is improving, 49% say it is "definitely or probably getting worse," 33% say it is "staying about the same," and 10% say "definitely or probably improving."
- 66% of voters say that the recent cuts to the state's need-based financial aid program are the wrong direction for Arizona.



Taxes & State Spending

Arizona voters advocate for a long-term state spending strategy that ensures stable revenue and improved planning. There is strong support for investing in and preparing for future growth while maintaining essential services, critical to quality of life.

Policy Items	Strongly Oppose	Total Oppose
Cuts to K-12 Education to balance the state budget	73%	87%
Cuts to Public Safety to balance the state budget	64%	82%
Cuts to Healthcare to balance the state budget	61%	81%

Value Statements	Strongly Support	Total Support
A robust transportation infrastructure system, including investments in our freeways, streets, and transit throughout the State of Arizona, is critical to moving people, goods, and services throughout the state and essential to our long-term economic success.	60%	90%
Arizona is expected to reach 8 million residents by 2030 and 9 million by 2040. It will take higher levels of planning and preparedness to ensure we have the resources and infrastructure to support that growth and maintain our high quality of life.	57%	87%
Arizona's short-term budget planning creates a lot of uncertainty – often alternating between budget shortfalls and cuts one year and surpluses and spending the next. For Arizona to live up to its potential as a great place to live, we need a long-term investment strategy based on stable revenue and better planning.	54%	88%
Arizona families are struggling to find affordable and reliable childcare. Without dependable access to childcare, caregivers may miss work or leave the workforce altogether. Arizona should invest more in childcare assistance programs for qualifying families.	53%	77%



VOTER INSIGHTS

- 52% are not confident that Arizona is prepared for future growth.
- While 55% of voters agree that the taxes they pay in Arizona are “just about right,” 71% do not believe “we are investing our tax dollars in the right things.”
- 81% of voters across political affiliations generally agree that “beyond income taxes, there are other sources of potential revenue for important areas such as education, infrastructure, and other priorities. We need to explore ways to expand revenue sources to ensure the state’s long-term growth and success.” It achieved strong support of 47%, which narrowly misses the 50% strong support criteria for inclusion in the Arizona Voters’ Agenda.

Housing

Arizona voters show high levels of concern about housing issues. They strongly agree that more action from state and local governments is needed to address homelessness and ensure accessibility to housing that is affordable.

Policy Items	Strongly Support	Total Support
Increase housing that is affordable in my community.	62%	78%
Value Statements	Strongly Support	Total Support
State and local government must do more to ensure that housing options are affordable and available to middle and low-income earners throughout the state.	59%	82%
State and local government must do more to make sure people who experience homelessness can access safe, affordable housing.	52%	81%



VOTER INSIGHTS

- Eight in ten view rent and home prices in Arizona as too high.
- Seven in ten believe homelessness is a crisis or serious issue.

Immigration

Arizona voters across the political spectrum highlight immigration as a pressing issue and show support for practical solutions.

Policy Items	Strongly Support	Total Support
Enact comprehensive immigration reform that includes a pathway to citizenship.	56%	77%
Value Statements	Strongly Support	Total Support
Immigration reform is important to our country and our economy. Mexico is Arizona's largest trade and tourism partner – we must prioritize creating a functioning border for commerce and immigration.	66%	89%
The current influx of thousands of migrants at the southern border is an international humanitarian and refugee crisis. Our leaders must work together to find a bipartisan solution to this problem.	62%	82%



More Insights into Voters' Perspectives

Beyond outlining the policy actions in the Arizona Voters' Agenda, the surveys of likely voters reveal additional insights into the electorate's perspectives. These insights offer context on voters' outlooks, preferences, and key factors shaping their priorities ahead of the election.

What Voters Want From Candidates and Leadership

- Nearly two-thirds of voters say the top factor in electing a leader to office is their "position on the issues" or whether they "have clear plans or solutions."
- Nearly two-thirds of voters prefer leaders who are willing to work across the aisle to find bipartisan solutions.
- 60% do not believe that current Arizona candidates are addressing their most important issues.
- Much of the data signals a desire among the electorate for more and better long-term planning at the state level. This arises across several issues, especially as it relates to preparing for Arizona's continued growth.

What Didn't Make the Arizona Voters' Agenda?

The surveys cover a wide array of issues and topics, and the issues that did NOT reach the level of support to be included provide insight into what to focus on instead. The following are just a few examples.

Where Voters Do Not Reach Consensus		Where Voters Agree
The appropriate funding level of the ESA/voucher program	👉	Ensuring accountability for private schools receiving state funding from ESAs/vouchers
Restricting the use of school restrooms and locker rooms by transgender students	👉	Ensuring all teachers are trained in the most effective methods for teaching reading
Easing restrictions and regulations on affordable housing and multi-family developments	👉	Expanding affordable housing options
How to balance the budget and how to fund priorities	👉	Arizona needs a long-term investment strategy based on stable revenue and better planning

Big Questions for Candidates and Leaders:

A Call to Action

The Arizona Voters' Agenda surveys reveal critical consensus areas that raise important questions for our leaders and candidates to address. We urge voters, the media, and political figures to drive meaningful discussions and engage in a productive and informative electoral process.



Elections Issues

1. How will you ensure that all registered voters, regardless of party affiliation, have equal access to the voting process?
2. What reforms do you support to make Arizona's primary system more representative of all voters?
3. How would you address concerns that the current primary system encourages polarization, and what changes would you propose to promote more nonpartisan leadership?



Water & Environment

1. What specific policies would you implement to better protect our groundwater and secure long-term water supplies for future generations?
2. How do you plan to balance water conservation efforts with the state's economic and population growth?
3. How would you work with federal and local agencies to ensure that forest management practices are implemented effectively to prevent wildfires?
4. What steps would you take to promote active forest land management and wildfire prevention?
5. How would you enhance Arizona's disaster preparedness in light of increasingly extreme weather conditions?
6. What is your plan to improve the state's infrastructure and emergency response systems to ensure Arizona can respond effectively to crises?



Education

1. What does Arizona need to do to become a top-performing public education system in the country?
2. What should Arizona do to ensure every school has the resources needed to deliver quality education that prepares every child for the future?
3. How will you increase funding and investment in public K-12 and higher education?
4. What will you do to ensure more students succeed in reading and math?
5. How will you ensure that private schools receiving ESA/voucher state dollars will be held equally accountable to financial and performance requirements and employment standards as public schools?
6. How will you expand access and ensure more students enroll in education and training beyond high school?
7. What are your plans for dual enrollment for all students and need-based financial aid programs?



Taxes & State Spending

1. How are you planning to prepare for growth?
2. What are your plans to ensure that Arizona's infrastructure can support the state's anticipated growth?
3. Acknowledging the critical role of transportation infrastructure and childcare in Arizona's economic success, how do you plan to prioritize these areas?
4. How will you advocate for a long-term investment strategy that ensures stable revenue and avoids the cycle of budget shortfalls and surpluses?
5. What specific steps would you take to implement better fiscal planning and stability, ensuring that Arizona can invest in critical areas like education, infrastructure, and public safety without the constant shifts between budget cuts and surpluses?



Immigration

1. Immigration has been a long-standing issue with little progress over the decades, despite broad public support for reform. What specific steps will you take to build bipartisan coalitions and advocate for comprehensive immigration solutions that prioritize both security and humane treatment at the border?
2. Understanding that immigration policy is not solely determined at the state level, what actions will you advocate for at the federal level?
3. In light of broad agreement on the need for comprehensive immigration reform, what steps will you take to create a pathway to citizenship?
4. How do you define a functioning border for commerce and immigration?



Housing

1. What specific policies will you propose to make housing more accessible to middle and low-income earners?
2. How will you ensure that state and local governments take a more active role in addressing homelessness?
3. What measures will you propose to encourage the development of housing that is affordable?

More questions and communications toolkit at arizonafuture.org/ava

Be a Voice for Positive Change:

Use the #ArizonaVotersAgenda Toolkit to Share Voters' Priorities and Make an Impact

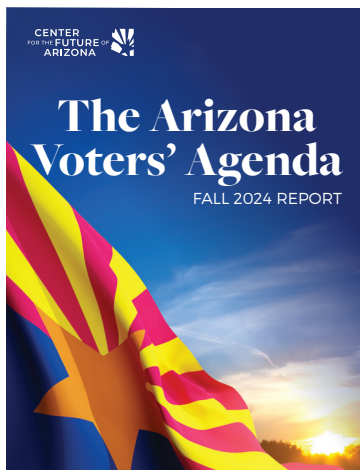
Use the Arizona Voters' Agenda data and materials in your own election conversations and decision-making. Grow your impact by sharing this information with your network! Your support is essential in spreading the word and maintaining the momentum behind voters' priorities.



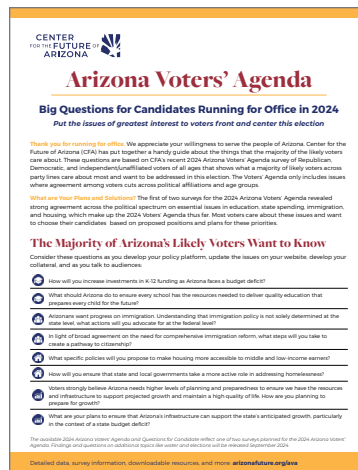
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READ AND SHARE

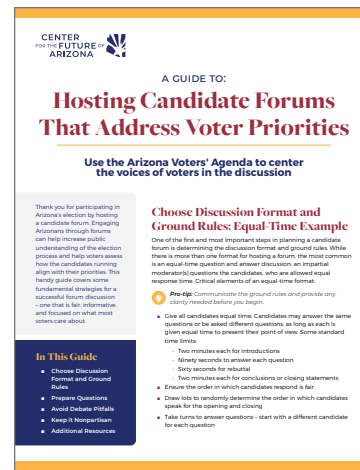
Need an extra hard copy to share? Email marcom@arizonafuture.org



Summary of the latest
Voters' Agenda data



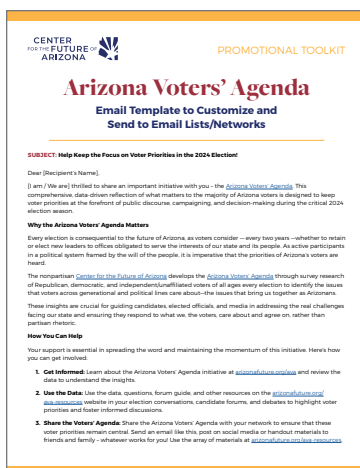
Questions for candidates



Guide to hosting a productive
and nonpartisan forum

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- 3 Be sure to tag CFA!

SOCIAL MEDIA HANDLES

- Twitter – @arizonafuture
- Instagram – CenterfortheFutureofaz
- Facebook – @azfuture
- LinkedIn – Center for the Future of Arizona

HASHTAGS

- #ArizonaVotersAgenda
- #TheArizonaWeWant

POST BANNERS ON WEBSITES AND BLOGS

Have a website or blog with space to promote the Voters' Agenda? Download one of our standard-sized digital banner display ads below.



About Center for the Future of Arizona

Center for the Future of Arizona (CFA) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan "do-tank" that brings Arizonans together to create a stronger and brighter future for our state. Through survey research & reports, Arizona Progress Meters, and impact initiatives & programs, CFA listens to Arizonans to learn what matters most to them, shares trusted data about how Arizona is doing in those priority areas, brings critical issues to public attention, and works with communities and leaders to solve public problems. CFA leads impact initiatives and programs across the state and has deep and ongoing engagement in education, workforce development, and civic health, recognizing how essential these are to advancing economic prosperity, quality of life, and opportunity for all.

CFA is focused on bringing Arizonans together to realize The Arizona We Want, which is a shared vision of success centered on what matters most to Arizonans and how those priorities can shape a hopeful and more prosperous long-term future for the state. The Arizona Voters' Agenda is one more example of CFA's commitment to research efforts that identify what matters most to Arizonans across a range of critical issues. Data from the research can not only inform election discourse but also connect Arizonans by bridging perceived divides, mobilizing communities and leaders around shared priorities, and ultimately realizing progress on critical challenges.

About the Arizona Voters' Agenda

During every election cycle, Center for the Future of Arizona (CFA) develops the Arizona Voters' Agenda from the results of statewide public opinion surveys of Republican, Democratic, and independent/unaffiliated likely voters about their priorities for the state, views on key issues, and what they want their leaders to address. The promoted Voters' Agenda is based on where voters across all age groups and political affiliations agree.

Survey Methodology

The first Arizona Voters' Agenda survey was conducted among likely voters ahead of the 2024 primary election, on March 4-11, 2024, with a random sample of 500 people. The second Arizona Voters' Agenda survey was conducted among likely voters ahead of the 2024 general election, on August 5-13, 2024, with a random sample of 500 people. Both polls surveyed likely Arizona 2024 General Election voters with a history of electoral participation and were balanced to model the likely turnout of voters across party, age, region, and gender. HighGround, Inc. conducted live interview surveys of voters in English and Spanish to landline and cell phone users. Based on previous election trends, the partisan advantage was set at +4% GOP. The margin of error is $\pm 4.3\%$. Due to rounding, percentages may not total 100. More details are available at arizonafuture.org/ava.

The 2024 Arizona Voters' Agenda initiative is supported in part by Arizona Community Foundation, Helios Education Foundation, Pivotal Foundation, Southern Arizona Leadership Council, and Thomas R. Brown Family Private Foundation.

Detailed data, survey information,
communications toolkit, and more:

arizonafuture.org/ava



arizonafuture.org

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