



## Attorney General Releases Opinion On Emergency Powers

Attorney General Mark Brnovich (R) recently issued an opinion on the Governor's Emergency Powers.

In January, Representative John Kavanagh (R, LD23) warned legislators that terminating the current emergency declaration would result in a patchwork of local, inconsistent emergency measures and urged lawmakers to halt discussion of ending the Declaration until Attorney General Brnovich issued an opinion on the subject. Representative Kavanagh warned "[Were] Arizona to become a mosaic of jurisdictions with conflicting restrictions ranging from nonexistent to draconian.... residents and visitors seeking relief from the tedium of restricted areas would flock to the packed restaurants, bars, and public events in the laissez-faire jurisdictions where they might become infected with COVID-19 and.... bring the disease back to those jurisdictions that tried the most to control it."

Attorney General Brnovich's opinion found that if the Legislature was to end the Emergency Declaration by concurrent resolution, the Governor has the authority to issue another emergency order declaration immediately after its termination. Brnovich wrote, the ". . . Governor may declare a new state of emergency and re-institute prior measures so long as the conditions for the existence of a state of emergency under A.R.S. § 26-301(15) are satisfied."

To read Attorney Brnovich's opinion, click [here](#).

### Cross Over Week For Bills

This week is crossover week when each chamber conducts floor action on its remaining bills and sends them to the other chamber. The only committees meeting this week have been House and Senate Appropriations.

Of the 1,822 pieces of legislation introduced this session, more than 1,000 were heard in committees by the deadline at the end of last week. Governor Ducey has signed 31 bills so far and 9 await his signature.

A couple of recently signed bills are:

**HB2301 (Chapter 25)**: Sponsored by Representative Walt Blackman (R, LD6) and signed by the Governor, this exempts a career technical education district (CTED) from being assigned a letter grade.

**HB2402 (Chapter 19)**: Sponsored by Representative Michelle Udall (R, LD25) and signed by the Governor, this exempts schools or school districts from

receiving a letter grade in the 2020-2021 school year. It also allows the State Board of Education (SBE) to adjust the dates local education agencies (LEAs) are required to receive assessment scores and data.

### **Arizona To Add 325k New Jobs By 2022**

A report released by the Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity finds that Arizona is anticipated to gain more than 325,000 jobs between spring 2020 and the same time next year, a 5.5 percent annualized growth rate.

Arizona's leisure and hospitality sector is projected to experience a 12.8 percent annualized growth rate, a gain of more than 69,000 jobs. The manufacturing sector is projected to experience a 3.1 percent annualized growth rate, a gain of more than 10,000 jobs, and more than 5,000 above pre-pandemic levels.

To read the report, click [here](#).

### **AZDHS Issues COVID-19 Update**

Arizona Department of Health Services (AZDHS) reported 88% of inpatient beds and 88% of ICU beds in use, which includes people being treated for COVID-19 and other patients. COVID-19 patients are using 19% of all inpatient beds and 29% of ICU beds. Overall, 31% of ventilators are in use. The state's COVID-19 rate of spread (Rt) is below 1 at .50 (the average number of people a COVID-positive individual will infect). Of known test results from last week, AZDHS reported that 9% have come back positive. A positivity rate of 5% or less is considered a good indicator that the spread is being controlled.

According to the AZDHS dashboard, 15% of the state's ICU beds are readily available, or approximately 259 beds for COVID and non-COVID patients alike.

To view the AZDHS dashboard, click [here](#).

For more information on free COVID-19 testing sites click [here](#).

### **AZDHS COVID-19 Vaccine Update**

Governor Ducey and AHCCCS have announced an initiative that will make it easier for AHCCCS (Medicaid) members to get transportation to drive-through COVID-19 vaccination appointments.

Beginning February 22, AHCCCS will cover the cost of transportation for eligible members who have appointments at drive-through vaccination sites. In accordance with federal guidelines, members who cannot provide or arrange their own transportation will have access to non-emergency transportation (NEMT) to and from appointments for covered Medicaid services.

The state is administering 250,000 to 300,000 doses per week across all 15 counties. All but one of the state's 15 counties are in either the priority or general 1B phase. Gila County has progressed to the 1C phase but has accounted for less than 1% of the almost 1.4 million shots administered in the state so far.

For information on each county's vaccination phase and vaccination locations, click [here](#).

Registration to receive a vaccine is available [here](#) or by calling 844-542-8201.



Click here to find COVID-19 resources and volunteer opportunities

## Legislators' Birthdays



Happy Birthday  
Rep. Charlene Fernandez  
Wednesday, February 24th

Representing LD4, Representative Charlene Fernandez was first elected to the Legislature in 2014 and previously served as Minority Leader from 2018 to 2020.

An Arizona native and graduate of Northern Arizona University, Fernandez previously worked for Congressman Ed Pastor where she coordinated constituent services for the western portion of then Congressional District 2. She later served Governor Janet Napolitano as a liaison for the Arizona Department of Environment Quality in Yuma County.

This session, Fernandez will serve as a member of the House Appropriations, Commerce, and Joint Legislative Budget Committees. She filed HB2852 which would establish a 9-member Study Committee on Educator Health Insurance Costs to examine the costs to both school districts and school district employees associated with providing health insurance to school district employees and their dependents.

To wish Representative Fernandez happy birthday: [cfernandez@azleg.gov](mailto:cfernandez@azleg.gov)

## Arizona Governmental Affairs

Address:

99 E. Virginia Avenue, #180  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
602.296.5966

[E-mail AZ Governmental](#)