

PETERS, CANNATA & MOODY PLC

This was the first full week of legislative action this year, and legislators approved dozens of bills in policy committees. Several uncontroversial bills already received approval from the Senate and House, and are ready to advance for consideration in the second half of the legislative process. Many more are to come: more than 700 bills have been introduced this session. That is a much lower number than in recent legislative sessions, but the count could climb as bill introduction deadlines.



January 30	Last day for Senate bill introductions
February 10	Last Day for House bill introductions
February 17	Last day for consideration of bills in the first legislative chamber
March 24	Last day for consideration of bills in the second legislative chamber
April 14	Last day for conference committees
April 18	100 th day of session
April 22	Statutory last day of session (may be extended by legislative leaders)

The bills that moved forward this week included a [Good Samaritan bill](#) that Governor Ducey called for in his State of the State speech, [stronger penalties](#) for stealing a flag, and [a proposal](#) that expanded the Math, Science and Special Education Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program to include teachers that teach in schools that are in low-income or rural areas, or that are located on an Indian reservation. Legislators also approved changes to the [location of medical marijuana dispensaries](#) in rural areas, and to the state's ["Shannon's Law" restrictions](#) on shooting guns into the air.

Not all bills that were considered this week moved forward. Committees failed to pass a proposal to [alter standards](#) for medical marijuana facilities, [a bill](#) that would have established a Concrete Masonry Education Council for training and research, and a law against [panhandling](#).

Legislative schedules will be busier next week; [click here](#) for a full list of bills to be considered in committees.

Budget Update

There was no sign of progress on budget negotiations this week, though House and Senate leaders continue to speak to their caucus members to identify their top funding priorities. In legislative budget committees, hearings focused on analysis of state agency funding and priorities. Committees heard details on funding for the judicial branch and state debt, and the Senate [highlighted](#) Arizona education finance systems. ([Click here](#) to view presentations from legislative budget staff.)

The House, which has three budget subcommittees, turned the focus to the impacts of the state minimum wage increase that voters recently approved. Separate hearings focused on the impact to [schools](#), businesses, and [those who provide services](#) to individuals with disabilities. These increased costs are a key priority of discussion as a budget proposal takes shape.

Next week, budget committees will focus on the budget requests of the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) and the Department of Corrections.

Priority Legislation

- [HB 2134](#) (schools; children's camps; sunscreen use), which would authorize children's use and possession of FDA-approved sunscreen, has not been heard in the House Committee on Health.
- [HB 2135](#) (health care workforce; data), which would create a Task Force on Health Care Professional Workforce Data to research the creation of a resource center on data from health care professionals, was assigned to the House Committee on Rules.
- [HB 2194](#) (indoor tanning; minors; restricted use), which would prevent minors from using tanning devices, passed the House Committee on Health 7-1.
- [HB 2198](#) (committee; childhood experiences; effects; prevention), which establishes an Adverse Childhood Experiences Study Committee to evaluate prevention and treatment of adverse childhood experiences, has not been heard in the House Committee on Rules.
- [HB 2208](#) (inhalers; administration; schools; authorized entities), which increases authorities for schools to offer inhalers to students when permitted to do so by a physician, was referred to the House Committee on Health.
- [HB 2335](#) (tobacco possession; sale; age; signage), which is the "T21" proposal to prevent access to tobacco and vaping products before the age of 21), has not yet been referred to a committee.
- [SB 1001](#) (civil liability; minors; animals; vehicle), which provides civil liability protection for bystanders to intervene for the protection of children and animals, is ready for consideration from the full Senate.
- [SB 1080](#) (teenage drivers; communication devices prohibited), which prohibits a minor from using a wireless communication device while driving – except for emergencies, was amended and passed the Senate Committee on Transportation & Technology 6-1.

- [SB 1131](#) (schools; K-3 reading program), which would require the Arizona Department of Education to develop guidance for K-3 reading programs, passed the Senate Committee on Education 7-0.
- [SB 1133](#) (certified nurse midwives; nurse practitioners), which would allow the Board of Nursing to adopt rules for the certification of a certified nurse midwife, passed the Senate Committee on Health & Human Services 7-0.

Governor Ducey, Advocacy Groups Call for Support for Arizona Health Care Programs

Arizona's KidsCare program is not up for debate at the Arizona legislature this year, but it is in the news. As federal officials debate the repeal and replacement options for the Affordable Care Act, advocacy groups are calling for attention to the fact that the changes could eliminate funding available for KidsCare – a step that could leave [thousands of children](#) without healthcare in Arizona.

But KidsCare is just one program that could be impacted by a repeal of federal funds, and Governor Doug Ducey has submitted [a plan for Congressional action](#) that he believes would minimize the uncertainty around federal action. In a letter to U.S. House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, Ducey opposes an outright repeal of the Affordable Care Act and calls for a continuation of the federal subsidies that enable low-income Arizonans to purchase health insurance. The Governor does not support the Affordable Care Act, but acknowledged that Arizonans now have access to care they did not have before. His plan of action lays out a transition that he believes will “ensure that the rug is not pulled out from under people who are currently receiving coverage.”

The Governor's office is actively lobbying Congress to support the plan. Ducey's health policy advisor, Christina Corieri, [was in DC this week](#) to meet with Arizona delegates and other key political leaders to advocate for certainty in Arizona health care funding.

House Committee Approves Tanning Ban

Citing undeniable evidence of the connection between underage use of tanning beds and skin cancer, the House Committee on Health approved a proposal to ban the use of tanning beds for minors. The Committee Chair, Representative Heather Carter (R-Cave Creek), a longtime supporter of the ban, celebrated the chance to finally have a hearing to move the bill forward after years of discussion.

A variety of medical experts and public health advocates testified in support of the bill, citing numerous statistics about the danger associated with the use of tanning beds – especially before the age of 18. The bill was also supported by individuals who had experienced skin cancer as a result of their underage use of tanning facilities. One supporter summarized her testimony with the reminder, “There is a reason a tanning bed looks like a coffin.”

The Committee passed HB [2194](#) by a vote of 7-1. Representative Jay Lawrence (R-Scottsdale), who opposed the bill, agreed that the use of tanning facilities was dangerous but expressed his belief that the proposal was a violation of personal liberties. The bill now moves to the full House for consideration.

Narrowed Texting Ban Advances in Senate

Despite speculation that this might be the year for approval of a state ban on texting while driving, Senate leaders are instead advancing a proposal that focuses restrictions only on teenage drivers. [SB 1080](#), which prohibits teenage drivers from texting while driving while they have an instruction permit or during their first six months of driving, was approved on a 6-1 vote in the Senate Committee on Transportation & Technology this week.

Another proposal to implement a total ban on texting while driving did not receive a hearing. Senator Bob Worsley (R-Mesa, the Committee Chairman, said a full ban did not have enough support to pass the Senate, but he supported the ban for teenage drivers as an important step. “We’ll see how this goes, and maybe we can have a more expansive discussion next year.”

The bill’s sponsor, Senator Karen Fann (R-Prescott), said she also sees this step as a logical start to what will be an “inevitable” ban on all texting. (Arizona is one of only four states without some form of a ban on texting while driving.)

Individuals who have lost loved ones from accidents with texting drivers pleaded for more, and pledged to continue fighting for a stronger ban in Arizona.