

June 24, 2021

Contact: Jenny Guzman, Jenny@ProgressArizona.org, (928) 341-5411
Sandy Bahar, Sandy.Bahr@SierraClub.org, (602) 999-5790

Statement from Arizona Community Organizations on Anti-Ballot Measure Bill SCR1034

The Arizona House of Representatives is set to hear SCR1034 on the floor, which would give Arizona state legislators the ability to add amendments to any ballot measure that is found to contain unconstitutional language by the Arizona Supreme Court, or the U.S. Supreme Court. This would allow legislators to change ballot measures after they pass and go outside of the original intention of the ballot measure - putting that new language in the Constitution.

Arizona community organizations are committed to fighting SCR1034 and are asking all Arizona state legislators to oppose it.

“The ballot initiative process has provided the people of Arizona with a tool to change policies to create immediate change for their communities for more than 100 years. Voters from all sides of the political spectrum have exercised their constitutional right to put issues on the ballot. Now the legislature is trying to manipulate the rules with SCR1034. This is complete legislative overreach,” said Paulette Zinzun with Arizona Advocacy Network.

“When legislatures limit or block ballot measures with these kinds of bills, our elected officials are directly going against the will of the people and blocking the passage of laws that would help students, teachers, and our entire state. Ballot initiatives are our constitutional right. It is unjust and unconstitutional for the legislature to attempt to limit or take away from voters the power of direct democracy. What we are currently seeing with SCR 1034 is legislative overreach and reckless attempt to block a constitutionally protected tradition of Arizona voters,” said Jenny Guzman, Legislative Communications Director for Progress Arizona.

“SCR1034 is another GOP power grab aimed at moving power from the people to the Arizona legislature. This bill would allow Arizona legislators to amend any ballot measure that is found to contain unconstitutional language by the Arizona Supreme Court, or the U.S. Supreme Court—and go well beyond addressing that language. This would result in legislators being able to subvert the Voter Protection Act and make major amendments to ballot measures passed by the people, despite not being the originators

of the proposals,” said Sandy Bahr, Chapter Director for Sierra Club’s Grand Canyon (Arizona) Chapter.

“This year’s attacks on ballot initiatives are part of a troubling wider trend that seeks to undermine our democratic processes. Our public initiative process is a constitutional right which Arizona’s founders gave to citizens at statehood in 1912. Thanks to grassroots citizens’ ballot measures, Arizona voters banned leghold traps, snares, and poisons on public lands, cockfighting, and the cruel confinement of animals in factory farms. Legislators opposing initiative rights see our power at the ballot, they see our wins, and they are doubling-down on silencing our voices and the will of the people. We strongly urge all members of the Arizona House of Representatives to vote no on these reprehensible attempts to override the trusted, bipartisan ballot initiative process — simply for one party’s own political gain,” Karen Michael, Board Member, Humane Voters of Arizona