

ARIZONA BOARD OF REGENTS

2027 LEGISLATIVE POLICY POSITIONS

ABOUT US

The Arizona Board of Regents is the governing body for the state's public universities – Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University, and the University of Arizona – providing academic, operational and fiscal oversight.

OUR MISSION

The board is committed to ensuring access to public universities for Arizona students, promoting new discoveries through research, extending the benefits of university activities to all Arizonans, and maximizing the benefits of the state's investment in public higher education.

VISION

The Arizona Board of Regents seeks to provide leadership and a unifying voice on key higher education issues and to influence public policy through advocacy and initiatives founded upon evidence based research. Synergies from a unified higher education system will provide access and the highest quality education to Arizona's citizens.

The Arizona public universities provide bachelor's level and higher public education, advance human knowledge through scholarly research and creative expression, and serve key roles as major partners in statewide economic development and community advancement.

HISTORY

In 1864, the first Territorial Legislature authorized the establishment of the University of Arizona and provided for the management, direction, governance and control by a Board of Regents. The state colleges, one in Tempe and one in Flagstaff, were governed by a three-member State Board of Education that included the superintendent of public instruction and two members appointed by the governor.

In March of 1945, the governor signed House Bill 136 uniting the governing boards of the university and state colleges of Arizona. The authority of the Board of Regents expanded to include the Arizona State Teachers College at Tempe (since 1958 Arizona State University), and Arizona State Teachers College at Flagstaff (since 1966 Northern Arizona University).

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>
> -ABOR Vision Statement

BACKGROUND

As a creation of the Arizona Constitution, the Arizona board of Regents has the statutory responsibility to govern the state's public universities. Together, Arizona's public universities — Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University and the University of Arizona — educate over 233,000 students and employ nearly 35,000 people. Upon graduation, these students join the workforce with the skills, knowledge and innovative mindset that fuel Arizona's robust economy.

The university presidents and ABOR's executive director — together constituting the Enterprise Executive Committee (EEC) — are responsible for the management of the institutions under the jurisdiction of the board, as set forth in board policy and subject to applicable law.

The board and EEC work collaboratively with a myriad of policymakers and staff members to obtain and preserve the statutory authority and financial support for Arizona's public universities.

LEGISLATIVE POLICY POSITIONS

In support of ABOR's mission, vision, and promise to Arizona, this document outlines the board's objectives and policy positions for the 2027 legislative session. These adopted legislative policy positions serve as general guidance that authorizes the designated board and university staff to advocate for and take positions on legislation that secures sustainable revenue and protects board interests.

SECURING SUSTAINABLE REVENUE

The board is committed to providing an accessible and affordable high-quality education through its public universities. Universities are funded through a mix of revenue sources including tuition and fees; federal and state funding; grants, gifts and contracts; and entrepreneurial revenue. State General Fund revenues make up about 12% of university budgets.

ABOR SUPPORTS

- Enactment of its fiscal year 2028 budget request, including obtaining dedicated and sustainable long-term investments from the state, and enhancing federal funding across all areas.
- Fully funding statutorily required programs and existing tuition waivers.

ABOR OPPOSES

- Reductions in funding allocation from the State General Fund, Arizona State Lottery funds, Arizona State Land Trust funds, or TRIF.
- New tuition and fee waivers unless fully funded by the state.

- Legislation that would directly or indirectly substantially increase the cost of operating the universities.
- Legislation that would put at risk federal funding for university students, faculty or institutions.
- Limiting or removing ABOR's authority to allocate and expend tuition and fee revenue.
- Limiting the universities' ability to maximize the value of land and other capital assets within their portfolios.
- Limiting the types of financial transactions available to develop university lands.

ABOR MAY SUPPORT OR BE NEUTRAL

- Creation of new tuition waivers that are fully funded by the state.

PROTECTING BOARD INTEREST

The board has a constitutional and statutory obligation to oversee Arizona's public university system. This authorizes the board to maximize the accessibility and affordability of its universities and ensure the institutions are providing a high-quality education to meet workforce needs in a safe environment. Examples of this authority include board policy and rulemaking, tuition and fee setting, employment of presidents and staff, establishing academic requirements, and providing for the preservation of freedom of expression.

The board also plays a critical role for postsecondary attainment and improving overall college readiness for Arizona students. Success in these endeavors is supported by maintaining and enhancing the requisite authority.

ABOR SUPPORTS

- Initiatives that strengthen the coordination with other institutions to improve student mobility.

ABOR OPPOSES

- Eliminating or substantially altering the board's exemptions from state rulemaking, procurement, and personnel laws and rules.
- Limiting the board's authority to provide for the maintenance of public order on university campuses.
- Limiting the board's authority to establish academic requirements.
- Limiting the board's authority to provide for the preservation of freedom of expression and free and open inquiry.
- Limiting or removing the board's authority to govern university real assets.
- Limiting the board's employment authority.
- Legislation that would place at risk Arizona's public universities' ability to compete in intercollegiate sports.
- Restricting authority to offer or administer the Optional Retirement Program.