# YELLOW SHEET REPORT

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### ·NEWS NOTES AND GOSSIP·

#### THERE'S THE DOUG WE KNOW AND LOVE

Ducey today continued to refuse to accept the results of the election in Arizona and refused to condemn the conspiracies that Trump and other Republicans have spread. In his first conference in three tumultuous weeks – during which the president has claimed Arizona's vote was stolen and his supporters have flooded the Maricopa County elections office and made death threats on Hobbs – Ducey steadfastly refused to say that the conspiracies Trump and other Republicans are pushing are, indeed, conspiracies. He instead argued that there are legal challenges pending in the presidential race, and he'll respect the will of the voters after those play out. In fact, there's only one ongoing legal challenge from the president – it's a question of whether Maricopa County should audit 2 percent of vote centers (as it already has done – no discrepancies



were found) or two percent of precincts. Though Trump has frequently taken to Twitter to spread debunked conspiracies about Arizona – including SharpieGate and a debunked conspiracy about Dominion voting software – the president has not gone to court to claim fraud. In fact, when his lawyer, Kory Langhofer, was directly asked if the president was alleging fraud in a lawsuit about roughly 200 overvotes, he said no (<u>LINK</u>). Multiple Republican elected officials have debunked the SharpieGate conspiracy and Trump's own Cyber and Infrastructure Security Agency has debunked the Dominion conspiracy (<u>LINK</u>). While he attempted to straddle the line of saying he believes Arizona's election system is robust, Ducey refused to say he believed Arizona's election in court. "We are going to let the legal process play out," he said.

#### **MEANWHILE AT KATIE'S HOUSE**

Armed protesters went to Hobbs' home last night to chant "we are watching you" and shout expletives after Parler users doxed her and she started receiving death threats. The secretary of state was working late when she got a call from her husband saying protesters were at their house and that at least one was armed, she told our reporter. A neighbor called the non-emergency police line, and police showed up and cleared out the crowd from her condo complex, she said. Phoenix Police Chief Jeri Williams called to say she wants to put cameras in her condo complex, and the Dept of Public Safety has been monitoring Parler since activists released her home address (YS, 11/16). The harassment has also spread to her husband's work, she said, and his office is now receiving threatening calls attempting to get him fired. In a statement today, Hobbs shamed Republican leaders who have promoted election conspiracies or silently allowed them to spread. The statement didn't mention the protests at her home, but said she was prepared for attacks. "I have been a social worker for many years and can anticipate this reaction when certain people feel powerless and angry," she wrote, adding that the intimidation tactics won't stop her from doing her job. In the statement, she blasted the president and other elected officials who are perpetuating misinformation and casting doubt on the election results "in a manner that violates the oath of office they took." And she specifically called out Ducey. "Now, I am calling on other leaders in this state, including the governor whose deafening silence has contributed to the growing unrest, to stand up for the truth," she wrote. When asked directly today, Ducey condemned the threats, but refused to push back on the election conspiracies. Hobbs was not satisfied. "We would like him to denounce the threats and stand up for the integrity of our elections," she told our reporter via text.

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#### AMERICA IN 2020

Hoffman also received threats this year after lawmakers like Bowers and S Allen accused her of promoting radical sexualization of children (YS, 9/19/19) which snowballed into a full-blown internet conspiracy that she is a pedophile (YS, 8/10). Some of them were thinly veiled death threats saying they know where she lives and works, and are watching her. She told our reporter the threats and misinformation over her support for comprehensive sexual education in schools took a toll on her, and made her question whether politics in this era is a safe profession, especially for women, who regularly receive far more vitriolic rhetoric online than their male counterparts do. "I've always felt strongly about encouraging young women to run for office and be leaders of their communities," she said. "And in this year, in particular, I have really questioned if I should continue to do that, because I can't say with certainty that this is a safe career choice." While she still plans to seek a second



term in 2022, the death threats and barrage of online harassment also forced her to think about whether she wants to continue being an elected leader. "I worry about my own safety and have asked myself 'is it worth it?' because I was in Tucson when Gabby Giffords was shot and that is the true reality of politics," she told our reporter. Hoffman blames the escalation on Republican lawmakers who started spreading the baseless conspiracy, and said she only heard from two Republicans after the threats poured in – Andy Tobin, the Dept of Administration director, and Lisa Graham Keegan, the former Superintendent of Public Instruction. "Definitely no Governor Ducey," she said. "People in elected office should stand up for each other, even when we represent different parties. We have to earn public trust on a daily basis and if we're spreading misinformation, or remaining silent when these types of things come out, it gives the appearance of condoning the behavior," she said.

#### **GRACE, EVEN IN THE FACE OF DEFEAT**



After news outlets started calling Arizona for Biden, Senate Republicans sought to find a legal mechanism to give the state's electoral votes to Trump. Fann requested a legal opinion from Legislative Council about whether lawmakers could change how presidential electors are selected. In a Nov 6 response, first discovered by the *Republic's* Maria Polletta (LINK), a copy of which our reporter obtained today, general counsel Ken Behringer explained that such a move is impossible. The US Constitution allows states leeway in how they choose presidential electors – Legislatures can pick them, voters can pick them or states can pass other laws, like the Arizona law that requires chairs of state parties

to pick electors for their party's candidate. But Congress, not the states, has authority over when electors must be appointed, and Congress has set that date on the same day as election day. Nothing prevents the Legislature from changing state law moving forward to give lawmakers the authority to choose presidential electors for the 2024 election, but they can't retroactively appoint electors. "The legislature cannot change the 2020 election results through changing the statutory selection process for presidential electors," Behringer wrote.

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**HINDSIGHT IN 2020** 

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Even if lawmakers had been able to appoint their own electors, those electors would be bound to vote for Biden - and Republicans have Kern to thank for that. His Laws 2017, Chapter 94 (H2302: electoral college; electors; violation; classification) requires all presidential electors to cast their Electoral College votes for the candidate who receives the most votes in Arizona. If an elector votes for anyone else, they're no longer allowed to be a presidential elector, their vote doesn't count and the chairperson of the political party that picked the elector must choose a new one. Kern initially planned to make that a Class 3 felony, with a sentence of 3.5 years in prison and a \$150,000 fine. He was responding to a 2016 push from Democrats to keep Trump from being seated by preventing him from gaining 270 electoral votes. Ten "faithless electors" attempted to vote for candidates they



weren't pledged to in 2016, but three were stymied by their states' faithless elector laws. Hillary Clinton took more damage than Trump: three Washington electors pledged to her instead cast their ballots for former Republican Secretary of State Colin Powell, one Washington elector voted for Native American activist Faith Spotted Eagle and one Hawaii elector voted for Bernie Sanders. Trump lost two electoral votes in Texas as electors opted for John Kasich and Ron Paul. Prior to 2016, only two people had been faithless electors in the past 25 years. An elector from DC pledged to Al Gore and Joseph Lieberman in 2000 left her ballot blank to protest the district's lack of congressional representation, and a 2004 Minnesota elector pledged to John Kerry voted for "John Ewards" – a misspelling of Kerry's running mate's name – in an apparent accident.

#### **EVERY LAWMAKER SEES A CONGRESSMAN IN THE MIRROR**



Quezada, who will be termed out of the Senate in 2022, is once again hinting that he'll run for a higher office. On Sunday, he shared a tweet from someone who wanted him to run for a statewide office with a reminder that he's out of the Senate in 2022 and a GIF of Robert Downey Jr. suggestively saying "maybe" (LINK). Quezada first hinted that he would run for Congress in CD7 if Gallego ran for Senate (YS, 1/31/19), but sought a final state Senate term instead after Gallego decided against running. Earlier this year, he told our reporter he would

think about running in 2022 if the 10th Congressional District ends up in Glendale (YS, 1/2). While Quezada is the most vocal about his 2022 plans, he's far from the only returning lawmaker who will need to find a new job after 2022. Contreras is also term-limited in the Senate, while Andrade, Bolding, Bowers, Cobb, Espinoza, Fernandez, Finchem, Friese and Weninger won't be able to seek another term in the House. Cobb previously told our reporter she's thinking about a Congressional run in 2022, provided that wouldn't entail running a primary campaign against Gosar (YS, 9/16/19). Thoughts of swapping roles with seatmates in the other chamber are mostly on hold until the Independent Redistricting Commission draws its new maps, as no one can know what their new legislative district will look like.

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#### **EVERYONE IS CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC THIS TIME OF YEAR**

A new criminal justice committee in the House and the retirement of a formidable foe in the Senate have criminal justice advocates cautiously optimistic that 2021 will finally be the year they get reform measures passed into law. Bowers this morning announced that he was restoring a criminal justice reform committee that was first created for former lawmaker David Stringer in 2019, then cancelled after revelations that Stringer had been charged for child molestation in the early 1980s. Blackman took up the mantle as the chief Republican working on criminal justice reform and will lead the new committee. Caroline Isaacs, program director for the American Friends Service Committee, told our reporter she wants to see proof that



the committee will lead to new laws, and not just serve as a rerun of the ad hoc sentencing reform committee Blackman chaired in 2019 with largely the same group of members that didn't get anything concrete accomplished. "My fear is that this is a gesture on the part of leadership, it will be where good ideas go to die so the Legislature can claim that it is addressing criminal justice without actually putting any skin in the game," she said. "My hope is that the opposite is true." Isaacs said she hopes momentum around the Second Chances, Rehabilitation, and Public Safety act, a ballot initiative that ultimately didn't make the ballot because of legal challenges, will make Republican leaders realize they have to either pass substantial criminal justice reform measures now or face another ballot initiative in two years. In the upper chamber, E Farnsworth's has always swiftly killed any significant attempt to reform criminal justice. But Petersen will replace him as Senate Judiciary Committee chair and his vice chair will be Wendy Rogers, whose criminal justice policy priorities include harsher penalties for anyone who defaces monuments and punishments for cities that cut their police budgets (<u>YS, 10/14</u>).

#### PUTTING PROGRESSIVE HOPES ON KAREN



Progressive lobbyist Marilyn Rodriguez took a rosy view of the ability to pass criminal justice bills out of the Legislature, noting that, a few powerful detractors aside, both the House and the Senate have been fairly supportive in recent years. It sometimes took legislative maneuvers to get bills around obstacles like Farnsworth, but measures that have made it to the floor – such as Mesnard and Toma's 2019 S1334 (sentencing; repetitive offenders) – pass with overwhelming bipartisan support. Rodriguez said she's particularly thrilled that Toma and Fann, who have been vocal supporters of criminal justice reform,

are in leadership and well positioned to talk to Ducey about supporting those bills. "I'm hoping they're going to open up those conversations with him because they're kind of our best hope. Weirdly, from the perspective of a progressive given the landscape, that is the best possible outcome we could have hoped for," she said.

### ·PRESS RELEASES AND NEWS CLIPS·

#### Secretary Hobbs: 'I was prepared for these threats of violence and vitriol'

Arizona Secretary of State Katie Hobbs released this statement in response to ongoing and escalating threats of violence directed at her family and her office:

"The truth is, I was prepared for these threats of violence and vitriol. I have been a social worker for many years and can anticipate this reaction when certain people feel powerless and angry. These actions are utterly abhorrent, especially when directed at my family and my staff. They are a symptom of a deeper problem in our state and country – the consistent and systematic undermining of trust in each other and our democratic process. Arizonans deserve to know that elections are safe and secure.

"This does not excuse the perpetrators. Their continued intimidation tactics will not prevent me from performing the duties I swore an oath to do. Our democracy is tested constantly, it continues to prevail, and it will not falter under my watch.

"But there are those, including the president, members of Congress and other elected officials, who are perpetuating misinformation and are encouraging others to distrust the election results in a manner that violates the oath of office they took. It is well past time that they stop. Their words and actions have consequences.

"Now, I am calling on other leaders in this state, including the governor whose deafening silence has contributed to the growing unrest, to stand up for the truth. When facing unimaginable challenges this election year, Arizonans stepped up. More people are registered to vote in our state than ever before, election participation has been at historic highs, thousands answered the call to work at voting locations during a pandemic, and people made their voices heard.

"This should be a time for thanking voters and election workers for their incredible commitment during unprecedented challenges. In that spirit, I offer my gratitude and express my admiration for the Arizonans who inspire trust in our democracy."

#### Dear Maricopa County voters,

Members of the Board of Supervisors continue to hear from government leaders and the public about the integrity of Maricopa County elections. We want to assure you that proper steps have been taken to ensure a full and accurate count of all votes.

Here are the facts:

- The evidence overwhelmingly shows the system used in Maricopa County is accurate and provided voters with a reliable election. On Election Day, fewer than 200 ballots had an over vote on the presidential race out of more than 167,000 ballots cast.
- The Dominion tabulation equipment was vetted by a bipartisan, "Equipment Certification Advisory Committee" before the contract was finalized. As required by law (A.R.S 16-442), the committee tested the functionality and accuracy of tabulation equipment before it was used in any Arizona elections.
- The Dominion tabulation equipment met mandatory requirements during logic and accuracy testing before the Presidential Preference Election, the Primary Election and the General Election. And after each of these 2020 elections, the hand count audit showed the machines generated an accurate count. (See Fact Page)
- Last week, the Elections Department conducted the mandatory hand count of Election Day ballots from two percent of vote centers and 1 percent of Early Ballots as required by Arizona law and it yielded a 100 percent match to the results produced by the tabulation equipment. All three political parties participated in the hand count audit. This is a statistically significant sample of thousands of votes, which would have caught irregularities.
- There are triggers in Arizona law to require another hand count or even a recount in the case of a close contest. None of those thresholds have been met during the 2020 General Election.

More than 2 million ballots were cast in Maricopa County and there is no evidence of fraud or misconduct or malfunction. Board members listened to and considered many theories about the election results. We asked, and continue to ask critical questions of County staff and none of these theories have proven true or raised the possibility the outcome of the election would be different.

The Board is required to canvass the election by November 23, 2020 (A.R.S 16-642). It is time to dial back the rhetoric, rumors, and false claims. I appreciate the efforts of our elections staff who worked tirelessly to run this election during a pandemic. No matter how you voted, this election was administered with integrity, transparency and in accordance with state laws.

Thank you, Clint Hickman

Chairman, Maricopa County Board of Supervisors

### Arizona School Safety Task Force Releases Final Report and Model School Safety Plan

**PHOENIX, AZ** – After over one year of work, the School Safety Task Force, as convened by the Arizona Department of Education, is proud today to release their final report and model school safety plan. Despite the efforts of students involved with the Arizona chapter of March for Our Lives to pass House Bill 2597 in the 2019 legislature, the bill failed to pass. However, lack of legislative action did not end the students' vision for school safety. Instead, Superintendent of Public Instruction Kathy Hoffman partnered with March for Our Lives to create the first-ever statewide School Safety Task Force; a multi-disciplinary group convened to reframe school safety as a multi-pronged approach to safety, health and violence.

"As an educator, I've consistently seen the value and importance of listening to our students and bringing their voices into decision making," said Superintendent Hoffman. "I encourage all to read this report than reflect on the ways that student voices can be elevated into your conversations about school climate and safety, so that all students can feel a sense of safety and belonging on our campuses."

"By creating this School Safety manual, it is our hope that all school districts in Arizona will have more direction and equal access to resources that will equate to an emotionally safe campus for all students," said Julie Kent-Partridge, MSW, CSSW at Washington Elementary School District, "Our students are the future leaders of America and keeping them emotionally safe while they are in public education so they can access academics was the ultimate goal of this task force. Our team worked hard and was amazing – I feel blessed to be part of this experience!"

One major goal of the School Safety Task Force was to create an outline of recommended legislative changes. The following ideas should be considered by lawmakers in the 2021 legislative session:

• Provide sustainable funding for the ADE to provide ongoing training on the determinants of the model school safety plan.

• Repeal legislation prohibiting statewide collection of school disciplinary data.

• Provide sustainable funding for the ADE for a full-time position to establish a vetting process for resources and to create and keep current a clearinghouse of resources on its website.

• Provide sustainable funding to create and implement a statewide tip line for public and charter schools. Additionally, students made recommendations to both lawmakers and school leaders, including:

- · Providing funds for mental health programs and positions, like mental health counselors and social workers
- · School leaders and educators should come from and reflect the school community
- · Implement restorative justice programs and centers in schools
- · Implement culturally sensitive and anti-racist curriculum
- · Consider alternatives to negative reinforcement systems (i.e. detention and suspension)

"We are very excited and grateful to have had the opportunity to work with the Department of Education and Superintendent Hoffman over the last year," said Maya Zuckerberg, Political Co-Director of March for Our Lives Arizona. "The work and research done on this committee will undoubtedly prove to help keep our students and school communities safe, and ensure that as a state, we really are putting student's wellbeing first."

Since launching the School Safety Task Force, our communities have gone through so much, including the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and nationwide protests for racial justice. These two events influenced the work of the Task Force because of their transformative effect on our students and schools. Read the Final Report and Model School Safety Plan here: <u>https://www.azed.gov/wellness/school-safety-task-force</u>

## LD6 State Representative Walt Blackman Calls for Election Audit State Wide

**Phoenix, AZ- November 16, 2020-** LD6 State House Representative Walt Blackman sent a letter to Arizona's Auditor General's Office requesting a comprehensive audit of every precinct in every county in the state of Arizona

concerning the 2020 presidential election as well as other statewide elections. "A comprehensive audit is common sense. It's important that we audit our vote counts to ensure that we have integrity in our elections. If we have a small discrepancy with even one voting machine it could drastically change the outcome of an election. At minimum, we need to have the Auditor General's office take a look at what is out there and what was potentially affected by the use of Dominion Voting Machines and the software that was used. By not looking into the potential of voter fraud in our state, we are neglecting to do our jobs as representatives and leaders of the people. If there's nothing wrong, then everyone can be certain we had a good election. Unless this audit happens, there will always be doubt in the minds of the electorate of whether our elections are fair or not. The least we can do is do nothing."

Representative Blackman is particularly interested in information regarding the voting machines and what software that was used in each precinct.

#### Media Advisory: Post Election Logic and Accuracy Test on Nov. 18

**November 17, 2020** (Phoenix) — The Maricopa County Elections Department is conducting a post-election logic and accuracy test for the General Election on Wednesday, November 18 at 10 a.m.

Logic and accuracy tests are open to the public and performed before and after every election to verify the accuracy of the county's tabulation equipment and accessible voting devices.

When: Wednesday, November 18 at 10 a.m.

Where: The public can view the test during the live stream at Maricopa.Vote.

**Media Information**: Media may record the test through the viewing window at the Elections Department at 510 S. 3rd Ave. in Phoenix. Masks and temperature checks are required.

**About the test**: A post-election logic and accuracy (L&A) test of tabulation equipment is standard practice in Maricopa County and required by law.

Using the same test ballots, the Elections Department compares the results of the pre- and post-election L&A to ensure no changes were made to any software throughout the election. It is the final step to verify the accuracy of election results.

The Maricopa County Board of Supervisors and the Elections Department have invited the Arizona Secretary of State's Office to also conduct a post L&A of Maricopa County tabulation equipment. This added test will provide another independent evaluation of the equipment used to tabulate and report results for the November 3, 2020 General Election.

The county invited representatives of all three political parties to attend this test.

**About 2020 General Election**: More than 2 million Maricopa County voters participated in the General Election, an 80.51% turnout of the nearly 2.6 million eligible voters.

See results <u>here</u>.

Read voting equipment facts here.

#### Indigenous Lawmakers, County Supervisors Propose Partnership to Push Native & Rural Priorities

**PHOENIX** – Rep. Arlando Teller and Coconino County Board of Supervisors Vice-Chair Lena Fowler are calling for the Arizona Legislature's Indigenous Peoples Caucus to work cooperatively with the Indigenous Elected County Supervisors – led by Fowler – to better address infrastructure needs, education, water and response for COVID-19 in tribal and rural communities.

Fowler has long had a vision for a unified local, state and federal voice representing and advocating for Tribal and rural communities. Now Teller is working with her to make it happen, beginning in Arizona.

"People need to know we're talking about collaboration and partnership – it takes a lot of organization to band together to get things done," Fowler said. "This also helps rural Arizona and other rural communities. Pretty much all native representatives serve rural communities, and rural and native issues are pretty much aligned. It's healthcare, water, infrastructure, broadband, the need for better education, it's all there."

Currently Fowler is the President of the National Association of Native County Leaders and Allies, a group of about a dozen Indigenous county supervisors, mostly from the Southwest and Hawaii, but sees much room for growth and formal organization. Teller said he will work with his fellow six-member Indigenous Peoples Caucus chaired by Sen. Sally Ann Gonzales, D-Tucson, to formalize a relationship with Fowler's organization.

"Supervisor Fowler and I both agree that the Indigenous People's Caucus and the Indigenous County Supervisors need to do a better job in working closely together in voicing issues and concerns in the communities they serve," said Teller, D-Chinle. "The ultimate goal is to bring in Indigenous Congressional members like Deb Haaland in New Mexico and Sharice Davids in Kansas to meet with us and build that bridge. This effort will help better issues like pandemic relief, transportation, public safety and economic development."

# ADVISORY: Mark Kelly to Join Transition Team, State Leaders for COVID-19 Briefing

This Thursday, U.S. Senator-elect Mark Kelly will be joined by members of his transition team and Arizona public health experts to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on Arizonans and our economy and talk about how Mark can work with local leaders to ensure communities get the resources they need in this crisis.

Last week, Sen.-elect Kelly announced the formation of a <u>bipartisan transition team</u> that consists of a broad coalition of leaders from across the state with expertise on key issues such as defense, business, water, education, public health, tribal communities, veterans, labor, and border communities.

On the campaign trail, Kelly consistently <u>called on Republicans and Democrats in Washington</u> to pass a bipartisan coronavirus relief bill. He held numerous virtual roundtable conversations to bring attention to the pressing need for <u>extending unemployment benefits</u>, better access to health care for <u>seniors</u>, and <u>funding workforce development</u> <u>programs</u> to help Arizona workers get through this pandemic.

Please let me know if you're able to join so that you can receive the Zoom info or if you're unable to but would like to receive b-roll and stills.

#### Details

#### **COVID-19 Briefing with Mark Kelly**

WHEN: Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. AZ

**WHAT:** Virtual COVID-19 briefing with Mark Kelly, transition team, and Arizona leaders. **WHO:** 

- Mark Kelly, U.S. Senator-elect
- Dr. Joe Gerald, Associate Professor and Program Director, Public Health Policy & Management at University of Arizona
- Ann-Marie Alameddin, President & CEO of AZHHA
- Coral Evans, Mayor of Flagstaff
- Neil Giuliano, President/CEO Greater Phoenix Leadership
- Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Ted Maxwell, President & CEO, Southern Arizona Leadership Council
- Luis Heredia, Executive Director of Arizona Education Association
- Tom Belshe, Executive Director League of Arizona Cities and Towns

Press must RSVP to press@markkelly.com.

#### House Passes Stanton-Backed Bill to Provide Emergency Relief to Tribal Nations After Inaction by Trump Administration

PHOENIX— The U.S. House of Representatives today passed a bill cosponsored by Rep. Greg Stanton that will significantly help tribal nations with the financial burden of fighting COVID-19.

The FEMA Assistance Relief Act of 2020, H.R. 8266, eases COVID-19-related financial burdens on state, local, and tribal governments by increasing the federal cost share of FEMA assistance from 75 to 100 percent. Stanton repeatedly <u>pushed</u> for the cost share adjustment in the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and was an original cosponsor of the bill after the Trump Administration refused to take action on the issue. In April, Stanton and more than 175 of his House colleagues <u>urged</u> the Trump Administration to eliminate the non-Federal cost share, noting the severity and magnitude of the crisis. Stanton also <u>echoed</u> Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez's request that the Administration waive the local cost share to help the Nation fight the pandemic, which the administration had the authority to do on its own without congressional approval. Stanton's request went ignored by the White House.

"Tribal communities, including the Navajo Nation, have been among the hardest hit by COVID-19. As cases surge to record levels across the country, the federal government has a duty to leverage the full weight of its resources to help tribal communities battle this pandemic," Stanton said. "After months of inaction by this administration, I'm proud the House has taken this long-overdue step and I hope the Senate acts swiftly to pass this life-saving legislation." The bill now heads to the Senate.

Full text of the bill is available here.

#### McSally to Deliver Final Floor Speech

U.S. SENATE – TODAY, U.S. Senator Martha McSally (R-AZ) will speak on the Senate floor for the final time to commemorate her work in the upper chamber.

Her speech will start at approximately **1:45pm AZ/3:45pm ET**. Watch <u>HERE</u>.



"I was in Tucson when Gabby Giffords was shot and that is the true reality of politics."

- Hoffman, on the danger politicians face and her own experiences with threats and conspiracies