

YELLOW SHEET REPORT

NEWS NOTES AND GOSSIP

SKINNY BUDGET OR BUST!

After a few brief hours of optimism Thursday, budget negotiations fell apart, leaving lawmakers increasingly eyeing the possibility of passing a skinny budget next week. “We’ll try again, but I’m getting closer to a ‘skinny’ [budget],” Bowers said after the House adjourned for the week yesterday afternoon. Bowers said he would put up a skinny budget next week if a deal doesn’t materialize, though the Senate is holding out hope for a full budget before the next fiscal year starts. Cobb lambasted her holdout colleagues and the League of Arizona Cities and Towns as “greedy” and had a pessimistic view of negotiations as she held the threat of a skinny budget over lawmakers’ heads. “There are a lot of people that worked very hard to be able to spend revenue, as well as have a tax break with our taxpayers, and to throw that all out because somebody is greedy is a travesty. It really is,” she said. “It’s a sad state of affairs. You can’t negotiate in that way. And we’re down to the last days, and I said this back in May, we don’t get a budget by mid-May, it’s going to be July before we get a budget. And here we sit, just two weeks out, less than two weeks.” Cobb said if they must pass a “skinny” budget, she prefers sitting on the extra money and coming back next year to decide what to do with it. “I think that we’ve had a long session,” she said. “We can’t come to an agreement, that’s our fault, and we just need to sit on it and start working again next year.” However, Mesnard still held out hope that lawmakers could pass a skinny budget then come back in a special session to enact tax cuts. “Just because you pass a skinny budget doesn’t mean you can’t then come back and add stuff during the fiscal year,” he said. That’s especially true of the tax package because most of it would take effect on Jan 1 and the Legislature could potentially have months left to fine-tune details.



KELLY DOESN'T HAVE ANYTHING ELSE TO DO

Meanwhile, Townsend is finding new reasons to keep the Legislature in session for the foreseeable future, saying on top of her demand that lawmakers wait for the Maricopa County audit and do a new audit of Prop 208, she now wants lawmakers to stay in session until Ducey’s emergency declaration ends. (Prop 208, it should be noted, cruised to victory by a margin of 113,000 votes, compared to the fewer than 11,000 votes that carried Biden to victory.) Townsend said she doesn’t think it’s appropriate for the Legislature to go home until Ducey ends his Covid state of emergency – she has opposed the state of emergency for more than a year and was one of the leading voices calling for it to be lifted and for the Legislature to reconvene last year, and she said the emergency makes even less sense now. “We’re still in a state of emergency but we have people going to sporting events,” she said. Ending the state of emergency was a top priority for a number of lawmakers, including Townsend, at the start of the session, and Ugenti-Rita dedicated one whole Senate Government Committee meeting to bills offering slightly different approaches to ending the emergency. Ugenti-Rita’s S1084 (state of emergency; automatic termination), which the Senate decided was the best vehicle for changing laws related to the state of emergency, has yet to make it to the floor in the House.

DELICIOUS IS THE RIGHT WORD, RUSTY

The “Patriot Party” filed zero valid signatures in its recall against Bowers, after being ironically stymied by an election integrity provision inspired by the successful recall of former Senate President Russell Pearce – and Bowers isn’t even trying to hide his schadenfreude. “Patriot Party” leaders (it’s not an actual party) filed 2,040 petition sheets with about 24,500 signatures, a little more than 22,331 valid signatures that would have been needed to trigger the recall. However, none of the petition sheets had a date-stamped application or a serial number attached to them, which is required under a Pearce-inspired law, so none of the signatures were valid, according to State Elections Director Sambo “Bo” Dul. “After the last recall that was of note in my area, that particular group of people really wanted to tighten up the recall statutes, which was done, and this was the result, and I find an irony in that I can tell you,” Bowers said. “It’s delicious.” The speaker was clearly in high spirits as he joked to the *Republic* that he should ask for an audit of the signatures. “There could be bamboo in those [signature] papers, there could be blue Sharpies,” he said ([LINK](#)).



THIS IS WHY YOU DON’T EMPOWER THE WEIRDOS



The recall organizers had called Bowers a pedophile and tried to intimidate him and his family by organizing armed protesters at his home, and Bowers is mulling legal action against them. Bowers told our reporter he is tempted to take some action against some people who “said horrible, horrible things about me and members of my family,” but added, “We’ll wait till I’m ready.” “These are very cruel, mean, angry, disrespectful, deceitful people,” Bowers said. “It was all intimidation, saying I was a pedophile, I wanted boys to have sex with boys. And when they came to my house, the Three Percenters were there with them. This guy had a gun jammed in his pants, screaming out to my neighbors that I’m an effing

pedophile. So, if you’re asking that I would rather avoid them, yes, I’m glad it happened.” To nobody’s surprise, the failed recall had some prominent “Stop the Steal” supporters. The Patriot Party said in a statement Thursday after turning in the petitions that the recall effort had received “crucial help” from Tomi Collins, executive director of the pro-Trump group America Restored. Collins, the statement said, in turn enlisted the aid of former Trump lawyer of “release the Kraken” fame Sidney Powell and My Pillow founder and CEO Mike Lindell, both of whom have been active in spreading conspiracy theories about the results of the 2020 election and supporting attempts to overturn it. Lindell declared support for it in a phone call that was publicly released in mid-May, and Powell promoted the recall on her Telegram channel. “Rep. Bowers is responsible for not protecting Arizona from Election Fraud, allowing Governor Ducey to act as a tyrant, and his desire to lessen the punishment for sexual predators,” the statement said. After receiving the news that the recall won’t make the ballot, the party tweeted “the matter has been turned over to our attorneys, no further comment will be provided at this time.”

WE GET IT – SOME OF OUR BEST FRIENDS ARE NUTJOBS, TOO

Cyber Ninjas CEO Doug Logan is a lovely person who just happens to be totally nuts, a longtime friend told *CNN* as the network attempted to investigate the roots of the previously low-profile IT firm from Florida. *CNN* reporters took a trip to Sarasota, Florida, to track down his legal department – which ended up being a rented mailbox at a UPS Store. The Sarasota business address for his company was sold last December and is vacant, according to the report ([LINK](#)) and every extension in his company phone line is redirected to Logan’s mailbox. His move into the limelight of Arizona’s partisan audit worries his friends. “It’s hard to say anything bad about the



guy. He’s a lovely person. He’s just nuts now,” Tony Summerlin, Logan’s friend of 15 years, told *CNN*, adding that before the audit, they’d never had a political conversation. Another friend told *CNN* he was smart and competent in cyber security but “politically naive.” “Doug may not have thought it all the way through,” she said. Logan has been cagey with the media from the beginning – he spoke publicly about the audit once at an April press conference where he declined to answer key questions about funding and his own biases ([YS, 4/23](#)). Logan’s company has no experience doing election audits, and Logan himself espoused Stop the Steal conspiracies on Twitter before deleting his account ([YS, 3/31](#)). Shortly after the election, Logan tweeted at Ron Watkins, who is speculated to be “Q” or a strong proponent of the QAnon conspiracies, asking to chat and looking for “original source documents” ([LINK](#)). He also appears to have narrated a trailer for a film about the Arizona audit from former Overstock CEO and election conspiracy theorist Patrick Bryne. After the similarity of Logan’s voice was pointed out on Twitter, the voiceover was altered before the whole video was ultimately removed by YouTube for violating terms of service.

DONATE A PLANE TICKET AND WE’LL GO STAKE OUT THE CABIN



As part of *CNN*’s ongoing investigation into the audit, it sent reporters to Montana to search for the election data allegedly held in a secure lab there, but found that lab is likely just a cabin owned by Cyber Ninjas’ subcontractor CyFIR’s CEO Ben Cotton. *CNN* reporter Gary Tuchman went to the site and shot video overhead showing a cabin and a few other structures on the property both listed as Cotton’s residence and as the address for his other company, CyTech Services ([LINK](#)). The revelation that Cotton drove Arizona election data to the Montana wilderness for some sort of unspecified analysis was first reported two weeks ago by *The Arizona Republic*’s Jen Fifield ([LINK](#)). Senate liaison Ken Bennett

told *The Republic* that Cotton made copies of the county’s election server and other data before taking it to a “secure lab” near Bigfork, Montana. *CNN*’s aerial view showed a barn, possibly, and perhaps some trailers but no people. Bennett told Fifield no one from the Senate was overseeing the activities in Montana. Standing on the edge of the property, Tuchman said he’d received no response to inquiries to Cotton. “Is this the secure, powerful laboratory? Is Arizona voting data inside that cabin?” Tuchman asked. “We just don’t know. But it could be.”

HE'LL DO FOR AZLEG WHAT HE DID FOR TRUMP: NOTHING

After getting trounced by Ugenti-Rita in the 2020 GOP primary, lawyer Alex Kolodin is again running for the Legislature, this time for the vacant LD23 House seat as Kavanagh moves to replace Ugenti-Rita in the Senate. In an email announcement yesterday, the “proven champion for transparency, accountability, and accessibility” took shots at his would-be seatmates even though he’s running for an open seat. “[LD23 voters] are frustrated that they put people in office to represent them and then those people seem to almost go out of their way not to fight for them,” he wrote (he lost his primary challenge to Ugenti-Rita by a more than 60-40 margin). The email blast notes that Kolodin “has been involved in some of Arizona’s biggest election integrity cases,” but doesn’t mention that he’s lost them all, including his conspiracy-based Sharpiegate and Kraken lawsuits – in the latter he claimed Biden’s team “engaged in the systemic adaptation of old-fashioned ‘ballot-stuffing’” ([YS, 12/2/20](#)). (In fact, it claims he’s been involved in election integrity since 2014, a bizarre claim since his 2014 suit was actually against former Maricopa County Republican Party chairman AJ LaFaro on behalf of a progressive activist and ballot-harvester Ben Marin ([YS, 10/29/14](#)).) He has also represented AZGOP, Finchem and former lawmaker Anthony Kern, and Cyber Ninjas, briefly, before being abruptly fired during oral arguments in the Democratic Party’s lawsuit against the Senate and Cyber Ninjas in favor of an attorney who wasn’t even ready to argue the case ([YS, 4/28](#)). Several local attorneys filed complaints with the State Bar in December against Kolodin and other lawyers involved in the “Stop the Steal” efforts, accusing them of filing frivolous lawsuits. As of May, the complaint against Kolodin was still being investigated even though several other similar complaints against other Republican attorneys had already been dismissed ([YS, 5/4](#)). (An update wasn’t immediately available by our deadline.) “As an attorney, I’ve jumped into some of the most controversial fights at great personal risk. I will bring that same fight and my legal expertise to the Arizona legislature to transform conservative intent into lasting results,” he wrote. In an interview on “The Seth Leibsohn Show” announcing his candidacy ([LINK](#)), Kolodin also drew on his spotty courtroom record, saying he feels he had “done all I can in the courtroom” and wants to bring his skillset to the Legislature. Republican attorney Jan Dubauskas had previously filed to run for the House ([YS, 6/1](#)) but has since filed a statement of interest for the Senate, challenging Kavanagh ([LINK](#)).



·WAKE UP CALL·

[Kelly makes bid to help rural Arizona communities](#)

Arizona Capitol Times

U.S. Sen. Mark Kelly has teamed up with Republican Sen. John Thune of South Dakota to introduce legislation to stop a statistical change that could affect rural communities’ access to federal funds.

[Special session yields \\$100M package for wildfires](#)

Arizona Capitol Times

Arizona lawmakers ended a three-day special session by passing a \$100 million bill on June 17 to help people affected by wildfires.

[Some lawmakers question need for special session](#)

Arizona Capitol Times

A bill moratorium and a budget stalemate meant the House and Senate weren't conducting any real business before Gov. Doug Ducey called a special session – so why call one?

[First case of highly transmissible Delta variant reaches Tucson area](#)

Arizona Daily Star

Health experts are more concerned about the Delta variants than other variants in Arizona, but they have yet to sound the alarm.

[Cook nears win on tax cut changes](#)

Associated Press

A pair of Republican Arizona lawmakers who objected to a \$1.9 billion tax cut in a \$12.8 billion GOP budget deal were close Thursday to winning major concessions that would secure their support for the spending plan before the whole deal came to a halt over the tax cut's effects on city revenue.

[Heat grounds aircraft over Telegraph Fire](#)

Florence Reminder-Blade Tribune

The temperature was so high Wednesday afternoon that aircraft fighting the Telegraph Fire south of Superior were grounded and crews using dozers to scrape firelines were halted.

[Auditors promised to screen workers, but QAnon promoters and Capitol rioters were hired](#)

Arizona Mirror

The Arizona election audit has employed a failed candidate who has espoused QAnon beliefs and a man who was at the Jan. 6 U.S. Capitol riot of Donald Trump supporters who tried, but failed, to overturn the election.

[DACA recipients, families and advocates will push for permanent immigration status](#)

Arizona Mirror

Local and national immigrant rights groups made a promise to mark the 9th anniversary of the federal program benefiting thousands of immigrants who arrived in the country as children: Those young people who benefit from Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals won't be celebrating the program's 10th anniversary.

[Katie Hobbs and Kyrsten Sinema Illustrate a Voting Rights Divide](#)

New York Times

Ms. Hobbs, the Arizona secretary of state, saw her star rise as she fought Republicans' election falsehoods. Senator Kyrsten Sinema, a fellow Democrat, insists on a bipartisan approach to voting rights.

[Gov. Doug Ducey is misusing his COVID-19 emergency power. Time to end it](#)

Arizona Republic (Opinion, Robert Robb)

Ducey is using his emergency authority not to take action to protect public health, but to prevent others, such as ASU, from doing so. That's over the top.

[What I learned from my dad: Be gentle, go easy, listen and don't preach](#)

Arizona Republic (Op-ed, Girish Rishi)

As we celebrate fathers, it's important to reflect on the memories and traits that my dad left me. They still resonate, years after his passing.

[Liberal clash over Juneteenth is predictable and laughable. We can walk and chew gum](#)

Arizona Republic (Opinion, Greg Moore)

Suggesting that this is nothing more than performative justice dismisses the power of collective political action. Let's take the win and strategize for more.

·PRESS RELEASES·

Governor Ducey Signs \$100 Million Bipartisan Wildfire Relief Package

PHOENIX — Governor Doug Ducey today signed a bipartisan relief package to support firefighters and safety officials as they battle wildfires, ensure Arizona communities have the resources necessary for post-fire disasters such as flooding and reduce the risk from future wildfires.

The \$100 million package passed with strong bipartisan support during a legislative special session called by the Governor after a visit to the Telegraph and Mescal Fires last week.

“We are in the midst of another catastrophic wildfire season, and it’s clear that we need to do more to fight these wildfires,” said Governor Ducey. “Many Arizona communities have already felt the impacts of this year’s wildfire season — people and pets have been displaced, homes have burned down, swaths of land have been decimated. I’m grateful that we were able to quickly come together in a bipartisan manner for the safety and protection of our communities. My thanks goes to our first responders working tirelessly to combat these fires, local and state agency leaders for their leadership during this time, and the legislators who worked across the aisle to get this bill passed.” The wildfire relief package was led by a bipartisan group of legislators representing both rural and urban Arizona, including House Speaker Rusty Bowers, Representative Gail Griffin, Representative David Cook, House Minority Leader Reginald Bolding, Senate President Karen Fann, Senate President Pro Tem Vince Leach, Senator Sine Kerr and Senate Minority Leader Rebecca Rios.

House Bill 2001 includes:

- \$24.6 million for a partnership between the Department of Forest and Fire Management and the Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation and Reentry to reduce wildfire risk to Arizona communities by removing fire-prone vegetation; and
- \$75 million for fire suppression efforts, recovery efforts including post-fire floods, economic assistance for those displaced, and assistance to landowners for emergency repairs to infrastructure damaged by wildfires.

“Thank you, Governor, for allowing us to work together, and thank you, Minority Leader Bolding and Leader Rios, for your help on an issue where we can come together for a common goal,” House Speaker Rusty Bowers said.

“People who aren’t Republicans or Democrats – they’re just our friends and people.”

“I look forward to partnering with my colleagues on continuing bipartisan success because wildfires don’t care which party you belong to,” said Senator Sine Kerr, who introduced House Bill 2001’s mirror legislation in the Senate.

Arizona is currently in the midst of fire season, having already experienced 918 wildfires burning over 245,000 acres this year. The Telegraph Fire visited by the Governor last week is currently the sixth-largest wildfire in state history.

“There is no question that there was an enormous need to dedicate as many resources as possible to fight the currently active wildfires as well as to prevent future ones from occurring,” Senate Minority Leader Rebecca Rios said. “I applaud the governor for calling a special session to address this extraordinary wildfire season. This was clearly a major issue that needed immediate attention, and I’m grateful for Governor Ducey’s action in bringing bipartisan leadership to work together to address this critical need.”

“We must do what we are doing today to react to this emergency, but we must also do everything in our power to mitigate the crisis for future generations – and we must do that together,” House Minority Leader Reginald Bolding said. “Thank you again, Governor Ducey. My colleagues in both the Republican caucus and our caucus stand ready to work together and ready to move forward.”

The Governor was also joined by Department of Forestry and Fire Management Director David Tenney, Department of Emergency and Military Affairs Director and Adjutant General Kerry Muehlenbeck and Gila County Supervisor Steve Christensen.

“I’d like to thank the Governor for calling this special session on behalf of Gila County and rural Arizona,” said Gila County Supervisor Steve Christensen. “The leadership in Gila County says thank you for being an advocate for Arizona. I’d like to extend my thanks to the Legislature and their willingness to work in a bipartisan way.”

On June 9, the Governor issued two Declarations of Emergency in response to the Telegraph and Mescal Fires in Pinal and Gila Counties. The orders made up to \$400,000 available for response efforts, and followed a request to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for a Fire Management Assistance Grant on June 6.

In March, the Governor signed Senate Bill 1442 to prevent wildfires by allowing for additional partnerships to employ Arizona inmates to clear forests of debris. The legislation aligns with the Arizona Healthy Forest Initiative proposed in the Governor’s budget which builds on proven methods to protect communities, while engaging individuals in state correctional facilities to equip them with new skills and reduce recidivism.

View House Bill 2001 [HERE](#).

View the Governor's remarks [HERE](#).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: joanna@theresolute.group

SCOTTSDALE, ARIZ. - Alex Kolodin, a proven champion for transparency, accountability, and accessibility, announced yesterday his decision to run for a seat in the Arizona House of Representatives.

Kolodin’s announcement follows many requests he has received from residents of LD23, seeking a candidate

committed to fairness, freedom, and fiscal responsibility.

Kolodin, founder of the Kolodin Law Group, has proven that no matter how hot it gets, he will “never back down for Arizona.”

“The people of my district are looking for leadership that will really fight for them, that will look for solutions, not excuses. They are frustrated that they put people in office to represent them and then those people seem to almost go out of their way not to fight for them.”

As an attorney, Alex began fighting in court for election integrity in 2014 and has been involved in some of Arizona’s biggest election integrity cases and the defense of Arizona’s audit. Most recently, he pushed back on the Biden administration’s overreach in Scottsdale around the ICE hotel conversion.

“Arizona faces some worthy fights,” said Kolodin. “Will we become California? How will we protect our state against open border policies? Will our leaders stand for our freedoms despite increasing pressure from the well-financed left or cave and undermine them? Will Arizona businesses recover from government-imposed lockdowns? Will Arizona continue to lead the nation for school options? Will we have the water resources we need for the decades to come? The direction we take will depend on our leadership.”

For Kolodin, the future of the state - and country - is personal. “I just had a son. I want the best for him. I’m also a former history teacher. I know how republics fall - slowly, then all at once. Will my son have a free republic to grow up in? My reason for fighting just got stronger.”

Kolodin announced a comprehensive platform focused on free and fair elections, secure borders, safe communities, constitutional freedoms, lower taxes, quality education, and a stable water supply.

“I never back down. From the time I was a kid, I’ve been drawn to challenges. I like a worthy fight,” Kolodin reminisced. “As an attorney, I’ve jumped into some of the most controversial fights at great personal risk. I will bring that same fight and my legal expertise to the Arizona legislature to transform conservative intent into lasting results.”

Alex is a Scottsdale resident, husband, and brand-new father.

To learn more about Alex Kolodin, visit AlexforAZ.com.

Congressman Andy Biggs Reintroduces the LIST Act of 2021

WASHINGTON, D.C. - On Thursday, Congressman Andy Biggs reintroduced the Less Imprecision in Species Treatment (LIST) Act, H.R. 3973, which authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to de-list species from the endangered species list when there is an objective, measurable, and scientific study demonstrating a species has recovered. It also penalizes those who intentionally submit false or fraudulent data in order to cause a species listing.

“The Endangered Species Act (ESA) was created to protect and restore species and their habitats, however, special interests and onerous delisting regulations have harmed western priorities and worsened the health of ecosystems along the way,” said **Congressman Andy Biggs**. *“ESA regulations have done more to infringe on private property and states’ rights than they have done protecting and recovering endangered species. My bill does not eliminate protections for truly endangered species. Rather, it allows the federal government to focus resources on species actually in danger of extinction.”*

You can read the full bill text [here](#).

Senator Mark Kelly To Deliver Commencement Address at Alma Mater, U.S. Merchant Marine Academy

On Saturday, June 19th, U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) alumnus and Arizona Senator Mark Kelly will deliver a commencement address to the class of 2021 at Tomb Memorial Field in Kings Point, New York. The 85th Commencement will be livestreamed to those interested in viewing.

For a livestream link, RSVP to press@kelly.senate.gov.

Senator Kelly received a Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering and Nautical Science from the United States Merchant Marine Academy, graduating with highest honors in 1986. Kelly has experience as a combat pilot and test pilot, logging more than 6,000 hours in more than 50 different aircraft, completing 375 carrier landings. Kelly also flew 39 combat missions over Iraq and Kuwait during Operation Desert Storm.

Sen. Kelly To Deliver Remarks at USMMA Commencement

When: June 19, 2021, 9:00 am EST

Where: Tomb Memorial Field, USMMA Campus, Kings Point, New York

How to watch: RSVP to press@kelly.senate.gov for livestream link

“QUOTE OF THE DAY”

“It’s delicious.”

- *Bowers, on the irony of the recall against him failing because of an election integrity law*