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INVEST IN AZ REFERENDA CERTIFIED, PROP 307 NOW ON THE 2022 BALLOT

With failed leadership at the legislature, citizen referendum measure is headed to the ballot – seeking a NO vote on a recently passed bill with massive tax breaks for the wealthy and hundreds of millions in cuts to state revenues affecting infrastructure, public safety, and education.

(PHOENIX) – Today, the Arizona Secretary of State certified the Invest in Arizona referendum, officially qualifying it for the 2022 state-wide ballot as Prop 307. The question that will be put to voters next November will decide the fate of Senate Bill 1828, a massive tax giveaway for the wealthy passed by a razor-thin majority of legislators and the Governor this year.

This referendum effort is the latest in the ongoing battle over tax breaks for the wealthy in Arizona, putting the demands of voters at odds with the actions of state leaders. Last year, 1.7 million Arizona voters passed Prop 208 - a historic initiative that would raise nearly a billion dollars annually in K-12 education funding to help address the state's longstanding teacher shortage crisis, lower class sizes, hire aides and counselors, and expand career and technical education.

However, legislative leaders and the Governor were determined to kill Prop 208 and deny voters what they have been asking for over a decade: more investment in education.

Today, Arizona stands as the state where teacher pay is among the lowest in the nation, class size is the highest in the nation, and the student to counselor ratio is the worst in the nation, with an average of 905 students for every counselor.

Parents, teachers, students, and advocates responded to this attack on education and the future of our state by collecting hundreds of thousands of signatures and qualifying for the ballot again. In the midst of a pandemic, the hot summer months in Arizona, and the extremely short amount of time, Invest in Arizona volunteers collected over 208,000 signatures, with a validity rate of over 78%.

Joe Thomas, a social studies teacher and President of the Arizona Education Association said, *“Arizona voters continue to show unwavering support for our teachers and students. They intend to vote NO on these massive tax cuts for millionaires and would rather see the governor and legislature use these dollars to invest in Arizona’s schools and communities. Voters—especially parents—know that these investments are critical to the success of our students and to the future of Arizona.”*

“This budget bill benefits Arizona’s wealthiest individuals, giving them massive handouts and guts hundreds of millions from state revenues. Voters are tired of failed leadership by this Governor and legislature.” said coalition partner David Lujan, CEO of Children’s Action Alliance.

“By passing these sneaky budget schemes, this small group of politicians are helping their rich friends avoid paying their fair share to public schools. Worst of all, they are trying to silence voters,” said Rebecca Gau, Executive Director of Stand for Children Arizona. *“Parents, teachers, students, and advocates worked to collect hundreds of thousands of signatures to stop them and to demand that what voters approved be respected.”*

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The Prop 208 – Invest in Education campaign, which accomplished a historic election win at the ballot box last November, is now Invest in Arizona. The new coalition includes the original members – Arizona Education Association, Stand for Children Arizona, Children’s Action Alliance, Arizona Center for Economic Progress, Arizona Interfaith Network, and is now joined by Save Our Schools, and Friends of the Arizona School Boards Association. The coalition is committed to keeping up the fight to ensure that Arizona students have a bright future by sending a referendum to the ballot that will overturn massive tax cuts for the wealthy enacted this year.

Visit www.investinaznow.com to learn more.