



# Children's Action Alliance

*A Voice for Arizona's Children since 1988*

## WHO'S FOR KIDS AND WHO'S JUST KIDDING?

A 2009 Legislative Report Card for Kids

December 2009

Children's Action Alliance (CAA) is a voice for Arizona children at the state capitol and in the community.

With thousands of dedicated Arizonans across the state, we work to build momentum for improvements in child care and early education, health coverage, protection from abuse and neglect, and family income so that kids can grow up healthy and strong.

Each year, the 90 members of our state legislature vote on dozens of bills that shape the health, education, and safety of Arizona children and families. The Governor decides policy with her veto or signature.

CAA believes that every lawmaker has the responsibility to vote for kids. And our legislators should be held accountable and measured on their performance.

This report card tracks votes on eight bills in the House of Representatives and nine bills in the Senate in 2009. During the legislative session, Children's Action Alliance analyzed and took a stand on each of the bills, asking lawmakers to vote "yes" or "no" for kids.

In the chart, a ★ is shown for each vote for kids that corresponds to our recommendation. A "NV" for "not voting" indicates that the legislator did not vote or was absent. If the legislator cast a vote contrary to what's best for kids, the vote box is left blank.



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### Arizona's Children Need YOUR Voice!

Children can't vote. It's up to you to be their voice in the halls of power.

You can make a difference by contacting your own state senator and representatives and asking them to vote for kids. Talk with them about policies you support for children and families.

You can help Children's Action Alliance remain a strong voice for children by joining our action network or by making a tax-deductible donation. To learn more, visit [www.azchildren.org](http://www.azchildren.org).

## LEGISLATION THAT PROTECTS ABUSED AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN

**HB 2622 – Identify Relatives for Children in Foster Care**  
**Supported by CAA, this legislation passed the Legislature and was signed by Governor Brewer.**

HB 2622 requires parents or guardians whose child is placed in foster care to immediately provide names and contact information of any relatives or other people who might want to care for the child. This law will improve stability for children and prevent the trauma caused to children when relatives are not found until after the child has been living with foster parents for a long time.



**SB 1047 – Child Safety**

**Supported by CAA, this legislation passed the Legislature and was signed by Governor Brewer.**

SB 1047 gives Child Protective Services (CPS) additional tools to protect children by refining the definitions of abuse and neglect to include circumstances such as unreasonable confinement of a child (for example, cages or closets), infants exhibiting problems due to prenatal exposure to illegal drugs, and deliberate exposure of a child by a parent to sexual conduct. The bill also allows the juvenile court to substantiate findings of abuse and neglect. This law will strengthen the CPS system and better protect children.

**SB 1209 – Rights for Children in Foster Care**

**Supported by CAA, this legislation passed the Legislature and was signed by Governor Brewer.**

This bill establishes rights for children living in foster care, including the right to have contact information for the child's caseworker and attorney; attending court hearings about their case and speaking to the judge; and attending community, school, and religious activities of their choice. These rights help to enhance both dignity and opportunity for children who have been abused and neglected to help them cope with their trauma.

## LEGISLATION THAT HELPS WORKING FAMILIES

**HB 2051 – Funding for Child Care Subsidies**

**Supported by CAA, this legislation passed the Legislature and was signed by Governor Brewer.**

This bill used \$18 million in federal stimulus funds to restore some of the state funding that was cut for child care subsidies for working families. The passage of this allowed parents of 15,000 children to keep their child care assistance so that they could continue to work and support their children.

**SB 1322- Extend Unemployment Insurance Benefits**

**Supported by CAA, this legislation passed the Legislature and was signed by Governor Brewer.**

This bill used federal stimulus funding to extend unemployment benefits for 34,000 Arizonans who were still looking for jobs. This legislative change brought \$97 million into Arizona's economy in 2009 with no cost to the state. It helped families pay for rent, groceries, and other necessities.

## **BILLS THAT AFFECT STRUGGLING YOUTH**

### **SB 1420 – Consequences for Youth with DUI Offenses**

**Despite CAA's opposition, this bill was passed by the Legislature and signed by Governor Brewer.**

This law requires some youth who are adjudicated (convicted) of a DUI or extreme DUI offense to be sentenced to longer terms of incarceration – without necessarily getting treatment for substance abuse. Research and experience demonstrate that swift consequences and community supervision work better and are more cost effective in protecting public safety than locking up youth.

## **BUDGET BILLS**

### **SB 1001 (1<sup>st</sup> Special Session) – Mid-Year Budget Cuts**

**Despite CAA's opposition, this bill was passed by the Legislature and signed by Governor Brewer.**

This bill was the first of many laws with large budget cuts. It included \$589 million in cuts that state agencies had to implement in the middle of the fiscal year, as well as \$591 million in fund sweeps. The 11% budget cut to the Department of Economic Security led to layoffs of hundreds of employees. Child Protective Services no longer investigates all reports of child abuse and neglect, payments to foster parents were cut, many prevention and family support services were wiped out, and cash assistance to poor mothers and children was shrunk by 20%. Therapy and rehabilitation services were cut to children with disabilities and severe medical conditions. Child care assistance was closed to newly applying low-income, working families – more than 10,000 children were turned away by December 2009.

### **SB 1145 – Health and Human Services Budget Bill**

**CAA opposed this bill, which was passed by the Legislature but vetoed by Governor Brewer.**

This budget bill was vetoed, although parts of it were included in subsequent laws that went into effect. This bill eliminated KidsCare health coverage for more than 8,000 parents. It cut KidsCare coverage for children by reducing the eligibility for any new applicants. It required the Department of Health Services to raise license fees for child care centers dramatically to replace general fund cuts. It required some poor moms to pass a drug test before their families could receive TANF cash assistance.

### **SCR 1006 – Reduce State Appropriation Limit**

**CAA opposed this bill, which ultimately failed in the Senate.**

This bill would have referred to the voters a constitutional amendment to lower Arizona's appropriation limit. The referendum would have also eliminated any future adjustments to the limit. This was an unnecessary change since Arizona's constitution already requires a 2/3 supermajority vote of the legislature for any revenue increase and since overall spending trends have been down as a share of Arizona's economy. The lower limit would arbitrarily shrink future policy choices and services for children and families.



State Representative	District	HB 2622	SB 1047	SB 1209	HB 2051	SB 1322	SB 1420	SB 1001 1st special session	SB 1145	2009 Grade for Kids
Ed Ableser	17	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	100%
Kirk Adams	19	★			★	★				38%
Frank Antenori	30	★		★	★	★				50%
Cecil Ash	18	★		★	★	★				50%
Ray Barnes	7	★	★		★	★				50%
Nancy Barto	7	★	★	★	★	★				63%
Andy Biggs	22	★								13%
Tom Boone	4	★			★	★				38%
David Bradley	28	★	★	★	★	NV	★	★	★	100%
Jack Brown	5		NV	NV	★	★	★	★	★	83%
Judy Burges	4	★				★				25%
Olivia Cajero Bedford	27	★	NV	NV	★	★	★	★	★	100%
Chad Campbell	14	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	100%
Cloves Campbell, Jr.	16	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	NV	100%
Tom Chabin	2	★	★	★	★	★	★	NV	★	100%
Steve Court	18	★		★	★					43%
Rich Crandall	19	NV	NV	NV	NV	★				25%
Sam Crump	6	★				NV				14%
Christopher Deschene	2	★	★	★	★	NV	★	★	NV	100%
Adam Driggs	11	★	★		★	★				50%
Steve Farley	28	★	★	★	★	★	NV	★	★	100%
Patricia Fleming	25	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	100%
Martha Garcia	13	★	NV	NV	★	★	NV	★	NV	100%
Doris Goodale	3	★	★	★	★	★				63%
David Gowan	30	★			★	★				38%
Matt Heinz	29	NV	NV	NV	★	★	NV	NV	NV	100%
Laurin Hendrix	22	★	★	★		★				50%
Russell Jones	24	★	★	★	★	★				63%
John Kavanagh	8	★		★	★	★	★			63%
Bill Konopnicki	5	★		★	NV	★	★		★	71%

★ = a vote for kids

NV = not voting or absent

blank = no vote for kids

State Representative	District	HB 2622	SB 1047	SB 1209	HB 2051	SB 1322	SB 1420	SB 1001 1st special session	SB 1145	2009 Grade for Kids
Debbie Lesko	9	★			★	★				38%
Phil Lopes	27	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	100%
David Lujan	15	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	100%
Lucy Mason	1	★	★		★	NV	NV		★	67%
John McComish	20	★			★	★				38%
Barbara McGuire	23	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	100%
Nancy McLain	3	★	★		★	★				50%
Eric Meyer	11	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	100%
Robert Meza	14	★	★	★	NV	★	NV	★	★	100%
Ben Miranda	16	★	★	★	★	★		★	★	88%
Steve Montenegro	12	★		★		★				38%
Rick Murphy	9	★		★	★	NV				43%
Warde Nichols	21	★		★	★	★				50%
Lynne Pancrazi	24	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	100%
Daniel Patterson	29	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	100%
Frank Pratt	23	★	★		★	NV				43%
Doug Quelland	10	★	★	★	★	★	NV		★	86%
Michele Reagan	8	★	★	★	★	★	★			75%
David Schapira	17	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	100%
Carl Seel	6	★				★				25%
Kyrsten Sinema	15	★	★	★	NV	★	NV	★	★	100%
David Stevens	25	★			★	★				38%
Andrew Tobin	1	★			★	★				38%
Anna Tovar	13	NV	★	★	★	★	★	NV	★	100%
Rae Waters	20	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	100%
Jerry Weiers	12	★			★	NV				29%
Jim Weiers	10	★	★		★	★		NV		57%
Vic Williams	26	★			★	NV			★	43%
Steven Yarbrough	21	★			★	★				38%
Nancy Young Wright	26	NV	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	100%

★ = a vote for kids

NV = not voting or absent

blank = no vote for kids

State Senator	District	HB 2622	SB 1047	SB 1209	HB 2051	SB 1322	SB 1420	SB 1001 1st special session	SB 1145	SCR 1006	2009 Grade for Kids
Paula Aboud	28	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	NV	★	100%
Amanda Aguirre	24	NV	★	★	★	★	★	NV	NV	★	100%
Carolyn Allen	8	★	★	★	★	★		★	NV	★	88%
Sylvia Allen	5	★			★	★					33%
Manny Alvarez	25	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	NV	★	100%
Robert "Bob" Burns	9	★	★		★	★					44%
Meg Burton Cahill	17	NV	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	100%
Ken Chevront	15	NV	NV	★	★	★	NV	NV	NV	★	100%
Jorge Luis Garcia	27	★	★		★	★	★	★	NV	★	88%
Pamela Gorman	6	★		★	★	NV					38%
Ron Gould	3										0%
Chuck Gray	19	★			★	★					33%
Linda Gray	10	NV	★	★	★	NV				★	57%
Albert Hale	2	NV	★	NV	★	★	★	★	NV	★	100%
Jack Harper	4	★	★			★					33%
John Huppenthal	20	★	★	★	★	★				★	67%
Leah Landrum Taylor	16	★	★	★	NV	★	★	★	NV	★	100%
Barbara Leff	11	★	★	★	★	★				★	67%
Linda Lopez	29	★	★	NV	NV	★	★	★	NV	★	100%
Debbie McCune Davis	14	NV	★	NV	★	★	★	★	NV	NV	100%
Al Melvin	26	NV	★	★	★	★					50%
Richard Miranda	13	NV	NV	★	★	★	NV	★	NV	★	100%
John Nelson	12	★	★	★	★	★					56%
Jonathan Paton	30	★	★	★	NV	★					50%
Russell Pearce	18	★				★					22%
Steve Pierce	1	★	★	★	★	★					56%
Rebecca Rios	23	★	★	NV	★	★	★	★	NV	★	100%
Jay Tibshraeny	21	★	NV	★	★	★	NV	★	NV		83%
Thayer Verschoor	22	★	★			★					33%
Jim Waring	7	★	★	★	★	★					56%

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Children's Action Alliance is a non-profit, non-partisan research, education and advocacy organization dedicated to promoting the well-being of Arizona's children and families.

**WE COMMUNICATE** the needs of children. Through research, publications, media campaigns and advocacy, Children's Action Alliance ensures that children's needs are known and acted upon.

**WE INFLUENCE** policies and decisions, making our children's best interests our state's priority.

**WE DEMAND** progress from our leaders and elected officials. There is no excuse for Arizona to be ranked among the lowest in the nation in child well-being.

**WE INFORM** the public about the voting records of Arizona politicians, holding them accountable for their campaign promises to our kids.

**WE IMPROVE** children's lives, by combining policy expertise with the power of strategic communications and advocacy to achieve **real** results.

**WE SHARE** common goals:

- That all children have health insurance
- That no child is raised in poverty and hunger
- That every child enters school ready to learn and succeed
- That no child endures the ravages of abuse and neglect
- That every child has a place to call home
- That struggling teens have the support they need to become responsible adults

Because of Children's Action Alliance, Arizona's children are safer and healthier. Families are receiving the resources they need to better care for their young children. Kids from working families have access to health coverage through KidsCare. Thousands more children are benefiting from safe, affordable child care. And fewer children are victims of abuse and neglect.

Children's Action Alliance  
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