

# YELLOW SHEET REPORT

## ·NEWS NOTES AND GOSSIP·

### **ONE DANIEL LEAVES**

Daniel Scarpinato, Ducey's chief of staff, and Gretchen Conger, the deputy chief of staff, are both leaving the Governor's Office, the pair announced today. The two, who have been with Ducey from the very beginning of his gubernatorial term, already have jobs lined up. Scarpinato will be a partner for a public affairs and political consulting firm called Ascend Media, which is based in Washington DC.



He will work remotely from Phoenix. Conger will be a senior advisor for Sarah Huckabee Sanders' gubernatorial bid in Arkansas. Both senior staffers moved into their positions in late 2018 after Ducey secured his re-election bid. "Daniel has been a trusted and important part of my team since the beginning," Ducey said in a news release. "His leadership of our team through challenge after challenge has been critical to our success. I am beyond thankful for his dedication and service from our 2014 transition to my re-election, through COVID and the completion of our most successful legislative session to date. While Daniel is moving on, I know he will continue to have an important impact on politics and policy in this new and exciting role." Scarpinato described working for Ducey "the greatest honor of my career." "Not only has the Governor been the most phenomenal boss I've ever had, but this team is one I've been so proud to be part of – dating back from day one, right up until now. They are the best," he said. Scarpinato also shared what working for Ducey was like for him over the past six-plus years in a 16-tweet thread ([LINK](#)). Ducey said Gretchen has been a critical part of the team that "accomplished some of our most important initiatives and reforms, from the expansion of school choice to universal licensing to historic tax cuts." Scarpinato worked as a journalist long before joining the governor's staff. He reported for the *Arizona Daily Star*, covering former Gov. Janet Napolitano, former Congresswoman Gabby Giffords and John McCain's 2008 presidential bid. He then became editor of the *Yellow Sheet Report*, a sister publication of the *Arizona Capitol Times*. From there he worked on the unsuccessful congressional campaign of former lawmaker Jonathan Paton in 2010, became a spokesman for the Arizona House and then became national press secretary for the National Republican Congressional Committee. Conger was a legislative intern under Gov. Jan Brewer, worked in state government for a bit before landing a gig with the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry. She worked there for three years before landing a job with Ducey's Day One crew.

### **ANOTHER DANIEL REMAINS**

COO Daniel Ruiz will take over as chief of staff. Ruiz started on the Ninth Floor in September 2015 and has gradually moved up the ladder. Ruiz told our reporter more staff announcements will be coming in the next couple of weeks, likely meaning he won't be pulling double duty as COO and chief of staff. He said his new duties take effect immediately, though Scarpinato will remain on through the rest of August under

a transition plan. “Every issue from communications to operations to policy, he’s been a part of, so I don’t think there’s anyone more prepared,” Scarpinato said. Ruiz told our reporter: “I’ve built a lot of really good friends in this office, and two of them leaving is going to be a difficult change for me, but I’m really excited about the opportunities that they have and I think it speaks to their talent and their skills and all the service that they put in. I’ve gained, not just, you know, mentors but lifelong friends. And Daniel is a chief amongst them.” Ducey’s senior health policy advisor, Christina Corieri, is the last remaining staffer from the beginning of the administration. According to one source, she also could either be on the way out or pull double duty in the administration – with one foot on the Ninth Floor and the other as either an interim or permanent option to replace Cara Christ as the Dept of Health Services director.

### **HOBBS: ONE THING OFF MY CHEST**

Stanton officially filed for re-election today, quelching rumors that he might run for governor. As late as this week, Democratic sources told our reporter Stanton was still keeping his options open and telling campaign funders that he was contemplating running for governor. Railbirds also speculated that he would run for attorney general, where he would enjoy higher name recognition than Kris Mayes or Rodriguez ([YS, 8/2](#)).

### **TRANSLATION: EXPECT 2,000 BILLS NEXT LEGISLATIVE SESSION**



Bolick will not immediately resign to campaign full time for secretary of state. “She has no intention of resigning a position that ensures the work of the people gets done and as chair of Ways and Means. She plans on continuing to put the interests of the taxpayer over special interest lobbyists,” George Khalaf, who speaks for the Bolick campaign, said after yesterday’s report cited rumors saying she’s ready to jump ship. Engel, meanwhile, would not comment on whether she would leave or remain in the Legislature while running for Congress. Several Dem lawmakers are still likely to resign

before next session, and Dem lobbyist Geoff Esposito said resigning offers more advantages than staying. Esposito said that particularly applies to a legislator who is running for a statewide race but who is not viewed as an early frontrunner and needs to raise a lot of money. “For someone like Lieberman, or some of these others, they’re having to play catch up to opponents who have a larger war chest,” he said. The pressure to raise money, of course, is non-existent for candidates running with Clean Elections money. Plus, Esposito said, the chances of Democrats making a difference legislatively are always slim since they’re in the minority. Esposito also told our reporter that could weigh into the decision to tap out. “I think somebody described this coming legislative session as second semester of senior year,” he said, adding that roughly half of the Democratic caucus won’t potentially stick around the Legislature after next year. Esposito also said that, when lawmakers resign, it offers advantages to whoever gets appointed as replacement, since they would get a year’s worth of experience, which can boost their chances in the 2022 election. How well someone utilizes that incumbency advantage and the relationships that they built at the Capitol are important, he said. “We’ve seen instances of both being an advantage for somebody in a future

primary and we've seen it fall flat. As much as legislators like to believe [otherwise], nobody really knows who they are or cares. Especially if you're appointed, voters don't really feel a loyalty to you," Esposito said. "Where the advantage comes in is if you're able to turn that into institutional support, build the relationships with the people who play in those races, and show that you care about progressive values, and are willing to fight the good fight."

### **BEYOND ANTI-INTELLECTUALISM**

Rogers yesterday praised a right-wing radio host for "being brave to get this truth out" after he claimed Covid doesn't exist and Covid vaccines have killed 50,000 people. Rogers made the rounds on alternative conservative media to talk about her thoughts on the audit. Among her interviews was with Stew Peters, who has repeatedly called for Anthony Fauci's execution ([LINK](#)). Media Matters, a left-wing nonprofit that scrutinizes conservative news outlets, flagged the interview, in which Rogers verbally agreed with Peters about Covid vaccines. ([LINK](#)).



Peters said the shots are not actually vaccines, that no one can prove Covid exists and that more than 50,000 people have died because of the vaccines. Rogers interjected several times with "right" and "exactly" before adding, "Well, and the fact that the truth of that is suppressed is even really troubling. ... And I – my hat's off to you, Stew, and other alternative sources of media for being brave to get this truth out." After Townsend, Rogers has been one of the most vocal opponents of vaccines. "If you trespass on my land and try to force-vaccinate my family and me, you will learn multiple amendments of the Constitution at the same time," Rogers tweeted early in July. None of Peters' claims is true. The federal Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System, which receives voluntary reports about deaths following a vaccination, reported 6,490 deaths – or 0.0019% – among people who received a Covid vaccine as of Aug. 2. The FDA requires healthcare workers to report any deaths after a vaccination, but anyone can submit a report to VAERS. VAERS is an early warning system, so reports do not necessarily mean a vaccine caused a health problem, the CDC emphasized ([LINK](#)).

### **WHERE ROGERS GOES, SO GOES THE REPUBLICAN PARTY**

Both the CDC and Arizona-based medical groups strongly recommend that students wear masks as the Delta variant continues to spread, an expert advice the Legislature and the governor not only refused to follow but also ensured no school can adopt. In a statement earlier this week, the Arizona Academy of Family Physicians advised "state leaders to follow guidance from the ... (CDC) and the Arizona Department of Health Services. This is especially important due to the evolving nature of this pandemic" ([LINK](#)). The groups recommends that all school faculty, staff and eligible students get the Covid vaccine and wear masks while indoors, "unless medical or developmental conditions prohibit mask use. This is a proven strategy to keep students and teachers as safe as possible while away from their homes." The Arizona Medical Assn urges schools to follow AZ DHS and CDC guidelines "These officials are using the latest and most reliable information to make evidence-based recommendations on what is best for the health of our communities. As physicians, ArMA stands behind this guidance," said ArMA President Miriam Anand. The Arizona chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics also champions the recommendation. "A significant portion of the student population is not yet eligible for vaccination," the

group said in July. “Recognizing requirements from the state government, the AzAAP continues to recommend all students and staff continue to wear masks indoors” ([LINK](#)). Meanwhile, the Network for Public Health Law and Arizona Public Health Assn Executive Director Will Humble have been floating the idea that Laws 2021, Chapter 404 (H2898: K-12 education; budget reconciliation; 2021-2022), which contains a ban on school mask mandates, is in unconstitutional violation of the “single subject rule,” an argument which would have massive consequences for the budget process were a court to accept it. “Adding a provision banning face masks into legislation concerning the state-wide budget is arguably unconstitutional pursuant to the single-subject rule because the two subjects are unrelated,” Network for Public Health Law staff recently wrote ([LINK](#)). “Limiting face coverings during the COVID-19 pandemic coupled with a comprehensive budget bill seems more attenuated than the connection in (*Hoffman v. Reagan*, a 2018 case). To the degree the provisions are unrelated, the specific provision unrelated to budgetary matters, namely the rejection of school mask mandates, may be deemed unconstitutional as passed.”

### **YOU ONLY NEED A SPARK**

The local-level pushback against a state law banning schools from mandating masks continued to grow, with the Washington and Creighton elementary school districts announcing Wednesday afternoon that they, too, would impose mask mandates. Washington’s governing board voted, 3-1, in favor of the mandate with an opt-out option. Board President Bill Adams expressed some concerns about the currently ambiguous legality of whether schools can require masks, as well as saying before the vote that he supports the idea of a mandate but parents shouldn’t necessarily have to come to the school in person to present the form opting their child out. This brings it to seven districts – Phoenix Union, Tucson Unified, and the Phoenix, Osborn, Roosevelt, Washington and Creighton elementary districts – that have contravened the wishes of Ducey and the Legislature’s Republican majority. Phoenix Union High School District, whose decisions to require masks kicked off the wave of defiance that spread to other districts in Phoenix and Tucson, will hold a governing board meeting at 6 p.m. tonight, and the district’s Covid mitigation plan is one of the agenda topics.

### **NEVER-ENDING LITIGATION MEANS NEVER-ENDING FUNDRAISING**

The Senate filed its petition for special action relief with the state appeals court yesterday to block American Oversight from gaining all the audit-related records Maricopa County Superior Court Judge Michael Kemp ruled the Senate must immediately provide. Kemp’s Monday ruling found that all records with a “substantial nexus” to the audit are public records, even if Cyber Ninjas and other contractors are private vendors ([YS, 8/3](#)). In his petition, Kory Langhofer, the Senate’s lead attorney, described the ruling as “an extraordinary incursion into the sovereign affairs of a coordinate branch.” He said the Senate needs emergency relief, instead of following the traditional appeals process, in part because the lower court’s order requiring Fann to take possession of some of the Cyber Ninjas’ records would moot part of the Senate’s argument – that it doesn’t have the records. Langhofer also argued that the court has no right to tell the Legislature what to do: “The notion of a court order coercing the president of a legislative house to divulge what the Superior Court itself regards as legislative records would subvert the interbranch equilibrium that underpins constitutional government.”

## ·WAKE UP CALL·

### **[Top Ducey aides leave for new jobs](#)**

*Arizona Capitol Times*

Two senior staffers for Gov. Doug Ducey are leaving their jobs after nearly seven years.

### **[Judge refuses – for now – to grant TRO against Phoenix Union’s mask policy](#)**

*Capitol Media Services*

A new mandate by Phoenix Union High School District that students and staff wear masks remains in effect, at least for the time being, as do similar policies being adopted by other districts.

[All Arizona counties covered by new eviction moratorium](#)

*Today's News-Herald*

High rates of COVID-19 transmission across all Arizona counties means that a new evictions moratorium issued by President Joe Biden effectively applies to the entire state.

['Tyrannical' Gilbert Mayor Under Fire for Proposed Limits to Public Comment](#)

*Phoenix New Times*

The new mayor of Gilbert has spent the first months of her term embroiled in a series of multiplying scandals.

[Karen Fann might be the only one who doesn't realize the 'audit' is all about Donald Trump](#)

*Arizona Mirror (Opinion, Jim Small)*

More than anything else, the disclosure last week of who has paid nearly \$6 million for the embarrassingly incompetent so-called "audit" of the Maricopa County election blows to smithereens the insistence from Senate President Karen Fann that the audit isn't about Donald Trump.

[Andrew Cuomo is Donald Trump, only less so](#)

*Arizona Republic (Opinion, EJ Montini)*

Incivility has no political affiliation. There are pigs in both parties. The only question is whether other members of that party allow the oinker to drag them into the mud with him.

[6 Arizona school districts now in revolt over masks. Are you seeing this, Gov. Ducey?](#)

*Arizona Republic (Opinion, Laurie Roberts)*

If the goal is to keep Arizona schools open, Gov. Ducey and the Legislature aren't helping. They should repeal the state law barring school districts from requiring masks.

[Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey is wrong about law banning COVID-19 mask mandates. He needs to say it and save lives.](#)

*Arizona Republic (Opinion, Elvia Diaz)*

Can somebody tell Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey that a change of heart is not only OK but could actually save lives?

[As a doctor, I implore you: Get vaccinated to protect yourself and others](#)

*Arizona Republic (Op-ed, Miriam Anand)*

We do not live in a bubble. Decisions we make to get vaccinated or wear a mask can affect our neighbors, co-workers, classmates and strangers. officially counted ballots. We mean now.

## ·PRESS RELEASES·

### **Governor Ducey Announces Daniel Ruiz As New Chief Of Staff**

Most Recently The State's Chief Operating Officer, Ruiz Has Served In Governor Ducey's Administration Since 2015

PHOENIX — Governor Doug Ducey announced today that Daniel Ruiz II will serve as his new Chief of Staff. Ruiz will succeed Daniel Scarpinato who announced his departure after six and a half years with the Governor.

Ruiz, a member of the Governor's team since 2015, most recently served as the State of Arizona's Chief Operating Officer, overseeing all state agency operations and managing the Governor's cabinet. As Chief of Staff, Ruiz will serve as the Governor's top aide, leading the Office of the Governor staff and coordinating Governor Ducey's agenda throughout all of state government, at the Legislature and across the state.

“Daniel Ruiz’s leadership has been key to our success since almost the very beginning of my administration,” said Governor Ducey. “Daniel has been involved in nearly every issue we have tackled. Whether it’s operations, strategy, policy, messaging or crisis management, Daniel has been a rock our team has relied on to guide us through challenges and opportunities. Daniel is a public servant who brings people together, solves problems and dedicates himself to the work at hand. I am thrilled to name him Chief of Staff.”

“I am honored to have earned the trust of Governor Ducey for this important role,” said Ruiz. “We have an exceptional team in the Governor’s Office and all across this administration that is dedicated to expanding opportunity and working on behalf of the people of Arizona. I’ve been lucky to have a front row seat these past six years, and to have learned so much from the Governor’s leadership. There is a lot of work left to do, and I can’t wait to hit the ground running as we continue our work.”

Ruiz brings a wealth of experience across state and local governments, with nearly 20 years experience in policy, elections, government operations and strategic communications. He has served in multiple roles for the Governor over the past six years, most recently as Chief Operating Officer, where he coordinated the state’s response to COVID-19 including coordination of multi-agency statewide vaccination sites, and led the consolidation of state agencies and the modernization of the state’s workforce efforts.

From 2015 through 2018, Ruiz served as Director of Media Affairs in the Governor’s Office, overseeing internal and external communications at all state agencies and managing all the state’s public information officers.

From August 2018 through November 2018, Ruiz assumed the role of Communications Director, with responsibility for all strategic communications on behalf of the Governor's Office. During that time he played a key role in the planning and management of the state's memorial service for the late Senator John McCain.

Beginning in December 2018, Ruiz was elevated to serve as Senior Advisor, advising the Governor directly on policy, operations and communications. His responsibilities also included overseeing the Governor's Office of Constituent Services.

Prior to joining the Governor’s Office in 2015, Ruiz was employed with the Maricopa County Recorder’s Office as Director of Communications and Public Affairs. Ruiz also served the Citizens Clean Elections Commission in various capacities including Deputy Director and Interim Executive Director.

An Arizona native, Ruiz grew up in the Maryvale area. He is a Flinn-Brown Fellow, the 2018 recipient of the Jack B. Jewett Public Service Award from the Arizona Center for Civic Leadership, and the Incoming Chair of the Flinn-Brown Fellows Council. Ruiz was named a 2018 Breakout by the Arizona Capitol Times for his work taking on complex and challenging public policy issues. In 2021, he was a finalist for “Best Capitol Staffer” in the Arizona Capitol Times “Best of the Capitol” awards.

Ruiz’s appointment to Chief of Staff is effective immediately, serving alongside Daniel Scarpinato, as Scarpinato transitions out of the Governor’s Office between now and the end of August.

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## **Chief of Staff Daniel Scarpinato, Deputy Chief of Staff Gretchen Conger Announce New Opportunities; Departures From Governor’s Office**

PHOENIX — Following the culmination of historic legislative victories, two of Governor Doug Ducey’s top aides announced their departures from the Governor’s Office today: Chief of Staff Daniel Scarpinato and Deputy Chief of Staff Gretchen Conger. Both have served in the office since the beginning of Governor Ducey’s administration.

### **Daniel Scarpinato**

Scarpinato has been named as a partner at Ascent Media, a national full-service advertising and political consulting firm based in Washington, D.C. and Denver, CO. Scarpinato, who will remain based in Phoenix, brings experience at both the state and national levels, having served as National Press Secretary at the National Republican Congressional Committee prior to joining the Governor's Office in 2015. In addition to serving as Chief of Staff since 2018, Scarpinato took on the role of Senior Advisor on Governor Ducey's reelection campaign, in which the Governor won more votes than any other in Arizona history.

An announcement about Scarpinato's successor will be forthcoming. He plans to transition out of his role as Chief of Staff in August.

Governor Ducey praised Scarpinato's leadership, dating back to him joining the Governor's transition team just days after his 2014 election.

"Daniel has been a trusted and important part of my team since the beginning," said Governor Ducey. "His leadership of our team through challenge after challenge has been critical to our success. I am beyond thankful for his dedication and service from our 2014 transition to my re-election, through COVID and the completion of our most successful legislative session to date. While Daniel is moving on, he will remain a close friend and advisor to our team."

"Serving in Governor Ducey's administration has been the greatest honor of my career," said Scarpinato. "Not only has the Governor been the most phenomenal boss I've ever had, but this team is one I've been so proud to be part of — dating back from day one, right up until now. They are the best. The past two years in particular have been filled with incredible challenges and major victories, especially this most recent legislative session. I'm proud of the work we've done together, excited to see this team continue to serve the state well, and thrilled about this new opportunity."

### **Gretchen Conger**

Conger will depart Arizona for Arkansas to serve as Senior Advisor to the Sarah Huckabee Sanders campaign. Huckabee Sanders served as White House Press Secretary from 2017 to 2019 and is a front-runner in the 2022 gubernatorial election.

Governor Ducey lauded Conger's impact on public policy in Arizona, which included assisting then-Treasurer Ducey in the successful defeat of Prop 204 in 2012 and advising him in his 2014 campaign.

"Since 2012, Gretchen has gained the admiration and respect of leaders in public service and with business leaders," said Governor Ducey. "Gretchen has been a critical part of the team that has accomplished some of our most important initiatives and reforms, from the expansion of school choice to universal licensing to historic tax cuts. She has been dedicated to getting results for the people of Arizona. While Arizona will certainly miss her, Sarah Huckabee Sanders and the State of Arkansas will no doubt benefit from her strategic advice, policy savvy and dedicated work ethic."

"I am so appreciative to Governor Ducey for the opportunities he has provided to me as part of his team," said Conger. "I leave very proud of the work we've done and the positive impact we have had on the state of Arizona. I especially want to thank our policy team, who has led the nation on conservative reforms and public policy. It's difficult to leave Arizona, but I'm excited about the opportunity to work for and learn from Sarah Huckabee Sanders, someone whom I greatly admire."

Conger initially served as Director of Legislative Affairs before being elevated to Deputy Chief of Staff in 2016. Prior to joining the administration in January 2015, Conger served as the Executive Director of the Arizona Chamber Foundation and as the Vice President of Public Policy for the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

## **COVID-19 Delta variant brings new attention to off-label use of medicine**

(Phoenix, State Capitol) --- With COVID-19 cases rising in the past month, a bill passed in the recent legislative session is getting new attention. [SB 1416](#), sponsored by Senate Health & Human Services Committee Chair Nancy Barto protects the off-label use of medications during a public health emergency. Off-label prescribing is when a physician prescribes a drug that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved to treat a different condition.

Roughly [one in five](#) prescriptions are written for an off-label use, whether it's a medication used for a condition that is not approved to treat, or a medication is dosed differently.

"We know how important early treatment and prevention is in healthcare," said Senator Barto. "Expanding access to certain off-label medications during a pandemic can be life-saving in this fight, and physicians need every tool in the toolbox to appropriately treat patients without fear of losing their licenses."

"What is not widely known yet is the decision by Governor Ducey to rescind Executive Order [2020-20](#) in early July," said Barto. "That action lifted restrictions on the filling of hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine. These drugs are widely available and affordable. It makes sense for Arizonans to have access to off-label uses, after consulting with their health professional."

Arizona has been a leader in off-label use. In 2017, Arizona became the first state to allow pharmaceutical companies to communicate off-label treatment uses to health professionals and SB 1416 extends Arizona's Free Speech and Practice Act protections to health professionals passed in 2016 (SB 1445).

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## **Arizona's labor movement mourns the passing of AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka**

This morning, Arizona's labor movement was saddened to learn of the passing of Richard Trumka, President of the AFL-CIO. President Trumka devoted his life to the betterment of working families across the country and the labor movement as a whole. During a visit to Arizona in 2018, Trumka said "We're the true American patriots. We're fearless. We're strong. We're powerful. We're united. We're rising in solidarity...real solidarity...where your picket line is my picket line, and my picket line is your picket line."

To honor the lifetime of dedication from President Trumka, the Arizona AFL-CIO and the labor movement will continue the fight by pushing forward for workers' rights, for safer work conditions, for higher wages and true equality in the workplace, and for the passage of the PRO Act.

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## **Attorney General Mark Brnovich Warns Consumers about Rental Scams**

**PHOENIX** – Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich is warning consumers to be on alert against property rental scams. As the Arizona housing market continues to price many out of purchasing a home, a growing number of residents are seeking rental properties. Scammers are seizing the opportunity to prey on unsuspecting consumers. Two of the most prevalent scams involve individuals advertising rental properties that they do not own or manage, and individuals advertising rental properties as a way to obtain personal and banking information to steal identities.

Additionally, Attorney General Brnovich warns landlords looking to lease their property should be aware of individuals offering to pay deposits or rent with certified funds in excess of the actual amount owed, and requesting the excess funds be wired back to the renter. Return the check or wait until the certified funds have cleared your account before returning any excess funds.



"Arizonans must stay vigilant against shameless scammers aiming to steal your money and your identity with promises of a perfect rental," said Attorney General Mark Brnovich. "Consumers can identify red flags in order to stay protected against rental scams."

Attorney General Brnovich offers the following tips to consumers seeking to rent homes and apartments:

- Be skeptical of rental prices "well below" market price for similar properties.
- Look up the property address on a search engine to verify that the property is not "for sale" elsewhere, or physically drive by the property to verify that it actually exists.
- Be wary of poorly written rental descriptions that include misspellings or bad grammar.
- Avoid companies or individuals listing rental properties who are not reachable by phone during normal business hours; who tell you that they are out of state or out of the country; or who request communication via text only.
- Be skeptical of companies or individuals charging "up front" fees in addition to the normal application and credit check fees.
- Always be wary of companies or individuals requesting personal information such as your social security number and bank account information up front.
- Don't pay the security deposit until you have a signed lease.
- Avoid companies or individuals requesting payments be sent overseas or by wired funds, gift cards or through peer-to-peer payment apps (such as Cash App).
- Deal with reputable companies or agents who have appropriate licenses.

There are several online resources available for consumers to check appropriate licenses and review information regarding a company's reputation. The [Arizona Department of Real Estate](#) contains information regarding licensed Real Estate Professionals. The [Better Business Bureau](#) is also a good source of information regarding a business' reputation.

If you believe you have been the victim of consumer fraud, you can file a consumer complaint by visiting the [Attorney General's website](#). If you need a complaint form sent to you, contact the Attorney General's Office in Phoenix at (602) 542-5763, in Tucson at (520) 628-6648, or outside the Phoenix and Tucson metro areas at (800) 352-8431.

###

## Dem Leader Bolding Reaction to DOJ Probe of Phoenix Police

PHOENIX— House Democratic Leader Reginald Bolding welcomed today's announcement of a U.S. Department of Justice investigation into excessive force, retaliation against protestors and other controversial alleged practices within the Phoenix Police Department. Bolding has pressed for policing reforms for the past six years, including outside investigations of use-of-force cases, but has been frustrated by resistance from some law enforcement leaders and lack of interest in police accountability among the Republican majority.

"Too many times we have seen what happens when law enforcement officials are accountable only to themselves. This investigation of the Phoenix Police Department is a critical step toward accountability for persistent misconduct that has gone unchecked for far too long. We strongly support police officers who are committed to professionalism and who put their life on the line to protect and serve our communities every day. But nobody should turn a blind eye to serious allegations of excessive force, mass arrests of peaceful protestors followed by trumped-up charges of gang crimes and the unwarranted surveillance of activist communities that prompted this investigation. These revelations, though shocking, were not entirely surprising to many of us. Too often we've seen law enforcement leaders in positions of trust fight back against attempts at accountability. Accountability is the key to rebuilding public trust."

## **Rep. Gallego Statement on Department of Justice Investigation of the City of Phoenix and the Phoenix Police Department**

PHOENIX, AZ – *Rep. Ruben Gallego (AZ-07) released the following statement regarding the announcement by Attorney General Merrick B. Garland that the U.S. Justice Department has opened a pattern or practice investigation into the City of Phoenix and the Phoenix Police Department:*

“The need for close examination of policing policies, police behavior and police reform in communities across the nation has never been more clear than in the last several years.

Public safety starts with trust and we have seen repeatedly what happens when systemic racism and institutional injustice erode trust between communities of color and law enforcement. The City of Phoenix has made some important improvements. We know there is always more work to do, which is why the House of Representatives passed the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act earlier this year.

I have confidence that Attorney General Merrick Garland’s review of the Phoenix Police Department and the City of Phoenix will be thorough, transparent and rooted in a commitment to improve public safety for all communities, including communities of color.

Accountability must be the rule, not the exception, and I know the people of my district share this commitment.”

###

## **Arizona Comment on Today’s Dismal Jobs Report**

Historic highs in compensation have not countered historic highs in job openings

**PHOENIX, Aug. 5, 2021**—From Chad Heinrich, Arizona state director for the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), on today’s release of the monthly [Jobs Report](#) from NFIB.

“Arizonans need to get back to work and normalcy. Our state leaders have been making the right moves lately to keep the Arizona small business economy moving forward. Hopefully, the power brokers in Washington DC can take a hint from Arizona before they again look to shutter businesses with untenable mandates and unproven mitigation strategies. Further dictates from the federal government will do nothing but harm Arizona small businesses and the one million people they employ.”

### **Highlights from the [Jobs Report](#)**

- July’s reading of unfilled job openings was 49% a record high and far above the 48-year historical average of 22%
- Forty-three percent of owners have job openings for skilled workers (up three points) and 25% have openings for unskilled workers (up three points). In the construction industry, 59% of the job openings are for skilled workers. Sixty-six percent of construction firms reported few or no qualified applicants for their open positions.
- Seasonally adjusted, a net 38% reported raising compensation, down one point from June’s record high of 39%. A net 27% of owners plan to raise compensation in the next three months, up one point from June and a 48-year record high reading.

### **From NFIB Chief Economist Bill Dunkelberg**

“Small business owners struggled to find qualified workers for their open positions, which has impaired business activity in the busy summer months. Owners are raising compensation to the highest levels in 48 years to attract needed employees.”

NFIB’s Jobs Report is a national snapshot not broken down by state. Today’s results were based on 1,440 respondents to the July survey of a random sample of NFIB’s member firms, surveyed through 7/30/2021. The NFIB Research Foundation has collected Small Business Economic Trends data with quarterly surveys since 1974 and monthly surveys since 1986.

Keep up with the latest on Arizona small business news at [www.nfib.com/arizona](http://www.nfib.com/arizona) or by following NFIB on Twitter @NFIB\_AZ

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## Education Forward Arizona Launches To Close Achievement Gaps And Improve Education Outcomes

### *Three Leading Education Entities Unite to Form New Organization*

PHOENIX (Aug. 5, 2021) — As students across Arizona return to school, [Education Forward Arizona](#) seeks to unite sectors, interests and communities across the state to improve education outcomes and close achievement gaps, from early learning through K-12 and postsecondary attainment. This new organization aims to change the way people think about and support education as the key to improving the economy and the quality of life in Arizona.

“Arizonans want bold action that moves education forward in Arizona,” said Rich Nickel, president and CEO of Education Forward Arizona. “It’s time to close the aspiration gap between what people in the state repeatedly say they want and the underfunded and inequitable system we have. We need to work together, statewide, to find solutions that advance the prosperity of all Arizonans.”

In a launch event this morning featuring leading business, workforce, community and education partners statewide, Education Forward Arizona announced its new name and action plan to ensure all Arizona students can succeed. The organization is the next evolution of the work of three well known education non-profits who joined forces earlier this year — Achieve60AZ, College Success Arizona and Expect More Arizona.

“The launch of Education Forward Arizona is a turning point for education in our state,” said Vince Roig, chair of Education Forward Arizona’s board of directors. “Education and the economy are inextricably linked. To get where we want to go, we need every student to thrive. As a state, we must prioritize supporting our underserved students.”

Education Forward Arizona will focus on building the case for education as an investment and not an expense, collaboratively driving action to close achievement gaps and influencing courageous actions to meet the goals in the [Education Progress Meter](#). The organization will also lead innovative programs to serve primarily low-income and first-generation students to help them reach and complete a postsecondary education.

The organization launches with support from partners from across the state from the education, business, philanthropic, community and nonprofit communities. Launching Education Forward Arizona with these partners demonstrates how the organization sees its mission being achieved — with all sectors and stakeholders working together to build the public and political will needed to meet the goals in the Arizona Education Progress Meter.

To learn more about Education Forward Arizona, visit [educationforwardarizona.org](http://educationforwardarizona.org).

”QUOTE  
OF THE DAY”

“My hat’s off to you, Stew, and other alternative sources of media for being brave to get this truth out.”

– *Rogers, praising a right-wing radio host who claims Covid doesn’t exist and Covid vaccines killed 50,000 people*