



**SAVE OUR  
SCHOOLS**

Strong Schools,  
Strong State

# Why Civic Engagement is Important



# Who We Are



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We are a *nonpartisan,*  
*community-based*  
organization  
fighting for strong *public*  
*schools*  
for a stronger Arizona



# Temp Check

- What do you know about the AZ Legislature or Governor?
- What are some ways you've been engaged around what the Legislature or Governor are doing?



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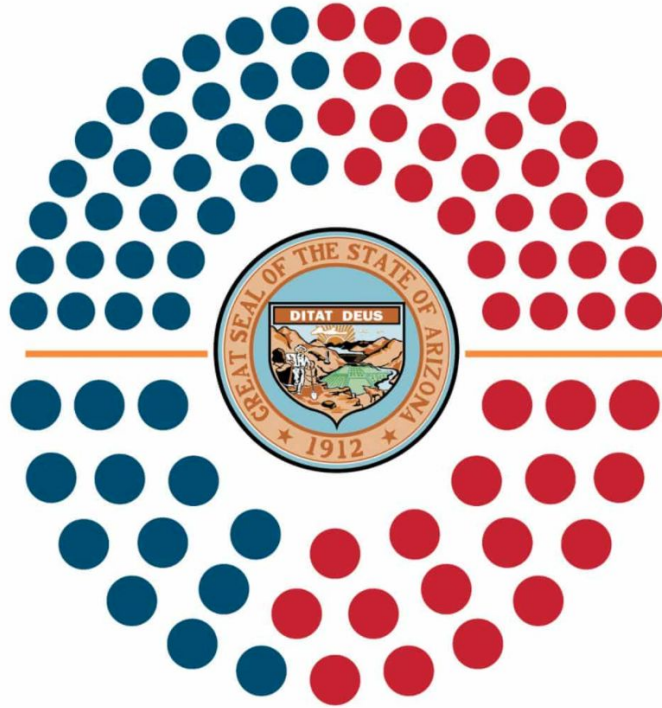
# Arizona State Capitol



# The Room Where it Happens



# 2021 Arizona State Legislature



## House of Representatives

**60 Seats**

 31 Republican

 29 Democrat

Speaker: Rusty Bowers

## Senate

**30 Seats**

 16 Republican

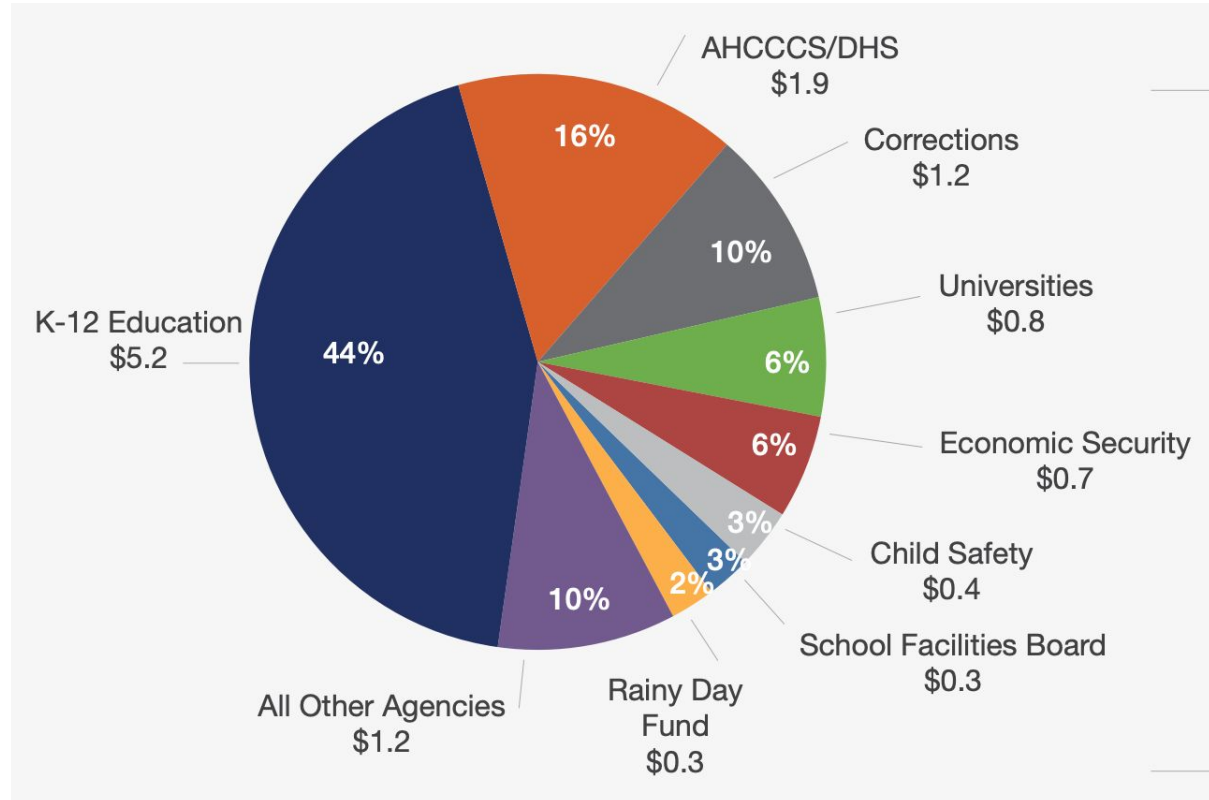
 14 Democrat

President: Karen Fann

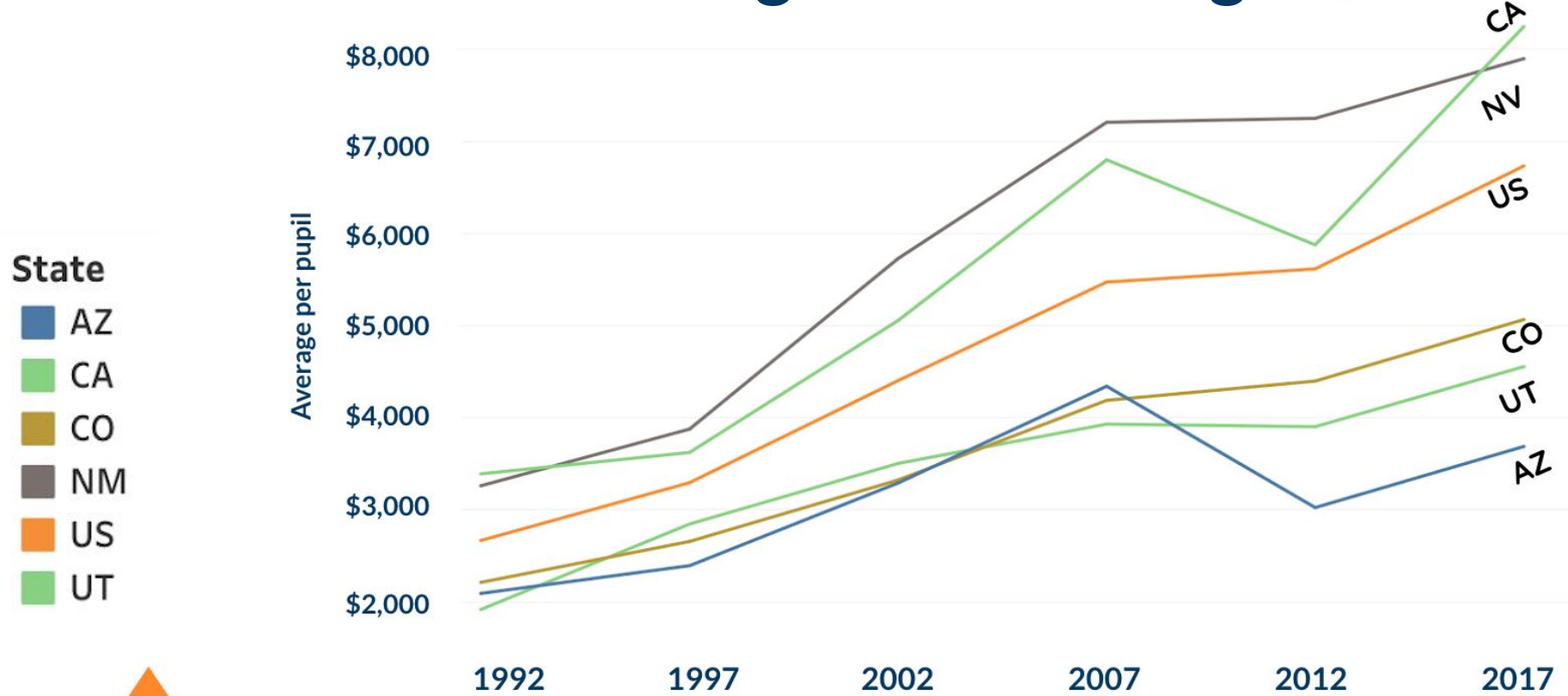


# Arizona's Annual General Fund

- Total: \$11.9 billion in 2020
- K-12 education: 43.5% of budget



# Public Education Funding vs. US Average





# Fighting for AZ's Public Schools



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- AZ Median teacher salary: **48th** in US
- **46th** in per-student spending
- AZ spends **\$5,500 less** per pupil than national average
- **2nd most crowded** class sizes in US

Get the



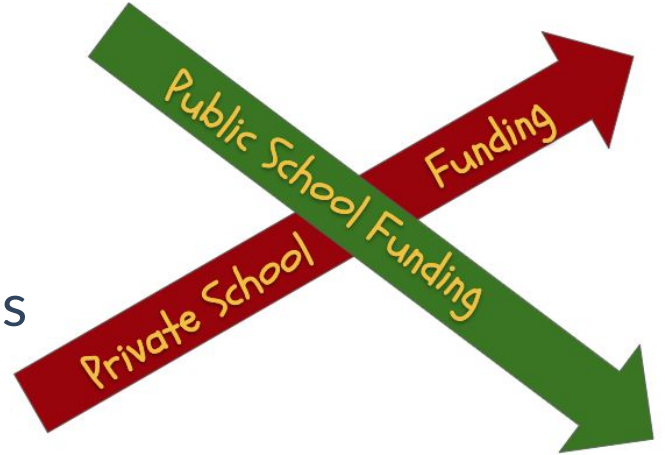
# Fighting for AZ's Public Schools



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- The Privatization Agenda:
  - *Discredit* public schools
  - *Disinvest* in public education
  - *Divert* public funds to private schools
- Despite our classroom crisis, AZ is consistently ranked “#1 in School Choice” by those seeking to privatize public education



# Our Focus



## Support Legislation that:

- Increases investment of public funds in public schools
- Increases transparency and accountability for all schools receiving taxpayer dollars



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## Oppose Legislation that:

- Diverts more public dollars to private schools via ESA vouchers, STO vouchers, etc.

# Our Goals

- Inform and engage parents, teachers, retirees & other citizens all around AZ
- Develop an army of engaged citizens who understand how policy impacts schools & children
- Help citizens engage with lawmakers to gain support for public schools



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# Current Legislation



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**HB2112**, Udall (R-25), bans the teaching on controversial subjects.

**HB2439**, Pingerelli (R-21), would require school boards to approve every single school library book

**SB1159**, Gray (R-21), waters down requirements to become a teacher.

**SB1657**, Boyer (R-20), is a near-universal ESA voucher expansion

**HB2808**, Udall (R-25), takes a punitive approach to “failing schools,” which are mainly low-income, rural, and on reservation lands.



**“Sunlight is the  
best disinfectant.”**



**-LOUIS BRANDEIS**

# The Most Effective Ways to Reach Out to AZ Legislators

1. Meet with them in Person
2. Call YOUR Legislator
3. Call ANY legislator
4. Personal Email
5. RTS
6. Form

Save Our Schools Arizona - [sosarizona.org](https://sosarizona.org)



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# How Do I Stay Informed?



## SOSAZ Legislative Report

Fifty-Fourth Legislature - First General Session

April 28, 2019

### You Can Make a Difference in this Budget

As session stretches on, all eyes are on lawmakers as they work toward a budget. Some lawmakers say they are focusing on a big-picture view of other issues rather than prioritizing education funding. However, Arizona is far from “checking the box” on education funding. Getting our state to just “average” (the national median) would require billions of dollars in additional investment.

As these budget discussions continue, YOUR presence in the House and Senate galleries will help remind lawmakers that our schools remain in desperate need of resources. Educators and students can't be there because they're at school — so we are counting on the amazing SOSAZ network of parents, retirees and concerned citizens to show lawmakers the community supports public schools and wants them to be funded. Don't forget to wear your SOSAZ red and post your reason for attending on social media using #FundOurSchools and #SOSAZ2019.



#### Join Us for the Budget Hearings

**Monday, 1 pm House and Senate**

**Tuesday, 1 pm House 1pm, 1:30 pm Senate**

**Wednesday, 1 pm House, 10 am Senate**

**Thursday, 1 pm House, 10 am Senate**

Times Subject to Change







## Check your email every Sunday for the SOSAZ Legislative Report



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### Calls to Action!

-  **Oppose SB1395**  
Continue to email and call YOUR senator to oppose SB1395.
  - Voters oppose all ESA voucher expansions
  - Allow the bipartisan ESA Task Force to do its job
  - Taxpayers expect more oversight and accountability, not less
-  **Support HB2187**  
Call and email Appropriations Chairman Sen. Gowan to hear HB2187 at [dgowan@azleg.gov](mailto:dgowan@azleg.gov) and (602) 926-5154
-  **Oppose SB1451**  
Call and email your senator to oppose SB1451
-  **Oppose SB1460**  
Call and email your senator to oppose SB1460
-  **Support SB1485**  
Call and email your senator to support SB1485
-  **Oppose SCR1023**  
Call and email your senator to oppose SCR1023

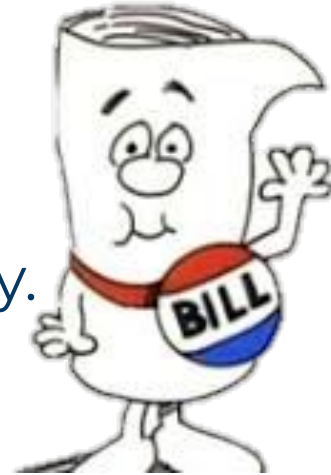


This is a great week to watch your lawmakers debate bills on the floor! The action starts on Monday at 1:15 PM in the House and 1:30 PM in the Senate. [Here's a handy map](#) of how to get there and where to park. If you can't make it downtown, [watch live proceedings online here](#).



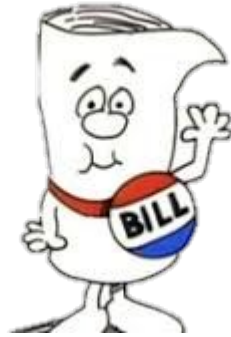
# What is RTS - Request to Speak

- RTS is an **online tool** to give Arizona State legislators your feedback on bills.
- RTS allows you to **register your support or opposition** on a bill and provide the reason why.
- You do not have to speak as the name implies.
- It's an easy way to share your opinions directly with legislators, all from the comfort of your home or kitchen table!



# It's Simple!

find  
your  
voice!



## New Request to Speak

Your position on the item:

-  For
-  Neutral
-  Against

Do you wish to speak?

-  Yes
-  No
-  If Necessary

Comment

250 characters remaining

SUBMIT

# Request to Speak



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- What is Request to Speak?



# Request to Speak

- Sunday-Monday a.m.
- Sign up today:  
[tinyurl.com/RTSSOS](https://tinyurl.com/RTSSOS)



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# But ... What Do I Say?



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- Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_ and I live in LD\_\_. (Add a personal note about your connection with schools).
- I want to thank {Lawmaker's title and name} for supporting **public** schools.
- I am concerned about / supportive of {Bill #} because (give your reasoning based on weekly report, a simple sentence will do).
- **Their staffer will record your position. That's it!**

# But... What Do I Say?



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## Do:

- Trust your voice and tell your story
- Speak to the issue
- Try to offer a positive
- Clearly state your position



## Don't:

- Attack the staffer
- Demean the lawmaker or their party affiliation
- Use swear words or get angry

# Advocating at the Capitol

- Schedule a meeting with your lawmaker(s)
- Call ahead and make an appt
- Similar advice to calls: introduce yourself, explain why you believe in public schools, and why you believe the need more investments
- Bring a friend! Feel free to bring handwritten notes, etc.



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# Advocating at the Capitol



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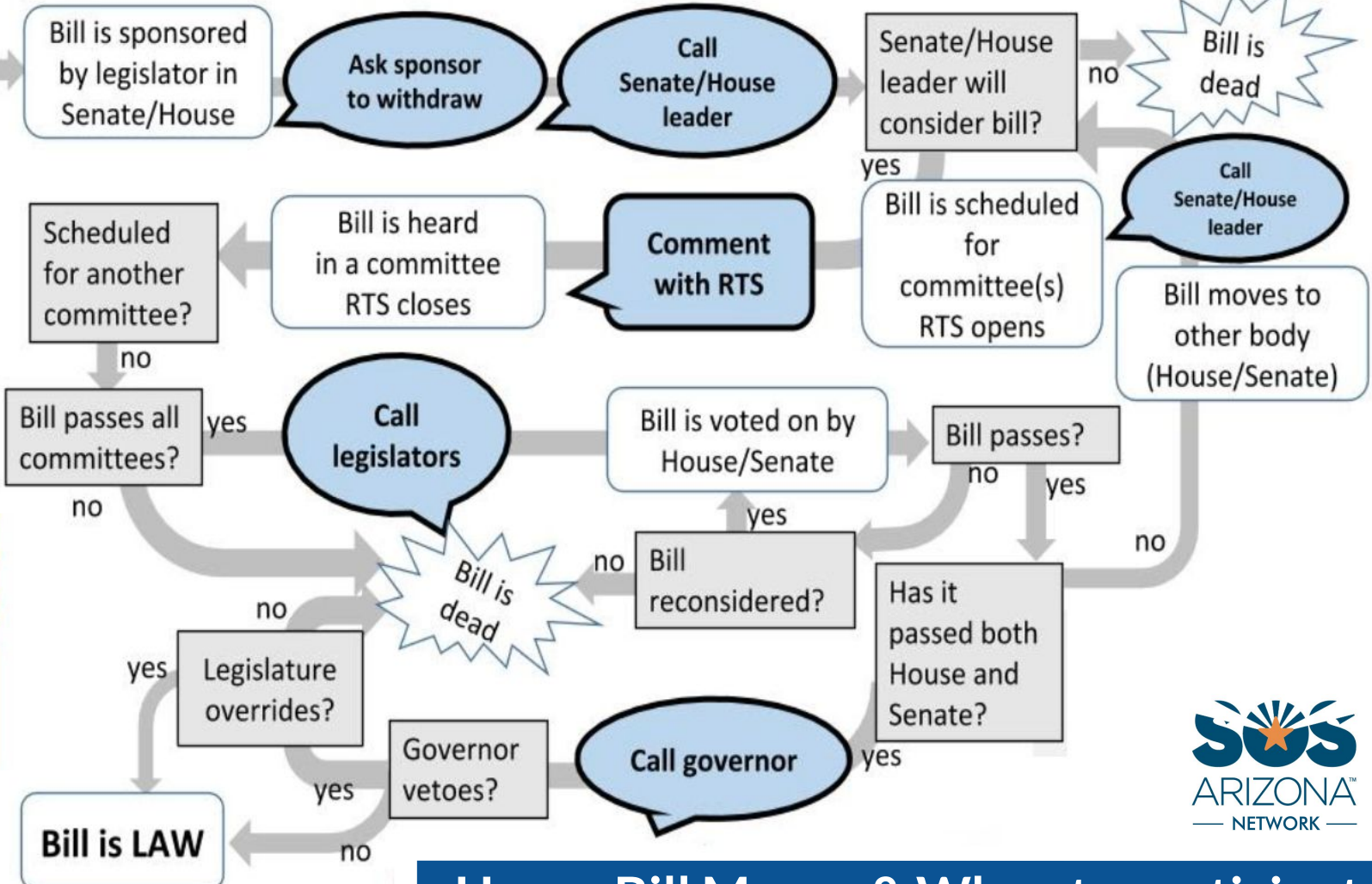
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- Attend a committee hearing or sit in the Gallery
- Follow our Facebook to find out when and where your support is most needed
- Wear your SOSAZ red
- Your mere presence matters
- If you want to testify, we can help





# Start of Legislative Session



## How a Bill Moves & When to participate

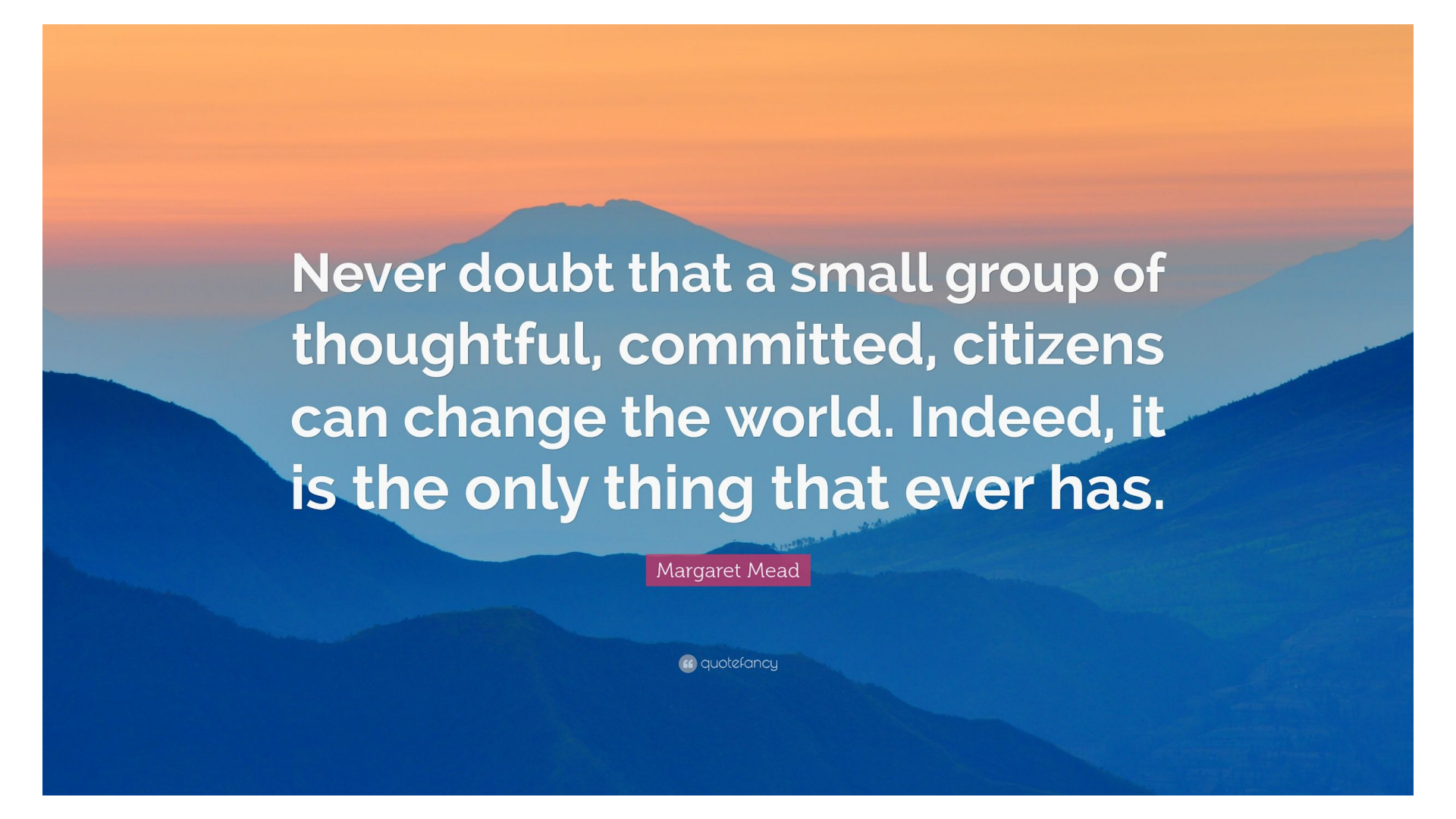
# What More Can I Do?



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- Join a local Community Action Team
- Request a Presentation! [tinyurl.com/SOSpresent](https://tinyurl.com/SOSpresent)
- Share this information with friends



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead



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**Questions?**

**info@sosarizona.org**  
**sosesp@sosarizona.org**