Arizona legislators continued their break most of this week, as Republican leaders participated in closed-door budget negotiations with Governor Katie Hobbs (D). The House did not hold any floor sessions, but the Senate convened on Monday to give preliminary approval to a bill that alters parenting time standards and a ballot measure that would ban school district support for labor organizations.

Legislative Leaders to Determine Which Proposals Go to Voters

The ballot measure that the Senate advanced this week is just one of many proposals that have moved through most of the legislative process. Before the end of the legislative session, House Speaker Steve Montenegro (R-Goodyear) and Senate President Warren Petersen (R-Gilbert) will decide which of those proposals will have the chance to go to the November ballot.

Legislative leaders have a variety of motivations as they decide what – and how many – proposals will go to voters. In addition to the policy topics of the ballot referrals, they will also consider the political dynamics, including which voters may support or oppose the measures and which advocacy groups may fund campaigns for or against them.

These topics are still eligible to go to voters this year:

- Elections & Campaign Finance

  Several proposals would amend Arizona's election laws and processes – including voter ID standards, early voting requirements, and limited dates for local government elections. Other measures would enact stricter requirements for those who circulate local government ballot measures, change Arizona's redistricting process, ban foreign contributions to Arizona ballot measures, and exempt more political contributions from campaign finance disclosure requirements.

- Firing Squads

  A House measure would expand Arizona's death penalty options to include execution by firing squad, as well as by lethal injection or lethal gas.

- Gender

  Legislators have advanced two proposals that would prohibit transgender athletes in school sports or athletic facilities and direct school policies for student pronouns and gender-related bathrooms.

©2026 Copper State Consulting Group

- **Healthcare & Public Health**
  Two House proposals would prohibit medical mandates and order an audit of Arizona's Medicaid program.

- **Judicial Retirement**
  A Senate measure seeks to raise the mandatory retirement age for Arizona judges.

- **Legislative Changes & Salaries**
  Lawmakers have supported proposals to raise legislators' salaries and adjust their salaries to account for inflation. Other measures would add more legislative districts, establish residency standards for legislators, and start legislative sessions a little later.

- **Photo Radar**
  Two proposals would ban photo radar, unless local voters opted to keep existing photo radar systems.

- **Preferential Treatment**
  A measure sponsored by House Speaker Steve Montenegro (R-Goodyear) would prohibit state government from implementing preferential treatment related to race or ethnicity.

- **Revenues**
  Two proposals would block local government increases to taxes or fees and make it more difficult for the state to increase fees.

- **Schools**
  In addition to the proposal to limit school districts' ability to support labor organizations and ban teacher strikes in school districts and charter schools, it is still possible that voters could consider an extension of Proposition 123, the state's now-expired funding for education. The details of the measure have been a longstanding point of disagreement between Governor Hobbs and legislative Republicans, but the topic could still be on the table as budget negotiations continue.

The November ballot will already include three proposals that legislators approved last year:

- A proposed limit on cities' ability to impose taxes on household food purchases
- A designation of drug cartels as terrorist organizations, and a requirement that the state do everything possible to address them as a threat
- A ban on government taxes or fees that are based on the number of vehicle miles driven

©2026 Copper State Consulting Group

Senate Panel Divided on Governor's Military Affairs Nominee

This week, the Senate Director Nominations Committee interviewed Governor Hobbs's nominee to lead the Arizona Department of Emergency & Military Affairs. The panel voted to recommend John Conley's confirmation, though two Republicans opposed the nominee and tension escalated over ICE involvement in Arizona communities.

The full Senate has not yet voted on Director Conley's nomination. Other agency directors are still awaiting Senate consideration, as well.

What's Next?

Governor Hobbs has lifted her bill moratorium now that bipartisan budget talks resumed. While the House remains adjourned until June 1, the Senate plans to work Monday and hold more hearings on the Governor's nominees throughout the week.

In the Courts

Former Rep. David Marshall faces a legal challenge to his new job as Navajo County Recorder. Republican lawmakers might sue over Pima County's limits on ICE. A superior court judge denied Maricopa County Supervisors' request to delay his ruling in an ongoing dispute over election authority. A judge said Rep. Rachel Keshel (R-Tucson) did not prove the identity of her online critic. Pinal County officials are back in court. Courts are still considering legal challenges about voter data. Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes (D) and Republican legislative leaders disagree on Arizona's abortion laws.

In the News

The nonpartisan Arizona Auditor General found misspending in the Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) program, leading to bipartisan calls for improvement. Another audit identified potential misspending of opioid settlement funds. The Attorney General and Sen. Carine Werner (R-Scottsdale) traded sharp words about AHCCCS fraud. The federal government is looking at a 10-year plan for Colorado River water. Federal changes on marijuana impact Arizona. AHCCCS is using AI to detect and prevent fraud as the agency goes through changes. Republican lawmakers are proud of their support for the Make Arizona Healthy Again movement. The U.S. Wildland Fire Service Chief shared his priorities. Governor Hobbs joined agricultural representatives to discuss the upcoming expiration of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement. Tucson schools are preparing to serve students from the Arizona School for Deaf and Blind. A new poll says Arizonans care about water.

©2026 Copper State Consulting Group