STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KATIE HOBBS
GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

The Honorable Warren Petersen
President of the Senate
1700 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

President Petersen,

Re: SB1523, SB1524, SB1525, SB1526, SB1527, SB1528, SB1529, SB1530, SB1531, SB1532, SB1533, SB1534, SB1535

Today I vetoed SB1523, along with the twelve other FY2024 budget bills that were transmitted to my office.

Five weeks ago, I stood before the legislature and, invoking the words of the late Governor Rose Mofford, asked the members to work with me in making "difficult choices" about the future of our state. I spoke about the need to address Arizona's housing crisis, to make college more affordable, to put money back in the pockets of working families, and to truly invest in public education.

Four days later, I delivered a budget proposal to the legislature that makes meaningful progress on these exact issues. As rent and housing prices have skyrocketed, my budget includes a historic investment in the Housing Trust Fund to help keep people in their homes and off the street. As everyday costs have increased and strained household budgets, I proposed a plan to put more money into the pockets of working families. As cutting-edge companies relocate to Arizona, my budget makes major investments in college scholarships and dual enrollment programs, to ensure we're preparing our students for the jobs of the future. And, perhaps above all else, my budget makes it clear that for as long as I'm Governor, Arizona will prioritize investment in public education.

Along with these immediate investments, my budget proposal puts a quarter of a billion dollars in the Rainy Day Fund, *and* leaves a quarter of a billion dollars on the table to ensure a healthy structural balance.

Unfortunately, despite my call to take on these difficult choices and protect our state's future, the budget approved by a slim, partisan majority in the legislature takes another path. An easy path. Rather than tackling *difficult* choices, this budget presents Arizonans with *false* choices.

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This purely-partisan budget says that we can't invest in our state now and invest in our future. It says that we can't address the challenges of today and save for the challenges of tomorrow. It says that as Democrats and Republicans, we can't disagree with each other and work together in the best interest of the state.

I reject these false choices because I'm an optimist, particularly when it comes to Arizona. I'm confident that we can work together on a budget that addresses our state's housing crisis, lowers costs, prepares our workforce, and invests in public education. I know that the people of Arizona didn't send us here to do the easy thing. They sent us here to do the right thing.

As we move forward this legislative session, I hope that all elected officials--regardless of party affiliation—will remain open to bipartisan discussion, solutions, and compromise. The people of Arizona demand it. So let's get to work.

Sincerely,

Katie Hobbs
Governor
State of Arizona

Cc:
House Speaker Ben Toma
Representative David Livingston
Secretary Adrian Fontes
Secretary of the Senate
Chief Clerk of the House
Arizona News Service