



## A Proven Failure in Colorado is A Bad Idea for Arizona

In 1992, Colorado passed a constitutional amendment known as TABOR. Since that time, Colorado residents have experienced a deterioration of education, health care, public safety, and transportation. On November 1, 2005, Colorado voters said enough was enough: they passed a referendum to suspend TABOR. Despite this evidence of the failure of TABOR, there are strong efforts to enact it in other states, including Arizona. Children's Action Alliance joins a broad coalition of firefighters, teachers, senior citizens, business leaders, community organizations, and voters to keep TABOR out of Arizona.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT TABOR

TABOR, the acronym for the deceptively named Taxpayer's Bill of Rights, is a constitutional amendment that imposes an arbitrary formula chaining government revenues to population growth and inflation rates. This is a formula for failure that reduces the effectiveness of government and leads to crises in education, health care, transportation, and public safety.

There are various versions of TABOR and some have different names. TABOR supporters are saying they have newer versions that fix the problems from Colorado. But this is simply a deceptive attempt at selling the same bad product in new packaging. Any version of TABOR that ties state budget decisions to an arbitrary formula based on population and inflation is a bad idea for Arizona. Any version of TABOR damages the assets that voters value most – education, health care, transportation, and public safety.

No simple formula can reflect Arizona's values and evolve to keep up with our changing world. What happens when our prison population grows far faster than our overall population? What happens when health care costs grow faster than regular inflation? What happens when natural disasters or the spread of new diseases create the need for different health and safety efforts? TABOR steals from Arizona's quality of life.

### THE COLORADO EXPERIMENT

The only state to live with TABOR has been Colorado, which learned, firsthand, about its devastating impacts. Under TABOR, Colorado residents saw:

- The state drop from 35th to 49th in the nation in K-12 education spending as a share of the overall economy;
- The state's percentage of fully vaccinated 3-year olds sink to last in the nation;
- The share of low-income children covered by health insurance fall to last in the nation;
- Higher property taxes for 100,000 senior citizens who lost their exemptions;
- 39% of the state's roads deteriorate to poor conditions;
- The closure of 33 driver's license offices, resulting in longer lines and longer waits; and
- Continuous reductions in higher education funding and huge increases in college tuition. (It was estimated that state funding for Colorado's universities would completely disappear as early as 2009.)

Because of TABOR, Colorado residents also saw large increases in many different fees for services and permits. These higher costs more than cancelled out the few tax rebates residents received.

### TABOR EFFORTS IN ARIZONA

Despite the overwhelming evidence against TABOR, there are still some people who want to bring it to Arizona. Legislation to put TABOR on Arizona's ballot has been introduced the past three years. State Representative Russell Pearce has introduced TABOR again this year with HCR2022.

*Bad Idea continued on page 5*



- 2 **Commentary**
- 3 **Inside CAA**
- 3 **AZ Ranks 41 in Kids Count**
- 4 **First Things First**
- 5 **Child Care Top Priority**
- 6 **Thank You Donors**
- 7 **Foster Care**
- 7 **Payday Loans Need Regulation**
- 8 **CAA Publications**

LET'S FIX THE ROOF



According to our legislators, Arizona has at least a \$700 million “surplus” going into the 2006 legislative session.

Webster’s dictionary defines the word “surplus” as: “a quantity or amount over and above what is needed; something left over; excess.”

If I have put off fixing my roof, my hot water heater needs to be replaced, and those termites are still in the attic, and then my boss gives me a surprise year-end bonus, should I consider this a “surplus” and buy that jazzy BMW that I always wanted? Or should I spend it on those fundamental items that are “needed” for my house to be solid? Or perhaps I shouldn’t accept the bonus at all and “give it back” to my boss.

This is the choice our policy makers will be making in the next few months. Should they fix the Arizona house so that foundational needs that have long been neglected are met, or should they further deplete the general fund through tax cuts or finding new things to buy?

I believe the choice is clear. Arizona has no “surplus.” We don’t have money “over and above what is needed.” For many years we have allowed pieces of our house to crumble. Just a few examples:

- We have failed to adequately fund child care for working families and at one point even put 9,300 kids on a waiting for child care.
- We rank fourth worst in the nation for children without health insurance.
- Forty-eight percent of our 4th graders score below basic reading levels.
- Our high school drop out rate remains unacceptably high.
- Our state employees’ salaries are nearly 22 percent below the Arizona market, leading to turnover that is costly to taxpayers.
- And the School Facility Building Renewal to maintain school buildings is being funded at almost half of what the law calls for.

Despite this neglect, in the last legislative session, Arizona lawmakers enacted a variety of new tax cuts. As shown in the graph on this page, these tax cuts start out as small amounts, but they are scheduled to grow to more than \$300 million each year in the next ten years.

This legislative session we have a wonderful opportunity to shore up Arizona’s house. Because we can’t depend on the bonus every year, we need to be careful. At the same time, we have a responsibility to address those commitments that have not been funded in order to make them work.

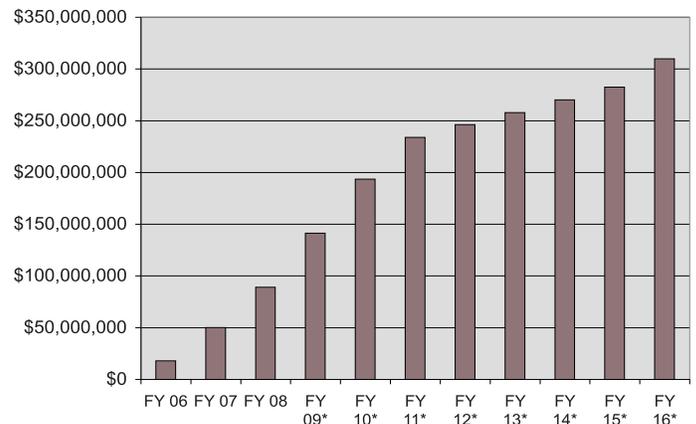
So- here’s what we think we need to do to prop up the Arizona house BEFORE any new tax cuts are considered:

- Replenish the Rainy Day fund according to the formula, so that in future years we have a real emergency fund on which we can depend.
- Increase the child care rates from the 1998 to the 2004 market survey and make sure we don’t have any more waiting lists.
- Add more child care licensing staff so that every center is visited as often as required by law.
- Provide decent raises for state employees so that there are stable and qualified people doing the important things they are supposed to do like protecting our children from abuse and neglect.
- Provide funding for substance abuse treatment, guardianship and adoption services so that abused and neglected children can live in safe and permanent homes.
- Fund early childhood education programs that are guided by science and values so that opportunities for successful lives are maximized for all of our children.

I have decided to use my bonus to take care of those long neglected needs. Let’s all work hard in the coming legislative session to convince our lawmakers to do the same.

*Carol Kamin*  
 Carol Kamin is President/CEO of Children’s Action Alliance.

TAX CUTS PASSED IN 2005 SCHEDULED TO GROW TO MORE THAN \$300 MILLION A YEAR



On December 28, Arizona lost a proud and persistent advocate for children and poor families with the passing of Monsignor Edward Ryle. Monsignor Ryle was a clear and caring voice for justice in Arizona policy. We will miss him dearly. His determination and kindness will continue to inspire our advocacy.

## Christine Nowaczyk



Christine Nowaczyk joined the Children's Action Alliance Board of Directors in 2005. Christine serves as Vice President and Relationship Manager for the Commercial Banking Division of JPMorgan Chase and frequently represents the company at community events benefiting organizations such as AWEE, Childhelp, Florence Crittenton, Phoenix Family Museum, Phoenix Children's Hospital and the Desert Botanical Gardens. Christine also participates in the Enterprise Network, Financial Executives International and is a member of the Arizona chapter of the Association for Financial Professionals. She also serves as a volunteer for the local LPGA/Safeway golf tournament. "As the mother of two young girls, I appreciate the voice CAA provides for all Arizona children. The work we do raises important awareness that leads to kids having the opportunity to achieve their full potential."

Trained as a commercial credit underwriter, Christine has fourteen years of banking experience in both the retail and commercial lines of business. Christine relocated to Phoenix from Ann Arbor, Michigan in 1999. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in finance from Michigan State University and an MBA from Eastern Michigan University.

Christine is married to Steve Nowaczyk, a professional engineer, and they have two daughters. CAA welcomes Christine and her commitment and community involvement on its Board.

## CAA Welcomes New Staff

CAA welcomes Chad Campbell as its new Director of Community Outreach. Chad will be working to build community coalitions and to defeat TABOR. Chad has a range of experience in grass roots advocacy and electoral campaigns. In 2004 he managed two successful primary and general campaigns for state House candidates and also managed two successful ballot measure campaigns. Chad also led voter education and mobilization work with the Arizona Advocacy Network and the Arizona Leadership Institute. He holds a bachelor's degree in environmental sciences from Northern Arizona University.

CAA welcomes new board members Mark Lodato, Investigative Reporter with KPHO Channel 5, and Steve Mittenenthal, Executive Director of Ellis Center for Educational Excellence. CAA is grateful for the commitment and dedication they bring to Arizona's children.

## Kids Count Report Shows Arizona Needs to Strengthen Education



The 2005 KIDS COUNT Data Book, a state-by-state ranking of child well-being produced by the Annie E. Casey Foundation in Baltimore, ranks Arizona as tied for worst in the nation in high school dropouts, and 41st overall for child well-being. Arizona ranks 43rd for the percent of fourth graders who are at or above proficient reading levels, a key indicator linked to later school success or failure.

The data book includes some good news, with Arizona moving up slightly from last year's ranking of 45th, passing Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, and West Virginia.

Arizona was one of only four states to show improvement in the rate of low-birth weight babies. This is Arizona's best ranking indicator at 14th in the nation.

Here is how Arizona ranks on key indicators:

Overall	41
Low birth-weight babies	14
Teen death rate	40
Teen birth rate	47
Rate of high school dropouts	49
Children living in poverty	41
Single parent families	43

# “Through The Eyes Of A Child” Gala Helps Open Doors for Arizona Children

Nearly 400 friends of CAA gathered to celebrate the joys of childhood and commit to improve the health, education, and security of Arizona’s children at Children’s Action Alliance’s seventh annual Through the Eyes of a Child gala. The gala, held at the Doubletree Paradise Valley Resort on October 29, was chaired by Richard Silverman, General Manager of Salt River Project. This year’s TEOC theme “Opening Doors,” was the most successful ever, raising close to \$230,000 for CAA’s research and advocacy work on behalf of Arizona’s children and families.



State Senator Carolyn Allen, Steve Mittenthal, and Carol Kamin celebrate Through the Eyes of a Child.

The evening included the presentation of the Jacques Steiner Public Leadership Award for Children to Senator Carolyn Allen in honor of her tenacious and courageous leadership in protecting the health and wellbeing of Arizona’s children.

Dr. Steve Mittenthal, President and CEO of the Arizona Community Foundation (ACF), received the Horace Steele Child Advocacy Award. Under Dr. Mittenthal’s 22 years of leadership, ACF has achieved remarkable gains in its capacity to fund important programs and services for Arizona children and families.

Guests enjoyed a silent auction of artwork donated by some of Arizona’s most talented school-age artists, and a live auction provided guests with the opportunity to bid on creative art pieces donated by Deb McAnder, Brian Lensink, and LeRoy DeJolie. Performers from Valley Youth Theatre provided lively musical entertainment for the enjoyment of guests.

## First Things First Ballot Effort Will Support Early Learning and Health

Children’s Action Alliance joins a broad-based coalition to support a statewide ballot initiative for young children. The initiative, known as **First Things First**, is designed to provide families and young children with the tools they need to start kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. If approved by voters, this initiative will increase funding for early childhood development and health programs by \$150 million annually. The funds will come from a state tax on tobacco products. Local councils who know the needs of children in their communities will distribute the funding to voluntary services for children and parents, such as parenting coaching, high quality child care and preschool, and linkages to health care.

Forty years of research, coupled with groundbreaking scientific discoveries, has shown us how early learning experiences directly impact children’s long-term educational success through their language skills, thought process, self confidence, discipline and values. First Things First will give many more Arizona children the opportunity for quality early learning and care.

For more information on how you can help get First Things First on the November 2006 ballot, visit [www.firstthingsfirstaz.com](http://www.firstthingsfirstaz.com) or call 602-266-5118.

## CAN WE FIND YOU WHEN WE NEED YOU? WE NEED YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS!

Please complete this form with your email address so that we can send you brief and timely updates on the key votes for children in our state capitol and the action steps you can take to make a difference.

If you prefer, you can send an email with your information to [abarnes@azchildren.org](mailto:abarnes@azchildren.org). Please put all your contact information in the body of the email. Thanks for helping us keep in touch!

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## Bad Idea *continued from page 1*

There are also two groups that have been talking about running an initiative campaign for TABOR either in 2006 or 2008. With these two groups – the Arizona Free Enterprise Club and the Arizona Federation of Taxpayers – the threat of TABOR remains very real.

### UNITED EFFORT NEEDED TO DEFEAT TABOR

TABOR proponents won't tell voters that Arizona already has several effective constitutional limitations on state taxes and spending. And they won't tell voters that Arizona already ranks at or near the bottom in the nation in class size, student reading and math scores, and health care coverage for children. If TABOR were to pass in Arizona, it would lock us out of progress and opportunities and would move us backwards in education, health care, and public safety.

TABOR is not a solution to any of the challenges facing our state. In fact, it will only create more problems for us over the course of time. As Colorado residents learned, TABOR is nothing more than a formula for failure.

We need your help in showing Arizona voters why TABOR is a false promise that creates huge problems.

*To learn more about TABOR and to join the effort to defeat it, please visit: [www.azchildren.org](http://www.azchildren.org) or call or email Chad Campbell at [ccampbell@azchildren.org](mailto:ccampbell@azchildren.org) and 602-266-0707.*

## UPDATING CHILD CARE RATES SHOULD BE TOP PRIORITY FOR 2006



A recent survey of Arizona's child care centers points to a pressing need to update the subsidy the state pays to low income working parents. Today's rate is still based on 1998 costs, and Arizona is one of only four states in the nation still paying rates that are so far out of date. Child care is a top priority for children during the 2006 legislative session, and Children's

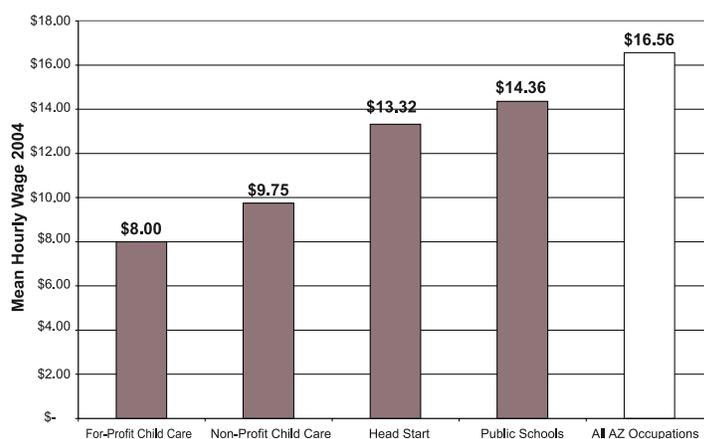
Action Alliance supports SB 1196, introduced by State Senator Carolyn Allen. This legislation would require this state to keep the child care rates up-to-date.

The telephone survey of all licensed early education employers (excluding home-based businesses) shows the median hourly wage for all Arizona early education teachers in 2004 was only \$9.00 per hour. This amount is 46% below the average hourly wage statewide in 2004. The median wage for early education teachers working in for-profit child care centers was even lower – only \$8.00 per hour.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, child care workers in Arizona earned lower wages in 2003 than coatroom attendants, hair stylists, and animal trainers.

The survey clearly shows that resources from public schools, federal Head Start funds and private, faith-based and charitable donations work to boost the quality of child care. As a result, children learning in these settings benefit from teachers with more education and more stability in employment.

EARLY EDUCATION TEACHERS EARN LOW WAGES



But half of Arizona's early education teachers work in for-profit child care centers without these additional resources. For these centers, Arizona's out-of-date child care rates depress the wages and benefits they can pay and prevent them from hiring and retaining teachers with more education and training.

"Shortchanging child care is shortchanging our future," said Carol Kamin, President and CEO of Children's Action Alliance. "With the state facing a much healthier financial outlook, we ask legislators and the Governor to take the next step for early education and update the child care rates."

*For more information or a copy of the survey results, contact Dana Naimark at [dnaimark@azchildren.org](mailto:dnaimark@azchildren.org) or 602-266-0707.*

# Donors

The work of Children's Action Alliance is made possible through the support of hundreds of individuals, organizations, businesses and foundations. We gratefully acknowledge your contribution toward sustaining and strengthening the voice for Arizona's children. Listed below are those who have contributed \$35 or more between **May 1, 2005, and October 31, 2005**. Without you, there would be no voice.



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## Become a member of CAA's Champion for Children Circle

CAA's Champions for Children Circle recognizes the support of individual, corporate and foundation donors who give a yearly gift of \$1,000 or more.

Membership in the Champions for Children Circle represents an investment in Children's Action Alliance that helps us move closer to the day when all Arizona kids have health insurance; every child is ready for school and graduates ready to succeed; every child has a place to call home; no child endures the ravages of neglect and abuse;

and families leaving welfare have the support they need to succeed.

Throughout the year, CAA Champion for Children Circle members will receive special opportunities for involvement with CAA activities, such as meeting guest speakers and national experts on various children's issues and receiving copies of new research reports and publications.

*For more information about the Champion for Children Circle, please call Judy Wabruff at 602-266-0707.*

*We welcome your support! To make a donation to Children's Action Alliance, call Judy Wabruff at 602-266-0707 or donate on-line at [www.azchildren.org](http://www.azchildren.org)*

## CAA Symposium Puts a Spotlight on Young Children in Foster Care

CAA will bring together policymakers, community organizations, and citizen leaders for a luncheon symposium on Young Children in Foster Care: Nurturing Their Well-Being, Wednesday, February 22, 2006, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Phoenix.

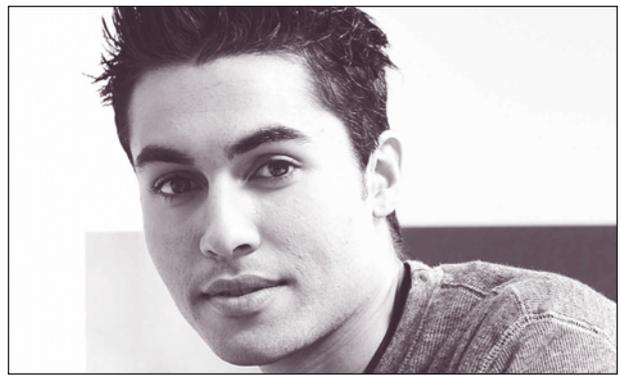
The symposium features Dr. Jack Shonkoff, Professor of Human Development and Social Policy at Brandeis University. Dr. Shonkoff, a pediatrician, chairs the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, a group of leading scientists who are working to bring accurate information to state capitols as public decisions are made affecting the lives of young children.

Dr. Shonkoff co-edited the well known report of the Institute of Medicine and the National Research Council, *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*

We all know that child abuse and neglect can be devastating to a child's development. And current scientific findings can tell us much more about how our child welfare system can provide stable care and loving attention to help young foster children develop the security, confidence and trust they so desperately need. Dr. Shonkoff will discuss how science, policy, and practice can close the gap between what we know and what we do to advance the healthy development of young children.

The cost of the symposium is \$30 per person.

*For registration or more information, please contact Beth Rosenberg at 602-266-0707 or brosenberg@azchildren.org, or register at [www.azchildren.org](http://www.azchildren.org).*



## CAA JOINS NATIONAL PROJECT TO STRENGTHEN FOSTER CARE

Children's Action Alliance is proud to join a new partnership, called *Home at Last*, working to reform foster care throughout the nation. Supported by a grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts, *Home at Last* will work nationally and in a few targeted states to improve the federal financing and court oversight of foster care.

"While foster care is intended to be a temporary refuge, too many foster youth spend years in the system and experience turbulence as they drift from placement to placement," said Miriam Aroni Krinsky, Executive Director of *Home at Last*. "Within two years of 'aging out' of foster care, more than half of former foster youth are unemployed, almost a third will become homeless, and one in five will be incarcerated."

*Home at Last* will focus on improving the safety and permanence of foster care. Children's Action Alliance will work with Arizona's Administrative Office of the Courts to enhance the training for all judges who serve on the juvenile dependency bench. CAA will also convene a youth summit and develop strategies to make sure young people in foster care have a real voice in the system.

## Stronger Regulation Should Protect Families from High Rates of Payday Loans

You have probably noticed payday loan shops cropping up on most major intersections near your home and place of work. This new industry is growing because of new state laws Arizona passed in 2000 that allow these very short-term loans and exempt them from existing caps on interest rates.

For working families who live paycheck to paycheck and face unplanned expenses, such as car repair or medical bills, payday loans offer cash that seems quick and easy. But with fees equal to 350% annual interest or more, these loans often lead families further into financial crisis. Instead of benefiting families, payday loans trap them into high-cost debt. Families moving from welfare to work are targeted. And the U.S. Department of Defense lists payday lending as one of the top ten issues affecting the quality of life of American soldiers.

There is growing concern across Arizona about the practices that are allowed by the payday loan industry. Payday loan fees far exceed any other interest rates allowed by state or federal law. Five cities in Arizona are in the process or have already regulated payday lenders through zoning regulations. But the problems require statewide attention. CAA is working with a variety of community partners and state lawmakers to improve the state law. We can protect families with a law that reduces the maximum fees, allows partial repayments of the loan without penalty, reduces the number of loan renewals, and requires full disclosure to consumers of actual costs.

*For more information, contact Penelope Jacks at (520) 795-4199 or [penelopejacks@alumni.grinnell.edu](mailto:penelopejacks@alumni.grinnell.edu)*

## Publications Available From Children's Action Alliance

**NEW!** Strengthening Families – bulletin highlights key budget and tax issues facing Arizona in 2006.

**UPDATED!** Healthcare Programs for Arizona's Uninsured – resource manual with easy-to-use index to low-cost health insurance and health services available to adults and children.

Compensation and Credentials: A Survey of Arizona's Early Education Workforce – describes the wages, benefits, and education levels of early childhood teachers and makes recommendations to strengthen the workforce and the education of young children.

Terminating Parental Rights by Jury Trial in Arizona: A First Year Look – examines the consequences of the new legislation giving parents the option to request a jury trial (rather than a trial by a judge) when children have been neglected or abused.

Transitions: Building Better Lives for Youth Leaving Foster Care – examines the dramatic challenges facing abused and neglected youth on their own at age 18 and recommends action steps to give them a solid transition to adulthood.

KIDS COUNT 2005 Data Book – ranks Arizona compared to other states on ten indicators of conditions for children.

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## Mark Your Calendar

for CAA's special engagement of Danny, King of the Basement, presented at the Herberger Theater on Friday, February 10 at 7:00 p.m., by Childsplay.

Also mark your calendar for CAA's Child Welfare Symposium, Wednesday, February 22, at 11:30 a.m.

Also mark your calendar for CAA's Annual Meeting and Champion for Children celebration on Thursday, March 9, at 5:30 p.m.

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