

A recap of 2015 legislative action for education –

As you are aware, the **budget deal was devastating to education at all levels: K-12, community colleges and higher education.** The legislature declined to fund the inflationary payments as directed by the courts but did divert \$24 million from the state to guarantee loans so that unregulated charter school businesses can expand.

- The efforts to undue **Common Core** were held off and, thus, all of the work and money already invested since 2010 has been preserved-- at least for the present. The Governor has called for a major review and study of the standards.

- **Opt out of testing** legislation FAILED -- probably because it would have cost the state a great deal in loss of federal funds.

-**The punitive school information bill**, SB1172, which would have prohibited and also penalized those responsible for the release of needed information to the public - FAILED.

-**SB1173 expanding the required information on override or bond elections** FAILED.

-Two of the bills for expanding eligibility for Empowerment Scholarships -- SB 1088 striker bill and HB2250 both FAILED **HOWEVER SB 1332 expanding ESAs to more than 70,000 students living within the boundaries of any Indian Reservation in the state passed and, thus** pulls money out of the public schools on Reservations in favor of private and religious schools. Passage of this bill was probably one of the buy-outs to get Begay's vote on the budget -- the single vote which permitted passage of the budget.

We appreciate all of the contacts to legislators and letters to the editors written in support of AAUW positions on education.

The **AZ Education Initiative** - to correct the narrative is still in existence. Unfortunately, I had some extenuating family circumstances which precluded my energy and time pushing it and apparently some branches thought the project was put on hold. Some reports have been received and we would be happy to receive reports from any members who can still conduct an interview and write up their findings.

