

## ***ITAA Meeting Minutes October 7, 2024***

### **Guest Speaker Joshua Polacheck, Democratic candidate for the Arizona Corporation**

**Commission:** This commission sets utility rates and develops long-term strategies for energy use in Arizona. The current commission is dominated by Republicans so with the Democrats running we have the opportunity to flip the Corporation Commission and chart an environmentally friendly public utility course for the state.

Joshua grew up across the rural West as the son of an immigrant and a doctor in the Indian Health Service, where he saw firsthand the value of public service. He settled in Tucson and after college, he was commissioned into the Foreign Service and spent nearly two decades overseas. While in the Service, he was a union member and, in Santo Domingo, the elected union representative. His diplomatic tours included Mosul, Beirut, and Islamabad. He left the State Department after the 2016 election because his oath to the Constitution took precedence over my career. After graduating with a Master's in Public Administration from the Harvard Kennedy School, he and his spouse decided to return home to Arizona to raise their daughter. In 2020, as executive director, he led the Pima County Democratic Party to its most successful presidential election year ever. After seeing the importance of the race to securing Arizona's economic future, addressing climate change and injustice, and preserving American democracy, he decided to run for the Arizona Corporation Commission this year. He's a Girl Scouts co-troop leader and active member of the League of Women Voters.

The Arizona Corporation Commission is very powerful and controls 10% of the economy in Arizona. It regulates utilities such as Tucson Electric Power and Southwest Gas Corporation, private water companies and several electrical co-ops. Traditionally, the Corporation Commission has worked behind the scenes so Arizona citizens get the best possible deal from utilities. However, the GOP controls the Corporation Commission so now companies get the best deal in the form of record price increases. The long-term strategy of the Corporation Commission is to lean on companies in the power sector to build fossil fuel plants (even when some don't want to), not explore clean energies.

Joshua is running for the Corporation Commission because it will have a huge legacy impact on Arizona over the next four years, especially in the form of investments from new chip manufacturers. He would like to leave Arizona citizens with an affordable sustainable energy future. We need to elect all three Democratic candidates running for the Corporation Commission to make this happen. When canvassing, we can ask voters: "Are your utility bills too high? Democrats will be there to control the prices." Joshua's Calls to Action are: 1) Have this conversation with everyone you encounter. Get the word out!; 2) Virtual phone bank for Democratic Party Corporation Commission candidates; and 3) Donate to Democratic Party Corporation Commission candidates.

See [www.JoshuaforArizona.com](http://www.JoshuaforArizona.com) and <https://www.joshuaforarizona.com> for more information.

**Walz and Harris Events in Tucson:** Tim Walz will be in Tucson in the afternoon of Wednesday, October 9. The time has not yet been announced and getting a seat is not

guaranteed. Vice President Harris will be in Arizona sometime this week. Click [here](#) for the link to get tickets for Governor Walz's event.

**Ballot Guides:** The Pima County ballot will be two pages back-to-back. For more information, see Civic Engagement Beyond Voting's Ballot Guide at: <https://www.cebv.us/2024-ballot-guide.html>. Do not retain Arizona Supreme Court Justices Bollick and King. Governor Hobbs will be appointing a new Arizona Supreme Court Justice since Justice Robert Brutinel announced he will step down at the end of October.

Karen Harris discussed the Southern Arizona Ballot Guide's Cheat Sheet that can be accessed at: <https://southern-az-ballot-guide.ballotcheatsheet.com>. The Guide was carefully researched utilizing information obtained from CEBV and other state and local organizations. Its purpose is to providing voting recommendation list for your specific district in Arizona. It's also shareable with voters throughout the state. The Cheat Sheet is printable but not from your phone!

**Indivisible Neighbor 2 Neighbor:** Eileen Hollowell discussed that the most effective thing we can do to get out the vote is to knock on doors. If you participate in the Indivisible Neighbor 2 Neighbor program you get the name of 10 neighbor doors to knock on in your community. Neighbor 2 Neighbor is not data driven; rather, it's relationship driven. If voters want more information (and many do), we can provide them with the Southern Arizona Ballot Guide's Cheat Sheet bar code. You can reach Eileen at [locar3@gmail.com](mailto:locar3@gmail.com) if you want more information or would like to find others to help you knock on doors. A Neighbor 2 Neighbor program with new data will be live on October 8 and will be used through early November. Neighbor 2 Neighbor is a good program to provide information to voters about down ballot races! Here's the link to join Neighbor 2 Neighbor: <https://allinforharris.org/neighbor2neighbor-targets>. Ian Hamp at Indivisible can answer questions on issues with getting names or the program in general at [iainhamp@gmail.com](mailto:iainhamp@gmail.com).

**The Perils of Project 2025:** Misty discussed her comprehensive Perils of Project 2025 document. Project 2025 has ties to Juan Ciscomani, who describes it as a "policy document." Here's the link: [https://mcusercontent.com/d63d308f9a9b7a9df4bb02458/files/d5b24398-6222-f430-5288-3556f833cbf0/Trump\\_039\\_s\\_Project\\_2025\\_4\\_.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/d63d308f9a9b7a9df4bb02458/files/d5b24398-6222-f430-5288-3556f833cbf0/Trump_039_s_Project_2025_4_.pdf). Here's the link for detailed information on Project 2025 [here](#).

**Project 2025 Communications Tool:** Chris Hawkins provided information on "Messaging Trump's Project 2025." Click [here](#) to see her document. This repository of information contains short messages for use in social media, where the undecided, politically unaware swing voters typically get their news and often just prior to elections. The messages are based on the strategy of Rachel Bitecofer, an expert in voter behavior. For information on training to use this tool, contact Chris at [votingforourlives@gmail.com](mailto:votingforourlives@gmail.com).

**Kirsten Engel/Juan Ciscomani Debate:** Kirsten Engel and Juan Ciscomani will debate on October 8 at 7 p.m. on PBS 6, KUAZ-FM 89.1, and KUAZ 1550 AM. You can see a Kirsten Engel/Juan Ciscomani billboard on Speedway west of Swan.

**ITAA Financial Information:** Jeanne Hardie reported that ITAA has Distributed Funds of over \$4,000 and restricted (non-distributed) funds of \$255. ITAA continues to receive a total of \$85 in monthly donation.

**General Election Poll Observer Training:** Eileen Hollowell provided this link where you can sign up for General Election Poll Observer Training: <https://www.mobilize.us/jumpstartaz/event/669345/>. Your work at the polls is for poll observing and poll defending. We need to have a presence to watch GOP poll observers. The shifts are from 6:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 7 p.m., depending on the number of people that volunteer. For more information on poll observation for the Democratic Party: <https://www.mobilize.us/jumpstartaz/event/669345/>.

Finally, we encourage everyone to drop off their mail-in ballots as soon as possible after you cast your votes!