



## Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection

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Arizona Center for Law  
in the Public Interest

Arizona League of  
Conservation Voters  
Education Fund

Arizona Native Plant Society

Bat Conservation  
International

Center for Biological  
Diversity

Center for Environmental  
Connections

Center for Environmental  
Ethics

Defenders of Wildlife

Desert Watch

Drylands Institute

Empire Fagan Coalition

Environmental and Cultural  
Conservation Organization

Environmental Law Society

Friends of Cabeza Prieta

Friends of Ironwood  
Forest

Friends of Saguaro  
National Park

Friends of Tortolita

Gates Pass Area  
Neighborhood Association

Native Seeds/SEARCH

Neighborhood Coalition of  
Greater Tucson

Northwest Neighborhoods  
Alliance

Oro Valley Neighborhood  
Coalition

Protect Land and  
Neighborhoods

Safford Peak Watershed  
Education Team

Save the Scenic Santa Ritas

Sierra Club—Grand Canyon  
Chapter

Sierra Club—Rincon Group

Silverbell Mountain Alliance

Sky Island Alliance

Sky Island Watch

Society for Ecological  
Restoration

Sonoran Arthropod  
Studies Institute

Sonoran Permaculture Guild

Southwestern Biological  
Institute

Tortolita Homeowners  
Association

Tucson Audubon Society

Tucson Herpetological  
Society

Tucson Mountains  
Association

Wildlands Network

Women for Sustainable  
Technologies

February 15, 2012

Representative Terri Proud  
Arizona House of Representatives, District 26  
1700 W. Washington  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Dear Representative Proud,

Thank you for taking the time to meet during our visit to Phoenix for Environment Day on January 31<sup>st</sup> 2012. We truly appreciate the willingness of elected officials to listen and favorably respond to the concerns of constituents.

I am writing on behalf of the Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection, founded in 1998 and comprised of 40 environmental and community groups working in Pima County. Our mission is to achieve the long-term conservation of biological diversity and ecological function of the Sonoran Desert through comprehensive land-use planning, with primary emphasis on Pima County's Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan.

One component of the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan is the creation of a functional and inter-connected open space preserve system in Pima County. Since our formation in 1998, the Coalition has been a strong advocate for open space funding through the Pima County bonding authority. In 2004, Pima County residents approved over \$174 million in bond funds to acquire important conservation lands. The bond passed successfully and garnered more citizen support than any other General Obligation bond on the ballot that year. In 1997, over \$25 million in bond funding was approved for the same purpose, also with significant voter support.

The passage of HB 2656 would damage an existing, functional bond process in Pima County. The current system allows for sufficient oversight by all jurisdictions within Pima County. In terms of the 2004 open space bond, a "jurisdictional open space" category was created, in which monies were allocated for the purchase of parcels of land in various local jurisdictions in the region. Thus all communities within Pima County were able to benefit from the creation of an open space preserve system, one that has provided enjoyment and value for all residents throughout the region, and will for generations to come.

Thank you for considering our comments on this legislation.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Campbell  
Executive Director