



## BUSINESS & EDUCATION LEADERS SAY “NO ON PROP 302”

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The **Arizona Business & Education Coalition (ABEC)** advocates “**NO**” on **PROP 302**. Arizona needs an infrastructure for a strong workforce and increased quality of life. To achieve increased learning, youngsters must “hit the road, running” in kindergarten to assure reading on grade level by third grade. If they don’t, a new Arizona law will require holding third-graders back. First Things First (FTF) ensures Arizona’s youngest children begin school healthy and ready to learn, the very foundation for increasing our chances for improving our economy. Eliminating FTF takes away a key tool educators need to ensure success for every child by third grade.

Funded by a tax on tobacco products, local, informed citizens determine how FTF money is spent in their community. FTF is no cost to the state. Conversely, legislators rejected an interest-free, \$300 million loan offer this past session – a compromise that would have helped the state budget AND keep FTF. Instead, legislators want to end the program voters approved in 2006 – but keep the tax – directing the use of the money.

FTF is an investment in our children’s future. It strategically invests to ensure kids begin school ready to learn, get access to doctors, better teachers and specialized therapists. It invests in parents, too, by providing information and help they may need.

FTF saves taxpayers money by detecting developmental problems in children, providing quality early education, teaching families about health, and laying a solid foundation for success later in life in order to combat illiteracy, behavioral issues, and child health problems and stop problems before they have a change to take root.

Susan Carlson  
ABEC Executive Director