
DISCLAIMER: THIS CART/CAPTION FILE WAS TRANSCRIBED AND PRODUCED FOR COMMUNICATION ACCESS AS AN ADA ACCOMMODATION AND MAY NOT BE 100% VERBATIM. THIS IS A DRAFT FILE AND HAS NOT BEEN PROOFREAD. IT IS SCAN-EDITED ONLY, AS PER CART INDUSTRY STANDARDS. IT MAY CONTAIN SOME PARENTHETICALS INDICATING INDISCERNIBLE AUDIO OR PHONETICALLY REPRESENTED WORDS OR INCORRECT SPELLINGS. THIS IS NOT A LEGAL DOCUMENT AND MAY CONTAIN COPYRIGHTED, PRIVILEGED, OR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.

THIS FILE SHALL NOT BE DISCLOSED IN ANY FORM (WRITTEN OR ELECTRONIC) AS A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT OR POSTED TO ANY WEBSITE OR PUBLIC FORUM OR SHARED WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE HIRING PARTY AND/OR THE TRANSCRIPTIONIST. THIS IS NOT AN OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT AND SHOULD NOT BE RELIED UPON FOR PURPOSES OF VERBATIM CITATION.

June 15, 2026. Study Session of the Governing Board.

>> MR. GREG TAYLOR: My phone says 5:00, so I will call us to order.

I know Board Member Barraza is not able to join us, but the rest of the board are in attendance, so why don't we get started with 2.1, the state budget update.

>> Hello. I'm Libby Howell. I will introduce myself for those folks who might be listening online and may not know who I am. I'm the executive director of the community government relations department, but today my real job is just to be the warmup group for Jonathan Paton, our contract lobbyist at the state.

Let me give you a little review of this session to get started. The budget was passed on June 11th, and then the legislature closed with sine die on the 13th. For those of you who don't know, "sine die" is a Latin term. If you pronounce it in Latin, it's sine die, which means no more days, basically. There are no more days left in this session.

So this year we had so many challenges, and we have been talking about this a lot all through the session, and it has been as bad as we expected. The majority party was very committed to achieving full conformity with the tax cuts that were established through the federal H.R. 1, and that reduced, had the effect of reducing state revenues by \$1.4 billion over four years.

The quote I think that states this most effectively is a quote
by

the House appropriations committee chair, Representative David Livingston. He said, this is a \$1.4 billion tax budget. It's all that matters in this budget. Everything else is small potatoes.

That was their primary goal throughout the session.

Thank you, Nestor.

>> I'm pulling up the PowerPoint that goes along with it. There it is.

>> Some other challenges that we had during the session was that,

according to the Grand Canyon Institute, our ESA program, the voucher program, is expected to cost more than \$1 billion this year, and the state was not, the legislature was not able to reach agreement with the governor regarding Prop 123 funding. You recall we talked about this in a previous board meeting. This is the court case that required the state to pay an additional \$300 million for K12 funding. And it expired.

So they're going to have to figure out something else to figure out what to do about that, since they were not able to get it to a renewal passed in the legislature.

So before we talk about how this session affected us, I do have to point out that the state's universities were cut \$16 million. They took a real slam. It affected all of them, particularly the University of Arizona, I have to say. It felt like, and when I was looking through the items that were cut, the programs that were cut, it seemed like if you take into account enrollment, it seemed to me like they were cut worse than the other colleges.

Of course ASU is bigger, and so, you know, the dollar amount might be greater, but not proportionately.

So let's take a look at what happened to us. So when you look at this first group of numbers, you'll see that -- how do I get this to go away, Nestor, that little black box there? That's fine.

You'll see that they eliminated the funding for dual enrollment, adult basic ed, and the nursing education investment.

I have to say our efforts to get that \$6 million renewed, it was very clear to us that adult ed has a lot of supporters. There were some other factors that prevented the funding from finally happening, and Jonathan will talk more about that, but we had a lot of fans.

In fact, one of our perpetual friends of the college is Vince Leach, a real conservative, and he asked Nick Ponder, who was the lobbyist for AC4, to speak during, I think it was in the caucus or...

>> He spoke during the (indiscernible).

>> The hearing. And he asked Nick to speak specifically so that he could ask questions to raise the issues, to show people how important this program was. So I think that's something really important to take note of.

The numbers you see there in the middle, the College Promise Scholarship, the Arizona Leveraging Educational Assistance program, and the Arizona Teachers Academy, you see how much they were allocated. I do not know yet how much Pima will get of that, but I put what we got last year, and it totaled about \$900,000.

It's very unlikely that our share this year will be more than a

million. Very unlikely. I don't think it's going to do a whole lot. But every bit counts.

Then if you look at the second segment, we see exactly what the community colleges got. All of the colleges received operations funding except of course for Pima and Maricopa. I did look up some numbers just to remind you, if you go back to our highest amount, which was in 2004, Pima received \$18.1 million for operations funding. Maricopa received \$46.6 million.

Maricopa serves 60% of the community college students in the state, and Pima serves 13%. So the two colleges that serve between 73% and 75% of the state's community college students have no operations funding.

We'll talk some more about that.

The year that our funding was eliminated, we were down to \$6.4 million, or closer to \$6.5 million. So that tells you where we were.

We did receive STEM/workforce training money again. This year we got a slight increase. It's \$113,000 more than we got last year, although Dave Bea was quick to point out it wasn't because they were eager to give us more money. It was formula funding that we got more, because we had a higher FTSE count this year.

There are four colleges that receive equalization funding. Equalization funding is for colleges in which the state feels that their counties don't have enough of a tax base to support a community college.

And the college that gets the most, just for your information,

is

Eastern Arizona. They get \$24.4 million in equalization dollars.

Then rural aid, rural aid was, originally when it was put in place, I don't know, maybe five years ago, it was meant to be a one-time thing, and they have renewed it every year. They got, all the rural colleges, got 14 million.

And I need to stop here and let you know that Santa Cruz did get some money, of course very much smaller, because their FTSE count is very small. They received, in operating aid, they got \$51,300. In STEM funding they got \$40,500. And in rural aid they got \$100,800. So they were funded, as well, for that.

Native American colleges are funded in a different mechanism that

I don't really understand, but Dine did get an additional \$1 million supplement for remedial ed to help them with that.

And then the rural county reimbursement subsidy is when one county has to reimburse another county because students are going to school outside of their home county.

And then Gila Provisional received a \$200,000 supplement for workforce development.

So as you can see, overall, not counting, you know, the stuff that goes to both the universities, but the funding that goes only to community colleges, the community colleges got \$99.5 million and some change, and Pima got 1.9 of that.

So I will tell you that one other challenge that we ran into, and

this is kind of my segue for turning this over to Jonathan, one of

the problems that the community colleges had is that we were not

unified in our priorities.

Maricopa was deeply committed to trying to get operations funding

back. The rurals really wanted their rural aid and their (indiscernible), and of course the four colleges that get equalization wanted that. And then we were committed, our No. 1 priority was adult ed, followed by protecting our STEM and workforce training, and then planting the seeds, you're going to hear from us again sometime, about our operations funding.

I think we had a reasonable approach about that, because, you know, we knew this was a crummy year, and so we didn't want to be bombastic and offensive in how we presented that, but we wanted them to know we're not going to let you forget, so those were our three priorities.

We also learned, as part of this process, that the two adult ed high schools, run by Goodwill and Graduation Alliance, do not have goodwill. They are deeply disliked by a number of legislators. I don't think we ran into a legislator who didn't like adult ed, didn't see the point, who didn't understand why it was important.

So for the real back story, I will turn it over to Jonathan.

>> CHANCELLOR JEFFREY NASSE: Before you turn it over, Libby, can you talk a little bit about the WIOA.

>> Yes, thanks. That's a great point.

So we get money from two pots basically at the state level, and one goes to the Department of Ed from federal WIOA dollars, and it's

meant to be a matching grant for the federal funding that we get.

The reason that's important and why we really have to protect those federal dollars is if we lose those federal dollars, we'll lose that, probably lose that state pot.

I think, Laurie, was it 4.9?

>> 4.1 comes to Pima.

>> 4.1. So that's good news, that we did still get that.

>> CHANCELLOR JEFFREY NASSE: Any questions for Libby, Members of

the Board? Theresa's here and of course others online.

>> MS. THERESA RIEL: When you said 4.1, is that just what the state gives us, or is half of that from the state and half from WIOA?

>> It's about 1 million state and the rest WIOA. It's -- yeah.

>> MS. THERESA RIEL: Okay. And then, Libby, when you mentioned the 14, I think it was the \$14 million rural aid, that's split up among all of the rural community colleges, correct?

>> Correct. Yeah, they all get operations, STEM/workforce, and rural.

So, let's see, Kristen or Karla, do either of you have any questions?

>> MS. KRISTEN RANDALL: No. Thank you so much, Libby.

>> MS. KARLA BERNAL MORALES: No questions on my end, either.

Thank you.

>> Jonathan?

>> Okay. Thank you. Way back in October, we started having the conversation about what we were going to do about the session. We knew this issue of conformity was going to be a big issue this

session, and we knew that the majority had said that this is our main issue, as Libby pointed out.

And right around that same time that that conversation started, Maricopa contacted us, and they said, we want to ask for the operations dollars back. It's been since 2014. We feel like enough time has gone by, we want to make a concerted effort to do that.

We obviously support the idea of getting the operations dollars back, but realistically, looking at the numbers and what you have seen happen, I said at the time, we're not getting that money back, at least not this year.

We've made other attempts in the past to talk to lawmakers, the Senate president, for example, about doing that. They have not wanted to do that the entire time I have represented you. They were not interested in operations dollars. They're interested in individual projects. They're actually interested in adult ed.

So we made the decision that while we would support what Maricopa

was doing, our main focus was going to be in adult education. When we spoke with Maricopa and we asked them what they thought of adult ed, they said, our only priority this year is going to be operations dollars.

This is important for what I'm about to tell you and how things broke out within those of us who lobby for all of you. I lobby for Pima, there's others that lobby for the individual colleges, and then AC4 lobbies for the whole group of community colleges.

When that started, that process started, we met with our

delegation. We talked to as many people who would meet with us. The chancellor came up several times to talk to them, and I think every single one of those meetings, and then we even met with a few from Maricopa County, like Matt Gress, he's the vice chair of appropriations in the House, they were all receptive to the idea of adult ed. They see the value in it, they felt it was important, and they said that they would advocate for it.

But as we were leaving each one of those meetings, just to make sure, I asked them, Maricopa is going to be bringing up the issue of bringing operations dollars back this year. What do you think of that? And they all told us, that is not going to happen this year.

It was a pretty inclusive, every single person we met with. I always made sure I asked the question. I think I was getting annoying to those who were with me to ask that question each time.

And meanwhile, the rural counties were asking for what Libby outlined already. They were asking for those rural dollars to go back to them.

And to keep this into perspective, we lost operations dollars. It was painful back when it happened. It's still painful to this day. But it is not an existential threat. It did not, would not, end us as an institution. If that money was taken away from the rural colleges, they felt that they would not really exist as colleges anymore.

The money, for example, that goes to the colleges that don't have

a necessary tax base to support them, that's why that's there,

because they would cease to exist, and there is no other, no University of Arizona, there is no other major employers in a lot of those communities, so it's a very different situation. They said we would like to have adult ed, but we have to focus on this, and we're not going to be asking for anything else.

for So that left for Pima as the only college that was advocating adult ed. And to show you kind of how this works, the way that the budget works these days, it's changed. Once Katie Hobbs became governor, the Democratic caucuses inform her what their priorities are, and then she negotiates in many cases on their behalf with the Republican majority in the legislature.

So the people in those negotiations, they call them the cage meetings, it's the Senate president, the speaker, possibly the majority leaders, and the governor and her staff, and they negotiate it. But the governor is informed by the caucus decisions within the Democratic House caucus and the Democratic Senate caucus. That's kind of how that process works.

Well, as an example of what I'm talking about, the Democratic caucus in the House, they conducted a straw poll amongst themselves to find out what their priorities were going to be, and they were told they need to find their top five priorities. So they listed those priorities, and those are all the things that state government does. So everything from K-12 to the universities to, you name it, the court system, et cetera, they went through it all, and they listed five priorities that had to be in the budget, in their

opinion, and that doesn't mean that the other things that didn't make it into the top five weren't important to them, but they weren't their top five priorities.

Adult ed did not make it into the top five, Maricopa receiving their operations money didn't make it into the top five, and the rural dollars didn't make it into the top five.

I got a chance to see the straw poll results, and it kind of tells the tale of why we are having this conversation today. It showed, at the top of that list of those who didn't make it into the top five, adult ed was among the top, and then there was a few for obviously the rurals had their supporters, and there was maybe one or two for Maricopa.

If you add all those numbers up, that would have gotten us into the discussion for adult ed for their priority list.

Does that make sense? That kind of tells you, to some extent, that stratification of those different priorities for different members tells you kind of how this all happened.

But the entire time, our delegation was very active, as Libby said, both from Republicans and Democrats. Vince Leach advocated for it several times in caucus. I heard from several Democrats that represent this region said this is one of their top priorities.

It was so much of a priority for Consuelo and Alma Hernandez that

they refused to vote for the budget because it wasn't in there. And you can't get much more committed than saying, I'm not going to be on the budget unless you give me what I want. And when they said this

is a top priority for them and it wasn't met, you can look at the vote count, they voted no.

That stratification, the fact that we were sort of on our own with the help of AC4, but I think that's a very difficult position for the lobbyist for AC4 to be in, because he has to observe all of these masters that all want something completely different. So that was, I think, probably the biggest reason.

At the eve of the session ending, there was a final meeting between the governor and legislative leadership to go over last-minute types of things that they wanted to see in the budget.

The Republicans, and I have heard their perspective, I haven't heard the governor's perspective from this, so I'm just going to recount at least from a point of view of one side, they said they were in the position of asking for money for individual priorities among their members that were not general-fund related.

So in order to pay for something, they had to find another fund that was not the general fund. And there are a million different funds across the state that are not the general fund.

They call that fund sweeping. They go in and take the money and send it off for another purpose. So there is a biometric fund of some sort that is, I think it's in Department of Education or somewhere, and they wanted to take some of that money and send it to sheriffs for different purposes for law enforcement, for example.

There was a million dollars that was being taken away from the College of Agriculture at the University of Arizona. They wanted

that to be credited to University of Arizona so they wouldn't be cut so deeply. That was another offset that they were looking for. So did not impact negatively the general fund.

The governor's priorities -- so the Republicans' priorities probably added up to \$8 million, 6 to 8. And the governor's priorities were all general fund related. They were individual asks that members of the Democratic caucus had wanted, but they were general-fund obligations.

Republicans said, well, we don't want to discuss the general fund. That's not what our impression was of this meeting. One of the top priorities on that list, I call them the honorable mentions list, this \$8 million, the top priority of that 8 million was adult ed. It was the No. 1 -- so if there was another tranch of money, there was an official request from the governor, and I think there was considerable agreement with many in the Republican caucus that wanted it as well, they would have put that in. But they decided, we're not going to do it, because we can't come to an agreement, and they said we're going to shut this down, and the governor agreed with that, and they went ahead and voted, and the budget went out.

That's how it happened. I'd be happy to answer any questions or concerns or anything that you might have, but that was sort of how the process played out this session. Like I said, I'd be happy to answer any questions.

>> I would like to add one thing, and maybe you would like to elaborate on this, at this morning's AC4 legislative update call,

Nick Ponder said he thinks next year is going to be worse, because this year they went into the session with, I think it was 200 million carry-forward dollars, and this coming year, they're going into the session with 41 million. Very much less than they went into this year. So his theory is it's going to be worse next year than it was this year.

>> And there are a number of other problems that are on the horizon. So I have some good news and some bad news. I will start with the bad news first.

The bad news is that, as Libby said, the carry-forward is less. There are also, there is lawsuits that are involving Department of Corrections where the federal government will be taking over their medical system within the Department of Corrections, or is in the process of doing that. They expect that to balloon costs in the state for that. I think there are some other lawsuits that the state is probably, is on the losing end of, that they may have to pay for.

So I think it's going to be a tough year, depending on what the economy is like. We go through this cycle every six or seven, in this case, the worst time was 2014 when we lost the operations money in the first place.

We're very much a sales tax-dominant state. That is where these revenues mostly come in from, and that is very -- I don't know what the term -- it's very turbulent. Let's put it that way. It goes up and down, so you have boom years and bust years. We are in one of those cycles right now. That's been exacerbated by the conformity

package.

So if the economy turns around, maybe that will make up for some of this, but structurally we still have some problems.

The good news is that I think that the work that we put in to adult ed has made it a much more visible issue for members. I think they care about it a lot more than they did a year ago, and I feel like we were pretty close in getting, with the only -- keep this in mind: They cut 2.5% of every agency pretty much in the state.

So the court system, for example, the office of the court, every single court in Arizona is having to cut back 2.5%. The same thing with every other agency in the state.

I was told that there are 1,000 positions that are being cut statewide. Many of those positions are unfilled right now, so it's not quite the same as cutting someone's job that currently holds it, but nonetheless, it's still a massive cut across Arizona.

So I think the good news is that we have at least a significant interest from our delegation, and I think we have made the case to leadership in both parties that it should be a priority, and I think we came pretty close to making that happen.

>> CHANCELLOR JEFFREY NASSE: Board Member Randall?

>> MS. KRISTEN RANDALL: Well, thank you so much for coming to the meeting. Sorry I'm not there in person. It's summer, so kid is home. So this remote option is very helpful.

I have a question for you, and hopefully it doesn't turn into multiple-part questions. You know, when you were talking to members

and they would say, at least not this year, and then Libby saying that this was kind of a crummy year, you know, there was less carry-forward money, and that there is this thought that next year might potentially be worse, I hear you talking about boom and bust years, and that this is a typical Arizona cycle, and that we are a sales tax dominant state.

My issue is that we can either grow out of our -- I'm a hydrologist. I'm not an economist. So I'm okay with being wrong. But we either grow out of the rut we're in as a state, or we have to increase revenues. Obviously, you know, the very, very low flat tax that the State of Arizona has reduced the amount of revenues that we bring in. Not only do we have this flat tax, but it's an extremely low flat tax compared to flat taxes.

I just don't see how we can be -- I mean, if we're in a bust cycle right now, how do we get into this boom cycle? Are we just very deftly making ourselves revenue poor when -- you know, when you look at it, job numbers are pretty good, economy is pretty good. Maybe it's not going to stay that way, but yet we're scrambling for crumbs here.

I just don't feel very optimistic about the, at least not this year, but maybe in the future, because it doesn't seem that we are in a bust. It seems like this is, like, intentionally designed this way. So set my mind at ease or correct me or -- it's not really a question, but that's my concern.

>> If I could make one comment, I have to say my husband says I

can find the dark lining of every silver cloud.

>> MS. KRISTEN RANDALL: Oh, no. Me too.

>> I have to be honest and tell you that some of the people we talked to didn't say not this year but sometime maybe, and some of them said, no, never.

>> MS. KRISTEN RANDALL: That's what I was worried about.

>> Yeah, we have to be realistic about that.

>> I just want to clarify, you're talking specifically about the operations dollars ever coming back? Is that what you're asking about, or adult ed? I want to make sure I understand what you mean.

>> MS. KRISTEN RANDALL: Let's just talk about the operations dollars, because I think with adult ed, I mean, I think what I'm seeing, as far as the state budget goes, is, you know, and specifically revenues, we have a smaller and smaller cookie every year, and, I mean, that's why we're all kind of scrambling for crumbs. I can see them sort of brushing some crumbs over in our direction for adult basic education at some point. The operations dollars, though, I'm very skeptical if we are ever going to receive a useful chunk of that money.

>> So I would like to address that. This is just from talking to members. Theresa and I went to meet with the Senate president sometime back. This was his last year in office at the legislature.

When we met with him, the answer was no, we don't do ongoing funding for new things or reintroducing something. He was, I think the attitude was, we are interested in one-time projects.

I think that if you look at state government writ large, we're not unique in this. They have stopped with ongoing spending on formula-type spending for a lot of folks, not just community colleges.

They are more in the mode of, we're going to spend money on specific programs, like adult ed is a good example of that, or specific projects, and I think that -- I mean, you can have a debate about how they do their policy, but that's just the reaction that I have received when I have talked with them.

I think that most politicians that serve in the legislature, and having been one of them at one point in my life, I know that they focus on what they can go back and tell their constituents that happened. Adult ed, they can go to a graduation for adult ed. They can see individual people. The aviation program that we have here in the state that we funded through state dollars, you can see that there is a physical location. There is something they can see and touch and they can point to.

When you are talking about operations dollars towards a specific community college, it's harder to find any one thing that it does. We all know that it has a huge impact, but it doesn't have the salience for them that it does -- and I'm not saying this is good or bad. I'm just saying this is the attitude at the capitol.

They want specific projects or specific dollars going to specific

programs that they like. They do not want to do it on a general basis. That doesn't mean -- I don't want to say never. Legislatures

change. Individual members get elected; others get unelected. Things change in that process. But that's sort of the trend that I'm seeing at the capitol.

>> MS. KRISTEN RANDALL: That's kind of what I felt, yeah.

>> So I don't think that -- what Libby was saying, I think she's absolutely right. When we talk to some members, they're, like, well, that's never going to happen. Then other people, we'd like it to happen.

But even if the majorities change, it is very difficult to raise taxes in this state. You have to have a supermajority in both the House and the Senate in order for that to happen, and they can't get a supermajority to decide who's going to get which parking spot, let alone to raise taxes.

do So under the constitution in our state, it's very difficult to that. I don't know if that's a satisfying answer to you, but it's the truth and also what I heard from members.

>> MS. KRISTEN RANDALL: Yeah, and that's really helpful. I was, you know, for sure I would have loved you to say, oh, no, Kristen, you're absolutely wrong, but that's kind of what my feeling has been. I guess I just sort of wanted confirmation that I'm not overly pessimistic. Well, I am pessimistic, but I want to be a realist, too. So I appreciate that. Thank you.

>> CHANCELLOR JEFFREY NASSE: Greg?

>> MR. GREG TAYLOR: Yeah. Can I better understand, I mean,

Libby, you referenced an opportunity that was created by AC4 to talk

about community college priorities, and Jonathan, you mentioned working a little bit with their lobbyist, although they're in a difficult position because they are representing community colleges with disparate interests.

I'll just be really transparent with what I'm trying to understand. I keep getting more and more of an impression -- I'm trying to figure out why we are in this organization, I guess, is really what's coming down to it. If community colleges' interests are that diverse, which I accept that they are, and everybody can do their own thing, what is the point of us funding this organization that can't represent those interests in a unified way, because those interests are not unified, wouldn't we -- ultimately, I think our job as board members is to make sure Pima College is getting what it needs, not all of them.

If that's our primary interest, why don't we just use whatever money we're paying to be part of AC4 to beef up our own ability to lobby for what we need if we're not really getting anything from AC4 in terms of public policy?

The only other thing they do is convene us, but I don't need to pay a bunch of money to convene community colleges together. They can convene whenever they want to convene. I'm just kind of struggling through what is the purpose of our ongoing engagement with this joint lobbying effort if our priorities are not becoming their priorities?

>> If you want me to answer that?

So I have worked with AC4 with different folks over the last decade, and I feel like in the past and present, obviously they have different issues that come up. This has been really the first time when those conflicts were very detrimental to the overall health of the whole community college system.

With that said, I think that Nick worked extremely hard at lobbying members across the board. And you're the policymaker. You decide where you want to put your lobbying dollars. But here's the problem. Even if you had more lobbyists, or whatever you want to do here for Pima College, think about it this way: I go to our delegation, and I ask them for support. I make the case that the chancellor comes up, Libby and other folks from the staff, Laurie comes up to talk about the technical side of adult ed, we make that case to them.

The problem is that, and they are all onboard when we talk to them, but when someone from Mohave County is a member, and I go to them or any other lobbyist goes to them and asks them, would you please support adult ed, and they say, well, the problem is, Jonathan, no one from my county or my community colleges is not asking for this money.

That's the ultimate lobbyist is the folks that they represent, their community, and when they're not hearing that from their community, they're going to do what that community wants them to do instead.

Does that make sense? That's the problem. So you can get more

and more lobbyists, but it's not going to change the situation if an individual county is not going to advocate for money for a specific program.

Normally we do work together, and I think that they have been pretty effective at trying to juggle all these interests, but this year, because the economy was so bad or the budget situation was so bad, it knocked everything out of whack.

But on things like, when we did the cap, on the past programs we've had, the expenditure limitation, for example, we did a lot of bills, we worked on those together. That was something that all colleges shared and needed to address. We passed those as a group, and those saved Pima College in the weighting of different things.

So they have been effective on certain items. It just was very difficult this year.

I don't know if that answers your question, but that's just my perception on the ground.

>> But I will say that -- so I'm going to embarrass myself here. We have been terrifically lucky in that we've had two chancellors who are visionary and see beyond their own little puddle of land. We're the only college that has, for example, has a federal lobbyist, you know, a contract with a federal lobbyist. One other college has an employee who part time does federal, but they don't have a full-time lobbyist the way that we do.

When we passed, when we got the, what is it, 20, 25 million for aviation, the other colleges were not happy about that. They were

unhappy that we had gone after that. They thought there was some danger, I guess, to what their funding was.

Now, I have to say Nick, this year, was terrifically supportive. He copied me every time he and Laurie were having conversations about -- he continually asked for more information and what data would be helpful in this situation. He really was wonderful in that regard.

But at the same time, when one of our previous legislative update meetings, when the budget passed the House that would eliminate adult ed, all adult ed federal funding, and I brought that up and I said, you need to be aware of this, because now our only chance is to kill it in the Senate, one of the college presidents said, that's not what we're about. We're a state organization.

Well, there is so much happening at the federal level that affects us and how we do business in the state that, you know, that's so short-sighted, so there --

>> MS. THERESA RIEL: What's that last part? What?

>> Short-sighted.

>> MS. THERESA RIEL: Short-sighted. Thank you.

>> I think we're just incredibly lucky that we have a chancellor that sees that, and before him had a chancellor that saw that.

>> MR. GREG TAYLOR: Do the rural colleges have their own state lobbyist, or is it just AC4?

>> No, they do.

>> Some of them do.

>> Some of them do. There are a number of them for, I know in the past, Cochise has had one. I don't know where they're at right now with this, but Northland Pioneer had one. There are several that have an individual lobbyist, because this is their lifeline, but they also have, if you look at the rural areas of this state, those are, the lawmakers that represent them are in the majority. So they have a bigger voice than what their communities would indicate.

We don't have that same thing here in Pima County, so we have -- but the ones who are in the majority in Pima County are supportive of adult ed. And they have said so and they have been willing to talk about it on the record in budget meetings.

But what you do with AC4, that's a policy decision for you all to make, but just from my view on the ground, I watched this session, I watched Nick basically grab people and ask them to support the adult ed. I think he's probably going to have just as many problems on the other side with Maricopa, that they may say, well, why didn't you work harder for us to get operations funding?

But the realities on the ground were I think he realized that the only thing that was going to make it, if anything extra was going to make it, was going to be adult ed this year.

>> MR. GREG TAYLOR: Just one final thing, and then I see your hand up, Board Member Riel.

Yeah, no, I appreciate that, and I'm not questioning whether Nick is doing his job or not. I'm just wondering if it's structurally

untenable, like, for based on what is going on for that structure to

make sense.

Like if our interests are so divergent as, you know, Pima, Maricopa, or especially in a situation where, like -- and correct me if I'm wrong, Chancellor, but I'm fairly certain that between Maricopa and Pima, we're funding 80% of that thing or something like that. And the others are not chipping in nearly as much, because I think it's based on enrollment or something like that.

So I just scratch my head a little bit, that if we're not getting our money out of that -- and I'm not saying, to your point, Jonathan, I'm not saying we would use that money to buy another lobbyist and that would suddenly get what we want.

I'm just saying in a situation where we're trying to scrape together every dollar that we can to make sure we're achieving our mission for our students, is that the best use of those dollars, or could it be for something completely different, maybe not public policy related that we need funding to be able to sustain, like apparently adult ed or something like that.

>> If I could, to that point, one thing maybe you could do, and this is -- I think that it's the other colleges that aren't getting it. I get the feeling in their statements they think that AC4 exists to serve them, and I think that this topic at least should be brought up to AC4, and from your perspective, to have them start to think, you know, maybe we should really start to consider what the other two colleges in the state want? Because I think they have been a little bit complacent that as long as they get their operations dollars, it

doesn't matter what happens with the rest of us, because we'll still keep funding them, that kind of attitude.

I think that the lobbyist that they have is good, but I think that the policymakers and those other colleges need to hear that from all of you.

>> MR. GREG TAYLOR: Thank you.

>> Because I think they take it for granted.

>> MR. GREG TAYLOR: Board Member Riel?

>> MS. THERESA RIEL: Thank you. To me, it seems like we're looking at this from sort of the wrong direction. Our state constitution says community colleges are supposed to be as nearly free as possible, something like that. So when our state legislators do not fund us in any form, right, imagine our household budgets, right? You need a new roof, oh, but let's stop working. Let's drop from full-time job to a quarter-time job, because I don't want to work as much, I don't want to put that much labor out there, right? Then how are we going to pay for the new roof, right?

I think that's what our state legislators are doing. It's all math. Maybe few of them know math, I'm not sure, but how can you support a state as diverse, varied, large as our state by cutting taxes, cutting revenue? It just doesn't make sense.

So I would propose that we be careful about pushing away AC4 or AACCT. I would say let's be careful about not dissolving those organizations, because really we need to work together to make sure that our state legislature starts doing what they're supposed to do.

our So it's a lot of work, right? We're going to have to talk to

business members in the business community. If they're not continuously asking their elected officials, hey, adult basic ed is super important -- you know, how many, Chancellor, did you tell me, 70,000 people don't have a high school diploma in Pima County?

If we have those kind of people -- and I get that you can be amazing without a high school diploma, but no one's going to pay you because you're amazing, right?

It just seems to me like we're working at this backwards. We need to get our state legislators to understand that education is the only -- especially if we're cutting the court systems, too, right, if we're cutting prison systems, all those kind of things, right? Because there is two ways people can go. They can get educated and improve themselves, or they can become despondent because they don't have any opportunities, and then they have to do sometimes bad things to just survive, and then they end up in the prison systems, right?

So I guess my point is I think we, as educators, across the board, we need to stop accepting things that are harming education and harming learning, and we need to make sure that everybody who works with us realizes that you're either onboard supporting education or you're against education.

You know, I'm tired of hearing the business community say, well, we need educated workers. Well, if you're not going to elect people that support public education, you're not really wanting educated workers, right? You're wanting maybe cheap, insignificant...

(Video feed lost.)

>> MS. KARLA BERNAL MORALES: Did we lose them?

>> MS. KRISTEN RANDALL: Yeah, I think we lost them.

>> MR. GREG TAYLOR: Yeah, I have lost them, as well.

>> MS. KRISTEN RANDALL: Nicole, are you on? I thought you weren't going to be on.

>> DR. NICOLE BARRAZA: I'm back. It's a long story. I'll tell you later.

>> MS. KRISTEN RANDALL: Oh, welcome back, baby.

>> DR. NICOLE BARRAZA: Our trouble.

>> MS. KRISTEN RANDALL: Oh, no.

>> MS. KARLA BERNAL MORALES: Greg, are you reaching out to them?

>> MR. GREG TAYLOR: Yes.

>> MS. KRISTEN RANDALL: I'm told we are live on YouTube. So we are still streaming to YouTube, so be careful, everybody.

>> MR. GREG TAYLOR: We had a power outage.

>> MS. KRISTEN RANDALL: Well, hello, public. The board is still

here. I suppose we should probably --

>> MR. GREG TAYLOR: Why don't we recess, then? I think I can do

that as chair.

>> MS. KRISTEN RANDALL: We have a quorum right now. Oh, wait. Chancellor says we're coming back. Give us a minute.

>> MR. GREG TAYLOR: Well, if someone can -- why don't we recess for five minutes and try to come back at 5:55 with everything

working, and then I'll call us back to order once the room can get

back in.

>> MS. KRISTEN RANDALL: Okay. Sound good.

(Brief Recess.)

>> MR. GREG TAYLOR: All right. For my fellow board members, I don't know if you can all hear me, but I just got off with the chancellor. It's a building-wide issue, not just a single-room issue. They are not able to get back online. They tried individually and collectively.

I'm just going to adjourn the meeting, and then we will reschedule for the last agenda item at a different time and date, because they're not going to be able to get back online to do the presentations and all that until they get this issue resolved. It's going to take a lot more than a few minutes, I'm told.

So I appreciate everybody's time. Hope you have a good night. Thank you very much.

>> MS. KARLA BERNAL MORALES: Thanks, Greg. Thanks, everyone.

>> CHIEF VILLAR: Thank you. Have a good evening.

(Adjournment.)

DISCLAIMER: THIS CART/CAPTION FILE WAS TRANSCRIBED AND PRODUCED FOR COMMUNICATION ACCESS AS AN ADA ACCOMMODATION AND MAY NOT BE 100% VERBATIM. THIS IS A DRAFT FILE AND HAS NOT BEEN PROOFREAD. IT IS SCAN-EDITED ONLY, AS PER CART INDUSTRY STANDARDS. IT MAY CONTAIN SOME PARENTHETICALS INDICATING INDISCERNIBLE AUDIO OR PHONETICALLY REPRESENTED WORDS OR INCORRECT SPELLINGS. THIS IS NOT A LEGAL DOCUMENT AND MAY CONTAIN COPYRIGHTED, PRIVILEGED, OR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.

THIS FILE SHALL NOT BE DISCLOSED IN ANY FORM (WRITTEN OR ELECTRONIC) AS A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT OR POSTED TO ANY WEBSITE OR PUBLIC FORUM OR SHARED WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE HIRING PARTY AND/OR THE TRANSCRIPTIONIST. THIS IS NOT AN OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT AND SHOULD NOT BE RELIED UPON FOR PURPOSES OF VERBATIM CITATION.
