

ARIZONA FOOD, RESOURCE, AND COMMODITY ASSURANCE ACT

Scarcity is a Policy Choice

State of Arizona, 57th Legislature, First Regular Session (2025)

Prepared by Imran Stanton Cooper, The Amanuensis

Version 2. Originally drafted 2015-2016 (Colorado conception, Sassafras and Maple Research Foundation). Arizona adaptation 2026-04-29.

VERIFICATION CHAIN (publisher and date only; sources cited inline through the bill body and listed in the References section):

ARIZONA FISCAL FRAMEWORK

- FY2026 enacted General Fund operating appropriations: \$17.61 billion (\$17,607,433,000) (Arizona Joint Legislative Budget Committee FY2026 Appropriations Report; Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting).
- FY2027 Executive Budget proposal: \$18.64 billion General Fund operating appropriations (\$18,639,851,000), \$19.08 billion total revenues, \$18.67 billion total uses of funds (Governor Katie Hobbs FY2027 Executive Budget Summary, January 2026, page 66 "General Fund Sources and Uses" table; azgovernor.gov; ospb.az.gov).
- Population: 7,623,818 as of July 1 2025 (U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts Arizona, Vintage 2025 release PST045225). Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity at-a-Glance Population & Employment Trends April 2025 carries the 7.6 million figure for July 2024.
- Per-capita state-only General Fund expenditure: \$2,446 (\$18.64B GF / 7.62M residents). Places Arizona in the Table 2 cluster for the Division I food and commodity assurance target.

ARIZONA AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD FACTS

- Yuma County winter leafy greens: approximately 90 percent of U.S. winter leafy green supply November through March; 64,200 acres of lettuce harvested in 2024 (USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Mountain Regional Field Office, Vegetables 2024 Summary, Arizona, February 2025).
- Arizona agricultural cash receipts: approximately \$5.24 billion in 2022 (USDA NASS, Arizona Annual Statistical Bulletin 2023-2024) [VINTAGE: 2022 receipts; pending pre-distribution refresh against the current Bulletin release].
- Arizona SNAP: approximately 889,600 recipients, \$2.015 billion in benefits FY2024 (Food Research and Action Center SNAP State Fact Sheet February 2025; USAFacts FY2025).
- Federal H.R. 1 (2025): SNAP administrative cost-shift from 50 percent to 75 percent state share effective October 1 2026 (Congressional Research Service R48832; P.L. 119-21).

ARIZONA STATE ASSETS AND DEFENSE COMMISSARY FOOTPRINT

- DeCA commissaries on Arizona soil: Luke Air Force Base (Phoenix metropolitan area), Davis-Monthan Air Force Base (Tucson), Fort Huachuca (Sierra Vista), MCAS Yuma, Yuma Proving Ground (Defense Commissary Agency store locator, commissaries.com; corp.commissaries.com store-locations directory).
- TSMC Phoenix: \$165 billion pledged semiconductor investment, one of the largest foreign direct investments in U.S. manufacturing history; more than 3,000 workers on site (TSMC corporate announcements, 2020-2025).
- Intel Chandler: major fabrication facilities. Raytheon/RTX missile systems in Tucson. Boeing rotorcraft in Mesa.

ARIZONA LEGAL ANCHORS

- *Shofstall v. Hollins*, 110 Ariz. 88, 515 P.2d 590 (Supreme Court of Arizona, En Banc, November 2 1973). Holding: Arizona Constitution guarantees pupils a basic education; school-finance system must be rational and reasonable.
- *Roosevelt Elementary School District No. 66 v. Bishop*, 179 Ariz. 233, 877 P.2d 806 (Supreme Court of Arizona, 1994). Holding: Arizona's then-existing school-financing scheme violated Article XI Section 1 of the Arizona Constitution because it produced substantial disparities among schools, communities, or districts.
- Arizona Constitution Article XI Section 1: Legislature shall enact laws to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a general and uniform public school system. (Education-clause material travels to Lane 3 with Division III; cited here only as the constitutional context for the companion Education bill.)
- Arizona Constitution Article IV Part 1 Section 1 (initiative power) and Subsection 6 (Voter Protection Act, Proposition 105, 1998): Legislature shall not repeal a voter-approved measure; may amend only by three-fourths supermajority in each house and only if the amendment furthers the original purpose.
- A.R.S. Title 19 (initiative process); A.R.S. Titles 3 (Agriculture) and 46 (Welfare) amended/enacted by this measure.

ARIZONA STATE-SPECIFIC HEALTH AND TRIBAL DATA

- 22 federally recognized tribal nations within Arizona (Arizona Department of Education, Office of Indian Education).
- Navajo Nation: largest reservation in the United States, approximately 27,000 square miles and approximately 180,000 residents; 13 full-service grocery stores serve the entire reservation (Planet Forward, "13 grocery stores: The Navajo Nation is a food desert"; PMC9113337 shopper purchasing trends; PMC7196009 produce-availability study).
- Navajo Nation adult Type 2 diabetes: approximately 1 in 5 adults, among the highest documented rates in the United States (Indian

Health Service Special Diabetes Program for Indians fact sheets; Navajo Health Study, *Journal of Nutrition* 2023 [PMC PII S0022-3166(23)01625-5]; PMC1349991).

- Maricopa County heat-related deaths: 645 in 2023; 602 confirmed in 2024 (Maricopa County Department of Public Health Heat Surveillance Reports 2023-2024). Statewide Arizona heat-related deaths in 2024: 977 (Arizona Department of Health Services Heat-Related Mortality Year 2013-2024).

- Arizona K-12 per-pupil ranking: Arizona public schools remain ranked last in the United States (*Arizona Mirror*, September 22 2025). (K-12 finding travels to Lane 3 with Division III; cited here only for state-anchor context.)

UNIVERSAL HISTORICAL APOPLEXY ANCHORS (Papers I, III, VII, VIII)

- Augustus annona civica (formalized circa 27 BC, approximately 200,000 Roman citizens, 400-plus year duration): Suetonius *Lives of the Twelve Caesars*; Appian *Civil Wars* 4.5; Cassius Dio *Roman History*.

- Augustus tyrant record: approximately 300 senators and 2,000 equestrians proscribed under the Second Triumvirate; Suetonius *Life of Augustus* 27 (Pinarius stabbed at public assembly for taking notes).

- Nerva alimenta: state-funded child nutrition; *Tabula Alimentaria* from Veleia, *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* XI 1147 (bronze inscription still housed at the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Parma).

- Mabu Co archaeological site, Tibetan Plateau, 4,446 m elevation, sedentary settlement 4,400 years ago with approximately 800-year duration (Yang et al., *Nature Ecology & Evolution*, September 2024, pages 2297-2308).

- Azolla Event: freshwater fern *Azolla-Anabaena* symbiosis drove Arctic Ocean CO₂ drawdown approximately 49 million years ago over 800,000 years, contributing to the Eocene hothouse-to-icehouse transition (Brinkhuis et al., *Nature* 441, pages 606-609, 2006).

- Defense Commissary Agency: established 1867 (Army Subsistence Department), codified at 10 U.S.C. § 2484, 236 stores worldwide,

approximately 2.8 million authorized users, approximately \$4 billion annual sales, 17 to 44 percent below civilian retail, approximately \$1.3 billion annual federal appropriation (Government Accountability Office GAO-19-344; DeCA official reports).

- USDA Food Dollar Series: farm share 24.3 cents per dollar / marketing share 75.7 cents per dollar (USDA Economic Research Service).
 - U.S. food-insecure population 47.9 million; cost to close the gap approximately \$32 billion per year; annual food markup above production cost approximately \$496 billion per year; ratio 15 to 1 (USDA ERS; Feeding America; Cooper Paper III 2025).
 - Federal structural overload: 22 federal shutdowns since 1976; 2025 shutdown 43 days, longest in U.S. history; 762,000 constituents per House representative since the 1929 Permanent Apportionment Act; Senate cloture motions over 2,000 per decade; debt ceiling raised 78 times since 1960 (Cooper Paper VII 2026).
 - Swiss Federal Council multi-executive precedent: 7 members, rotating presidency, since 1848 (178 years), over 80 percent citizen trust (admin.ch Federal Council History; gfs.bern; Cooper Paper VII 2026).
- UNVERIFIED (flag for the next pre-distribution audit pass)
- Updated Arizona SNAP recipient counts and benefit totals for FY2026 pending a current FRAC State Fact Sheet release.
 - AHCCCS FY2026 expenditure detail reconciled against the next AHCCCS Appropriation Status Report cycle.
 - USDA NASS Arizona Annual Statistical Bulletin 2024-2025 release for refreshed agricultural cash receipts.

57TH LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA
First Regular Session, 2025

INITIATED MEASURE ____

AN INITIATIVE MEASURE

PROPOSING AN ACT RELATING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF STATE PROGRAMS FOR FOOD AND COMMODITY ASSURANCE TO ENSURE THE MATERIAL SECURITY OF ALL ARIZONA RESIDENTS, INCLUDING RESIDENTS OF THE TWENTY-TWO (22) FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBAL NATIONS WITHIN THE STATE; AMENDING AND ENACTING NEW SECTIONS OF THE ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES IN TITLES 3 AND 46; MAKING APPROPRIATIONS; PROVIDING EFFECTIVE DATES; AND INVOKING THE PROTECTIONS OF ARTICLE IV, PART 1, SECTION 1, SUBSECTION (6) OF THE ARIZONA CONSTITUTION (THE VOTER PROTECTION ACT, PROPOSITION 105, 1998).

A BILL

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Arizona:

LEGISLATIVE ROUTING NOTE

Arizona has one of the strongest citizen initiative processes in the United States. Under Article IV, Part 1, Section 1 of the Arizona Constitution, citizens may propose laws (statutory initiatives) or constitutional amendments by petition. The statutory initiative process is a DIRECT initiative: if petitioners collect sufficient valid signatures, the measure goes directly to the ballot without legislative review.

STATUTORY INITIATIVE PROCESS (Arizona Constitution, Article IV, Part 1, Section 1; A.R.S. Title 19):

Step 1, APPLICATION FILING: Proponents file an application with the Arizona Secretary of State containing a description of no more than one hundred (100) words and the full text of the proposed measure.

Step 2, STRICT COMPLIANCE: The Secretary of State issues an official serial number and official title. Proponents prepare petition sheets conforming to A.R.S. § 19-121.

Step 3, SIGNATURE COLLECTION: Proponents collect valid signatures equal to ten percent (10%) of the total votes cast for all candidates for Governor at the last preceding general election in which a Governor was elected.

SIGNATURE THRESHOLD: Based on the November 8, 2022 gubernatorial election total of approximately two million five hundred fifty-nine thousand (2,559,490) votes cast for all candidates for Governor, the statutory initiative signature requirement is two hundred fifty-five thousand nine hundred forty-nine (255,949) valid signatures (Arizona Secretary of State, 2026 Election Cycle).

NOTE ON PROPOSITION 134 (2024): The Arizona Legislature referred Proposition 134 to the 2024 ballot, which would have imposed a per-legislative-district signature distribution requirement on citizen initiatives. PROPOSITION 134 WAS DEFEATED by Arizona voters. Arizona's citizen initiative process remains intact without geographic distribution requirements for statutory initiatives.

Step 4, FILING DEADLINE: Petitions must be filed with the Secretary of State not less than four (4) months before the next general election at which the measure is to be voted upon.

Step 5, BALLOT PLACEMENT: Upon certification of sufficient valid signatures, the Secretary of State places the measure on the next general election ballot.

VOTER PROTECTION ACT (Proposition 105, 1998):

This act is submitted as a statutory initiative and, upon approval by the voters, is PROTECTED by the Voter Protection Act, codified at Article IV, Part 1, Section 1, Subsection (6) of the Arizona Constitution. Under the Voter Protection Act:

- (A) The Legislature SHALL NOT repeal a voter-approved measure;
- (B) The Legislature SHALL NOT supersede a voter-approved measure;
- (C) The Legislature MAY amend a voter-approved measure ONLY IF:

- (i) The amendment furthers the purpose of the original measure; AND

- (ii) The amendment receives the affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the members of each house of the Legislature.

This protection is the highest legislative bar in American state politics. Once Arizona voters pass this measure, the Legislature cannot repeal or supersede it. Once you pass it, it stays passed. ALTERNATIVELY, this measure may be introduced in the Arizona Legislature by any member of the House of Representatives or the Senate under the standard legislative process.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT: Upon introduction, this bill would likely be assigned to:

- House Land, Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee or Senate Natural Resources, Energy & Water Committee (Division I food and commodity provisions);
- House Appropriations Committee or Senate Appropriations Committee (fiscal review and appropriation).

FISCAL NOTE: The Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC) prepares fiscal impact statements for all measures with budgetary implications.

FLOOR VOTE: Simple majority in each chamber (31 of 60 Representatives; 16 of 30 Senators). Governor's signature or veto override (two-thirds of each chamber, per Article V, Section 7, Arizona Constitution).

ARIZONA FISCAL YEAR: July 1 through June 30.

HISTORY: A version of this proposal was first developed 2015-2016 through the Sassafras and Maple Research Foundation (SMRF), the first nonpartisan civic education trade school in the United States, registered with the Colorado Department of Higher Education, Division of Private Occupational Schools, and founded by Imran Stanton Cooper. The 2016 Colorado proposal was sidelined during the 2016-2017 legislative cycle. The Arizona adaptation was prepared in April 2026. The present version incorporates the evidentiary foundation of the Historical Apoplexy series (Cooper, Papers I-X, 2025-2026), the academic work that establishes the diagnostic frame. The companion Education bill (Lane 3) is being prepared separately and is not part of this Act.

LEGISLATIVE DECLARATION

SECTION 1. Legislative findings and declaration.

(A) The People of the State of Arizona hereby find, determine, and declare that:

FINDINGS RELATING TO THE STRUCTURAL IMPERATIVE FOR STATE ACTION:

(a0) THE FEDERAL STRUCTURAL OVERLOAD. The United States federal government is not failing through corruption but through structural mismatch between its founding scale and its current scale. Twenty-two federal government shutdowns have occurred since 1976, including the 2025 shutdown of forty-three (43) days, the longest in U.S. history, which furloughed approximately 670,000 federal employees [SOURCE: CRS R48832, 2026]. The House of Representatives has been frozen at 435 members since the Permanent Apportionment Act of 1929, producing a representation ratio of approximately 762,000 constituents per representative, the worst in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Senate cloture motions totaled 49 from 1917 to 1970; the 116th and 117th Congresses each filed more than 320 [SOURCE: senate.gov cloture counts, 2026]. The debt ceiling has been raised, extended, or revised 78 times since 1960; the 2011 standoff produced the first United States credit-rating downgrade. Federal H.R. 1 (2025) shifted SNAP administrative costs from 50 percent to 75 percent state share, effective October 1 2026 [SOURCE: P.L. 119-21, 2025]. The federal machine is structurally overloaded (Cooper Paper VII 2026). This state has the authority to act under its own legislative power rather than await federal action that structural overload prevents;

(a0a) THE MULTI-EXECUTIVE PRECEDENT. The Swiss Federal Council has operated as a seven-member rotating-presidency collegial executive since 1848, one hundred seventy-eight (178) years of continuous operation, with citizen trust consistently above eighty percent (80%) [SOURCE: admin.ch Federal Council History, 2026]. The Roman Republic operated under dual consuls for four hundred eighty-two (482) years (509 BC to 27 BC). Uruguay operated a nine-member National Council of Government from 1952 to 1967. Bosnia and Herzegovina has operated a tripartite rotating presidency since 1995. The single-executive overloaded design is not the only functioning executive model; multi-executive collegial systems function at state and national scale, and at measurably higher institutional trust than the United States federal apparatus currently delivers. The State of Arizona acts unilaterally because federal structural overload is not a temporary condition but a structural one;

(a1) Arizona has carried the design infrastructure for this program since the Sassafras and Maple Research Foundation (SMRF) drafted the original Colorado version in 2016, sidelined during the 2016-2017 legislative cycle. Ten years later, every metric that proposal addressed has worsened. The federal government has since imposed the SNAP administrative cost-shift. The State of Arizona's authority to act has always existed. The urgency is now measured in federal mandates the state cannot decline;

(a2) DENIAL IS NO LONGER NEUTRAL. The People of Arizona find that inaction by a state possessing the constitutional authority, the fiscal capacity, and the documented need to act constitutes active harm. The burden of justification rests on denial, not on action;

FINDINGS RELATING TO ARIZONA'S PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY AND THE YUMA PARADOX:

(a) YUMA PARADOX. Yuma County, Arizona produces approximately ninety percent (90%) of all leafy vegetables consumed in the United States during winter months, lettuce, spinach, kale, romaine, and mixed greens, from November through March. Arizona producers harvested sixty-four thousand two hundred (64,200) acres of lettuce in 2024 [SOURCE: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Mountain Regional Field Office, Vegetables 2024 Summary, Arizona, February 2025]. Arizona total agricultural cash receipts exceeded \$5.24 billion in 2022 [SOURCE: USDA NASS, Arizona Annual Statistical Bulletin 2023-2024; VINTAGE: 2022 receipts]. Arizona feeds the nation in winter. Yet approximately one in five (1 in 5) Arizona children are food insecure, and agricultural workers in Yuma County, the laborers who harvest the nation's winter produce, cannot afford to eat it. The food-insecurity gap inside the state that grows the nation's winter salad is the grocery proof expressed at its sharpest form on Arizona soil;

(b) Arizona is gaining manufacturing capacity while Rust Belt states lost it. Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) has pledged \$165 billion in semiconductor fabrication plants in Phoenix, one of the largest foreign direct investments in U.S. manufacturing history, employing more than 3,000 workers. Intel operates major fabrication facilities in Chandler. Raytheon/RTX operates missile systems manufacturing in Tucson. Boeing operates rotorcraft manufacturing in Mesa. Arizona has the operating

manufacturing base to demonstrate that productive capacity and material security are not abstract concepts;

(c) The economist Thorstein Veblen documented in *The Engineers and the Price System* (1921) the deliberate restriction of production capacity by business interests to maintain prices above production cost, a practice he termed the "conscious withdrawal of efficiency." In Arizona, the withdrawal is visible at the border: the same food products available in Nogales, Arizona cost substantially less one hundred yards south in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico. The 75.7 percent marketing share documented by the USDA Food Dollar Series is not theoretical in Arizona; it is visible at the international line;

FINDINGS RELATING TO FOOD AND COMMODITY INSECURITY:

(d) According to the Food Research and Action Center and the USDA, approximately twelve percent (12%) of Arizona households experience food insecurity. Approximately 889,600 Arizonans receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, representing approximately 11.7 percent of the state's population. In fiscal year 2024, SNAP brought approximately \$2,015,194,104 to the State of Arizona [SOURCE: FRAC SNAP State Fact Sheet, February 2025; USAFacts FY2025];

(e) The USDA Economic Research Service Food Dollar Series establishes that the farm share of the U.S. food dollar is 24.3 cents, with the remaining 75.7 cents allocated to processing, transportation, wholesale, retail, and food-service markup. Total U.S. food-at-home spending is approximately \$1.09 trillion; production cost is approximately \$213 to \$327 billion. The difference of approximately \$496 billion represents markup above production cost [SOURCE: USDA ERS Food Dollar Series; Cooper Paper III 2025];

(f) The cost to close the food-insecurity gap for all 47.9 million food-insecure Americans is approximately \$32 billion, which represents 6.5 percent of the \$496 billion markup between production cost and retail price. The cost to feed them all is 6.5 percent of what is currently spent on permission (Cooper Paper III 2025);

(g) THE COMMISSARY OPERATES ON ARIZONA SOIL. The United States military commissary system, established by the Military Commissary Act of 1867 and codified at 10 U.S.C. § 2484, has operated at-cost food distribution continuously for one hundred fifty-nine (159) years, delivering savings of 17 to 44 percent below civilian retail prices to approximately 2.8 million authorized users through 236 stores worldwide [SOURCE: Defense Commissary Agency; GAO-19-344]. The program is funded by all federal taxpayers at approximately \$1.3 billion per year but available only to military families and retirees. The Defense Commissary Agency operates stores on Arizona soil at Luke Air Force Base (Phoenix metro), Davis-Monthan Air Force Base (Tucson), Fort Huachuca (Sierra Vista), Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, and Yuma Proving Ground [SOURCE: corp.commissaries.com store-locations directory]. Arizona civilian taxpayers fund the federal commissary system through their income taxes and are excluded from access. Not charity. Engineering;

(h) The geographer Albrecht Penck calculated in 1925 that Earth's carrying capacity was eight billion (8,000,000,000) people using 1920s agricultural technology. World population is now approximately eight billion. The productive capacity for universal food provision has been a settled scientific question for one hundred years [SOURCE: Penck 1925; Cohen How Many People Can the Earth Support? 1995];

(i) The United States has approximately 293,000 manufacturing facilities. Ten thousand to fifteen thousand facilities would suffice for universal material abundance. The ratio is 19.5 to 29.3 times overcapacity. U.S. manufacturing currently operates at approximately seventy-seven percent (77%) capacity utilization [SOURCE: Federal Reserve G.17; Cooper Paper III 2025];

(j) In 2024 alone, 7,325 retail grocery store locations closed in the United States, with 15,000-plus closures projected nationally for 2025, while 54 million Americans live in food deserts (Cooper Paper IV 2025). The commercial retail grocery model is collapsing as a distribution system. The choice before this state is not whether the model changes. The choice is whether the transition is designed or chaotic;

(k) The economist John Kenneth Galbraith described in *The Affluent Society* (1958) the condition of "private opulence and public squalor," the coexistence of substantial private productive capacity with inadequate public provision of basic needs. The condition persists in Arizona, where the state's agricultural and manufacturing output substantially exceeds the population's material requirements;

FINDINGS RELATING TO HISTORICAL AND BIOLOGICAL PRECEDENT:

(l1) Augustus Caesar (63 BC to 14 AD) formalized the *annona civica*, monthly grain distribution to approximately 200,000 Roman citizens, as civic infrastructure. Augustus was a tyrant: the Second Triumvirate proscriptions listed approximately 300 senators and 2,000 equestrians for execution, and Suetonius records him ordering a Roman knight named Pinarius stabbed on the spot for the offense of taking notes at a public assembly (Suetonius, *Life of Augustus* 27). Even Augustus, who would have a man killed for taking notes in the wrong room, understood that hungry citizens are broken infrastructure. The *annona* operated for over four

hundred (400) years. Emperor Nerva (96-98 AD) expanded the program with the *alimenta*, state-funded child nutrition recorded on the *Tabula Alimentaria* from Veleia, *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* XI 1147. The bronze inscription still exists, housed at the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Parma, and can be visited;

(I2) In September 2024, *Nature Ecology & Evolution* documented a permanent settlement at 4,446 metres elevation on the Tibetan Plateau (Mabu Co) sustaining sedentary abundance for 800 years beginning 4,400 years ago, using fishing hooks and environmental knowledge (Yang et al., 2024). Approximately 49 million years ago, the freshwater fern *Azolla* in symbiosis with the cyanobacterium *Anabaena azollae* sequestered enough atmospheric CO₂ across the Arctic Ocean over 800,000 years to contribute to the Earth's hothouse-to-icehouse transition (Brinkhuis et al., *Nature* 441, pages 606-609, 2006). *Azolla* fixes nitrogen autonomously, requires no soil, doubles biomass every two to five days, and contains 15 to 30 percent protein by dry weight. The fern is operationally relevant to Arizona as a low-water aquaculture feedstock for poultry and aquaculture operations;

(I3) **THREE-RECORD CONVERGENCE.** The state therefore inherits three operational records establishing at-cost distribution and abundance maintenance as sustainable infrastructure: the U.S. military commissary (159 years of statutory operation), the Roman *annona* (400-plus years of archaeological record), and the biological record across geologic time (800,000 years of *Azolla* planetary editing). Three records. Three time scales. One mechanism: when a system is built to deliver, the system delivers. The argument that Arizona cannot operate the same model is refuted by the fact that the model is already operating, on Arizona soil, at five federal installations, for one hundred fifty-nine years (Cooper Paper I

2025);

(14) THIS IS NOT GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP OF THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION.

The State of Arizona does not own farms, processing plants, or trucks. Division I operates distribution centers that contract with private Arizona agricultural producers at production cost plus a five percent (5%) surcharge. The upstream supply chain stays entirely private. Currency continues for luxury, custom, and specialty goods. The Defense Commissary has operated this exact model since 1867 without acquiring a single farm; the agency contracts with private suppliers and runs a retail point at cost. Costco operates a private-sector parallel: membership-based, volume purchasing, near-cost pricing on a defined basket. The contrast case is the New York City municipal grocery proposal advanced by Mayor Zohran Mamdani, in which the city itself owns and operates the stores directly (the La Marqueta model). This Act does not adopt that model. This Act provides a floor. It does not replace the market;

(15) The retail collapse and autonomous freight are eliminating distribution and retail jobs regardless of this Act. Aurora Innovation operates driverless freight without a safety driver on public roads in the Dallas-Houston corridor today. Waymo operates robotaxi service in San Francisco, Phoenix, and Los Angeles, on Arizona streets today. Boston Dynamics Atlas runs ten-hour production shifts at Hyundai Motor Group today. Figure 02 contributed to the production of more than 30,000 vehicles at BMW's Spartanburg plant. Agility Digit has moved 100,000-plus totes in Amazon and GXO Logistics warehouses. The bill does not cause the displacement. The bill catches displaced workers:

Division I feeds them, and the companion Education and Public Service framework (tracked in Lane 3) will provide the developmental pipeline into whatever comes next. The commissary

has truckers. At-cost distribution does not eliminate distribution labor; it eliminates the 75.7 percent markup on top of distribution labor. Adam Smith warned in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) Book V Chapter I Part III Article II about exactly this person, "the man whose whole life is spent in performing a few simple operations" without education to match. The retail and trucking workforce displaced by the collapse Smith described is the workforce this Act catches;

FINDINGS RELATING TO ARIZONA TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY AND INDIGENOUS

FOOD ACCESS:

(m) Arizona is home to twenty-two (22) federally recognized tribal nations, the most of any state in the United States [SOURCE: Arizona Department of Education, Office of Indian Education]. These nations include the Navajo Nation, the Tohono O'odham Nation, the Hopi Tribe, the Gila River Indian Community, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, the Fort Apache Tribe of the White Mountain Apache, the San Carlos Apache Tribe, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, the Ak-Chin Indian Community, and 13 others. Each is a sovereign nation with inherent rights to self-governance;

(n) The Navajo Nation, the largest reservation in the United States by both area (approximately 27,000 square miles, larger than ten U.S. states) and population (approximately 180,000 residents), is served by only 13 full-service grocery stores across the entire reservation [SOURCE: Planet Forward; PMC9113337; PMC7196009]. Many communities are two to three hours by car from the nearest grocery store. Food insecurity on the Navajo Nation exceeds 30 percent, compared to the national average of approximately 13 percent. The food-desert conditions on the Navajo Nation are among the most extensive documented within the United States;

(o) Tribal nations across Arizona are already pursuing food sovereignty through indigenous agriculture, traditional foods programs, community gardens, and locally controlled food distribution. This Act does not bring something new to tribal communities; it provides funding and infrastructure to scale what tribal communities are already building. The at-cost distribution model SUPPORTS existing tribal food-sovereignty movements. It does not replace them;

(p) Any state program operating on tribal land or serving tribal residents shall be developed in genuine partnership with tribal governments, pursuant to federal trust responsibilities and the government-to-government relationship between sovereign tribal nations and the State of Arizona. This is not a policy preference; it is a legal and moral obligation;

FINDINGS RELATING TO THE PHYSIOLOGY OF WHY THE PROGRAM REACHES

BEYOND BARE SURVIVAL:

(q) Sir Michael Marmot's Whitehall Studies, commencing in 1967 and continuing to the present with 10,308 British civil servants, established that among a population with universal healthcare, full employment, and no absolute poverty, the lowest employment grade experienced three times the mortality rate of the highest grade. Standard risk factors (smoking, cholesterol, blood pressure) explained less than 40 percent of the gradient. Low control at work was the largest single factor. Hierarchy itself, independent of absolute material deprivation, produces lethal health outcomes [SOURCE: Marmot, Whitehall I and II; The Status Syndrome 2004];

(r) Dr. Robert Sapolsky's thirty-year study of wild baboon populations in the Serengeti demonstrated that subordinate social position produces chronically elevated cortisol, atherosclerosis, immune suppression, and cognitive impairment. When a tuberculosis outbreak eliminated the most aggressive males from a troop, the hierarchy collapsed, and the surviving subordinates' cortisol levels normalized. The biology followed the social structure [SOURCE: Sapolsky, *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers* 1994; *Behave* 2017];

(s) Dr. Carol Shively's thirty-year study of female cynomolgus macaques at Wake Forest University demonstrated that subordinate social status directly causes visceral fat accumulation, atherosclerosis, and coronary artery disease, with cingulate cortex serotonin identified as the neurological nexus linking depression to cardiovascular disease [SOURCE: Shively 2009; 2014];

(t) Dr. Elizabeth Blackburn, recipient of the 2009 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, demonstrated that chronic psychological stress shortens telomeres, the protective caps on chromosomal DNA, accelerating cellular aging. Subordination ages the body at the molecular level [SOURCE: Blackburn and Epel, *The Telomere Effect* 2017];

(u) THE GAP IS THE GRADIENT. The gap is not the deprivation. The findings of Marmot, Sapolsky, Shively, and Blackburn collectively establish that the mortality and morbidity gradient is produced by hierarchy itself, not by absolute scarcity. Treating sickness downstream of an untreated gradient is documented to fail across four programs, six decades, three species. Hierarchy itself kills. A food and commodity assurance program that compresses the gradient at its base, at the level of daily caloric and material access, is therefore a public-health intervention with measurable physiological consequence, not a transfer payment;

(v) THE TARGETING ERROR (Bowles-Gintis Corner-Trap). Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis named the right disease at the wrong site in *Schooling in Capitalist America* (1976). Stratification is the ocean, not the cup. The gradient is the disease; any single institution is downstream of it. Hierarchy itself kills, and the gradient runs through every institution. Targeting any single institution as the cause misses the structural mechanism (Cooper Paper V 2025). Division I addresses the mechanism at the point of daily caloric access, the most upstream intervention available to a state legislature;

(w) UNIVERSE 25 REBUTTAL. The Calhoun mouse experiment ("Universe 25") is frequently invoked against any abundance-distribution proposal. The argument is a misread. Calhoun's mice collapsed not because they had abundance, but because abundance arrived without institutional infrastructure: food, water, nesting material, and space, with no education, no governance, no intergenerational transmission, no civic role. Abundance of resources plus abundance of ease produces Universe 25. Abundance of resources plus structured civic obligation produces the Augustus annona (400 years), the Defense Commissary (159 years), and the Mabu Co settlement (800 years). The Roman grain dole was distributed to citizens who had civic obligations: military service, public works, jury duty, voting. The commissary is distributed to military families inside an institution that defines daily structure. The institutional scaffolding is what distinguishes sustainable abundance from collapse;

FINDINGS RELATING TO ARIZONA-SPECIFIC HEALTH GRADIENT ANCHORS:

(x) NAVAJO DIABETES AS GRADIENT MADE VISIBLE. Approximately one in five (1 in 5) Navajo adults have Type 2 diabetes, among the highest documented rates in the United States [SOURCE: Indian Health Service Special Diabetes Program for Indians; Navajo Health Study, Journal of Nutrition 2023; PMC1349991]. The diabetes prevalence is not genetic destiny. It is the biological consequence of imposed food deserts combined with the chronic stress of subordination, historical trauma, and the systematic disruption of traditional food systems. The causal pathway is documented: food desert, reliance on processed foods high in salt, sugar, and fat, metabolic syndrome, Type 2 diabetes. This is Marmot's gradient made visible in Arizona: tribal populations occupy the lowest rung of every socioeconomic measure in the state, and their health outcomes follow exactly what the Whitehall Studies predict;

(y) ARIZONA HEAT DEATH IS HIERARCHY DEATH. In 2023, Maricopa County recorded 645 heat-related deaths. In 2024, 602 confirmed heat-related deaths were recorded in Maricopa County. Statewide, 977 heat-related deaths occurred in Arizona in 2024 [SOURCE: Arizona Department of Health Services Heat-Related Mortality Year 2013-2024; Maricopa County Department of Public Health Heat Surveillance Reports 2023-2024]. The victims are disproportionately unhoused, elderly, and economically subordinated. Those with resources have air conditioning. Those without die. This is Marmot's gradient applied to desert climate: survival resources, shelter, cooling, water, are distributed by socioeconomic position. Heat death in Arizona is not a weather event. It is a hierarchy event. The essential goods program established in this Act, which includes heat-mitigation supplies and cooling

distribution, directly addresses the material conditions that kill;

(z) THE GRADIENT WITHIN THIS STATE. Scottsdale and Paradise Valley, among the wealthiest zip codes in the nation, exist within the same state, under the same sun, as the Navajo Nation, where food insecurity exceeds 30 percent, where the diabetes prevalence is among the highest documented in the United States, and where life expectancy is below state and national averages.

The gradient is not between states. It is within Arizona;

(aa) THE PROGRAM REACHES BEYOND BARE SURVIVAL because the physiology requires it. Marmot, Sapolsky, Shively, and Blackburn established that the gradient itself produces measurable disease and mortality. Compressing the gradient at the point of daily material access is the only intervention available at the upstream end. The Navajo diabetes prevalence and the 977 Arizona heat deaths in 2024 are the same gradient at two different physiological end-points. The companion Education and Public Service legislation, tracked in Lane 3 and prepared separately, will address the downstream developmental requirements. This Act addresses the upstream physiological one. Denial is no longer neutral.

(B) The People of the State of Arizona further find that the food and commodity assurance program established in this Act is the foundation upon which the companion Education and Public Service legislation will rest. Material insecurity is the upstream constraint that no downstream policy can compensate for: students cannot learn food-insecure, workers cannot train food-insecure, citizens cannot participate food-insecure. This Act resolves the upstream constraint. The companion Education bill (Lane 3, in preparation) will resolve the downstream developmental one.

(C) This Act is enacted pursuant to the initiative power reserved to the People of Arizona by Article IV, Part 1, Section 1 of the Arizona Constitution. Upon voter approval, this Act is PROTECTED by the Voter Protection Act (Proposition 105, 1998), codified at Article IV, Part 1, Section 1, Subsection (6) of the Arizona Constitution. The Legislature may not repeal this Act. The Legislature may amend this Act only by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of each house AND only if the amendment furthers the purpose of this Act. When the People of Arizona pass this Act, it stays passed.

DIVISION I

ARIZONA FOOD AND COMMODITY ASSURANCE

SECTION 2. Title 3 of the Arizona Revised Statutes is amended by adding Chapter 24, to read:

CHAPTER 24

ARIZONA FOOD ASSURANCE PROGRAM

ARTICLE 1

General Provisions

§ 3-3001. Short title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Arizona Food Assurance Act."

§ 3-3002. Definitions.

In this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

- A. "At-cost pricing" means the price of a food product calculated as the sum of the direct production cost paid to the producer or supplier plus a facility surcharge not to exceed five per cent (5%) of the production cost, with no additional profit margin, markup, or marketing cost applied.
- B. "Department" means the Arizona Department of Agriculture.
- C. "Director" means the director of the Arizona Department of Agriculture.
- D. "Food assurance center" means a state-operated facility established under this chapter for the purpose of distributing food products to Arizona residents at at-cost pricing.
- E. "Facility surcharge" means a charge not to exceed five per cent (5%) of the production cost of a food product, applied to cover the operational costs of a food assurance center, including but not limited to facility maintenance, labor, utilities, and transportation.
- F. "Production cost" means the cost of producing a food product as determined by the department based on wholesale acquisition price from producers, cooperatives, or the most proximate point in the supply chain to the point of original production.

G. "Tribal food assurance center" means a food assurance center located on or serving tribal land, established in partnership with the governing body of the relevant tribal nation pursuant to Section 3-3008.

§ 3-3003. Arizona food assurance program; creation; purpose.

A. There is established in the department the Arizona food assurance program.

B. The purpose of the program is to establish state-operated food distribution centers where all Arizona residents may purchase the full range of grocery products at at-cost pricing, modeled on the United States military commissary system as authorized by 10 U.S.C. § 2484 and as operated by the Defense Commissary Agency continuously since 1867, including the commissaries already operating at Luke Air Force Base, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Fort Huachuca, Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, and Yuma Proving Ground on Arizona soil.

C. The program shall:

1. Establish and operate food assurance centers throughout the State of Arizona;
2. Purchase food products directly from Arizona producers, cooperatives, and wholesale suppliers at or near production cost;
3. Sell food products to Arizona residents at at-cost pricing as defined in Section 3-3002;
4. Prioritize procurement from Arizona farms and ranches to the maximum extent practicable, with specific emphasis on Yuma County winter produce;
5. Accept all forms of payment including cash, electronic benefit transfer (EBT), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) vouchers, and Double Up Food Bucks;

6. Operate without profit motive, with all revenue above operational costs reinvested in program expansion.

§ 3-3004. Pilot food assurance centers; locations; timeline.

A. Within two (2) years of the effective date of this section, the department shall establish not fewer than ten (10) pilot food assurance centers in the following regions:

1. Two (2) centers in the Phoenix metropolitan area, with at least one (1) center located in South Phoenix or another documented food desert within Maricopa County;
2. One (1) center in the Tucson metropolitan area, prioritizing neighborhoods identified as food deserts by the USDA Food Access Research Atlas;
3. One (1) center in the Yuma metropolitan area, the winter lettuce capital of America, where agricultural workers who harvest approximately 90 percent of the nation's winter leafy greens cannot afford to eat the food they pick. YUMA SHALL BE THE FIRST CENTER OPERATIONAL, as the pilot site for the grocery proof;
4. One (1) center in the Flagstaff area, serving Northern Arizona and accessible to surrounding tribal communities;
5. One (1) center serving the Navajo Nation, established in partnership with the Navajo Nation government pursuant to Section 3-3008;
6. One (1) center serving the Tohono O'odham Nation, established in partnership with the Tohono O'odham Nation government pursuant to Section 3-3008;

- 7. One (1) center in the Sierra Vista / Cochise County area;
- 8. One (1) center in the Prescott / Yavapai County area;
- 9. One (1) mobile food assurance unit serving the western tribal nations (Hualapai, Havasupai, Fort Mojave, Colorado River Indian Tribes) along a regular route schedule.

B. Within five (5) years of the effective date of this section, the department shall expand the program to not fewer than twenty-five (25) food assurance centers statewide, with at least one (1) center per congressional district and at least five (5) centers serving tribal communities.

C. The department shall prioritize locations with the highest rates of food insecurity, the greatest distances to existing grocery retail, and the largest populations residing in food deserts, including tribal communities where distance to grocery retail regularly exceeds fifty (50) miles.

§ 3-3005. Arizona-first procurement.

A. Not less than fifty per cent (50%) of all food products sold through food assurance centers shall be sourced from Arizona producers, cooperatives, or processors within three (3) years of the effective date of this section.

B. The Arizona-first procurement target shall increase to seventy per cent (70%) within five (5) years of the effective date of this section.

C. The department shall establish partnerships with the Arizona agricultural community, including Yuma County produce growers, Arizona dairy producers, Arizona cattle ranchers, and tribal agricultural programs, to develop direct supply chains between Arizona farms and food assurance centers.

D. Yuma County winter produce procurement shall be prioritized as the primary demonstration of the farm-to-center model, eliminating the supply-chain layers that produce the 75.7 percent marketing share between the field and the consumer.

§ 3-3006. Arizona food assurance fund; creation.

A. There is established in the state treasury the Arizona food assurance fund.

B. The fund shall consist of:

1. Appropriations from the state general fund;
2. Revenue from facility surcharges collected by food assurance centers;
3. Federal grants, reimbursements, and matching funds;
4. Gifts, grants, and donations from private sources.

C. All monies credited to the fund shall be used exclusively for the purposes of this chapter.

§ 3-3007. Reporting.

A. The department shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature, not later than December 31 of each year, detailing:

1. The number and location of food assurance centers in operation;
2. Total food sales volume and average savings compared to civilian retail prices;
3. The percentage of Arizona-sourced products sold;
4. The number of Arizona residents served, disaggregated by county and by tribal / non-tribal status;
5. Financial performance of the food assurance fund;
6. Progress toward self-sufficiency through volume surcharges.

§ 3-3008. Tribal food assurance partnership.

A. The department shall not establish, operate, or locate any food assurance center on tribal land or within the exterior boundaries of any tribal reservation without the express written consent and ongoing partnership of the governing body of the relevant tribal nation.

B. Tribal food assurance centers shall be:

1. Developed through government-to-government consultation between the State of Arizona and the relevant tribal nation;
2. Operated in a manner consistent with tribal sovereignty, tribal law, and tribal cultural practices;
3. Staffed, to the maximum extent practicable, by members of the relevant tribal nation;
4. Designed to integrate with existing tribal food sovereignty programs, including traditional foods programs, indigenous agriculture initiatives, and community garden networks;

5. Located at sites determined by the tribal governing body.

C. The department shall establish a Tribal Food Assurance Advisory Council, composed of one (1) representative designated by each tribal nation that elects to participate, to advise the department on:

1. Culturally appropriate food selection and procurement;
2. Distribution logistics for remote communities;
3. Integration with existing tribal food programs;
4. Mobile food assurance unit routes and schedules;
5. Workforce development and tribal employment priorities.

D. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to diminish, alter, or supersede any treaty right, federal trust responsibility, or inherent sovereign authority of any tribal nation.

ARIZONA ESSENTIAL GOODS PROGRAM

SECTION 3. Title 3 of the Arizona Revised Statutes is amended by adding Chapter 24.1, to read:

CHAPTER 24.1

ARIZONA ESSENTIAL GOODS PROGRAM

§ 3-3101. Short title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Arizona Essential Goods Act."

§ 3-3102. Definitions.

In this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

A. "Below-retail pricing" means a price calculated as the production cost plus a surcharge not to exceed ten per cent (10%) of the production cost.

B. "Essential goods" means basic consumer products necessary for daily life, including but not limited to:

1. Clothing and footwear;
2. Household cleaning and maintenance supplies;
3. Personal hygiene products;
4. Basic home furnishings;
5. Basic tools and hardware;
6. Infant and child care supplies;
7. Heat mitigation supplies, including portable cooling

units, electrolyte supplies, and sun protection. In Arizona, cooling is not a luxury; it is a survival requirement.

C. "Office" means the Arizona Commerce Authority.

§ 3-3103. Arizona essential goods program; creation; purpose.

A. There is established in the Arizona Commerce Authority the Arizona essential goods program.

B. The purpose of the program is to produce and distribute essential goods at below-retail pricing through manufacturing partnerships and direct procurement, with specific emphasis on heat-mitigation supplies given Arizona's documented heat-mortality burden.

C. The program shall use Arizona's existing manufacturing infrastructure, including the semiconductor, aerospace, and defense manufacturing sectors, and workforce to produce essential goods within the state wherever practicable.

§ 3-3104. Distribution model.

A. The distribution of essential goods shall follow a tiered structure adapted from the at-cost universal-service model operated by the Defense Commissary Agency:

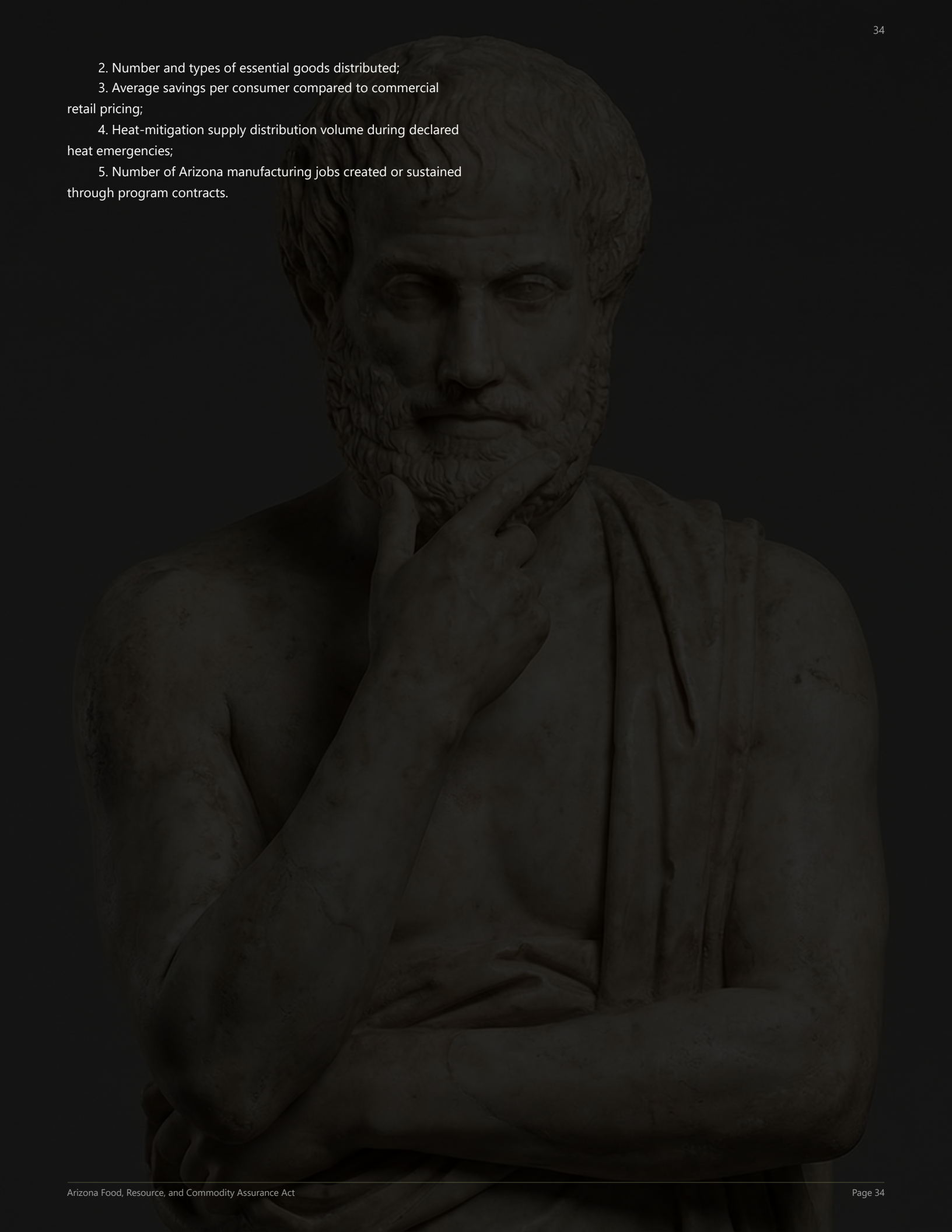
1. Constant-need goods, including food and consumable supplies, shall be distributed on a recurring basis through food assurance centers established under Chapter 24 of this title;
2. Semi-permanent goods, including clothing and household supplies, shall be distributed on a need-based schedule with reasonable limits established by rule to prevent hoarding;
3. Heat-mitigation supplies shall be distributed at no cost during declared heat emergencies, and food assurance centers shall be designated as cooling stations during such emergencies;
4. Currency continues for luxury, custom, and specialty goods not covered by the essential goods program. This Act provides a floor. It does not replace the market.

§ 3-3105. Arizona essential goods fund; creation.

- A. There is established in the state treasury the Arizona essential goods fund.
- B. The fund shall consist of appropriations from the state general fund, federal grants, surcharge revenue, and private donations.

§ 3-3106. Reporting.

- A. The office shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature, not later than December 31 of each year, detailing:
1. Total procurement volume and value of contracts awarded to Arizona manufacturers;

- 
2. Number and types of essential goods distributed;
 3. Average savings per consumer compared to commercial retail pricing;
 4. Heat-mitigation supply distribution volume during declared heat emergencies;
 5. Number of Arizona manufacturing jobs created or sustained through program contracts.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 4. Appropriation and fiscal convergence.

A. There is appropriated from the state general fund for fiscal year 2027-2028 the following amounts to the following departments and agencies:

1. ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, Food Assurance Program (Chapter 24, Title 3): TWO HUNDRED FIFTY MILLION DOLLARS (\$250,000,000) for the establishment of pilot food assurance centers, including procurement contracts with Arizona producers, facility construction and staffing, and initial inventory acquisition.

2. ARIZONA COMMERCE AUTHORITY, Essential Goods Program (Chapter 24.1, Title 3): ONE HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS (\$100,000,000) for the Arizona essential goods program, including procurement contracts with Arizona manufacturers, distribution infrastructure, and heat-mitigation supply provisioning.

B. TOTAL APPROPRIATION: THREE HUNDRED FIFTY MILLION DOLLARS (\$350,000,000), representing approximately 1.88 percent of Arizona's FY2027 Executive Budget General Fund operating appropriations of \$18,639,851,000 [SOURCE: Governor Katie Hobbs FY2027 Executive Budget Summary, January 2026, page 66].

C. DIVISION I FOOD PROGRAM TARGET. The at-cost food assurance program established in Division I, serving Arizona's population of approximately 7,623,818 residents [SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts Arizona, Vintage 2025 PST045225], scales over seven (7) years toward an annual operating target of approximately \$2.356 billion per year (at three hundred nine dollars (\$309) per resident per year for a baseline staple basket distributed at the commissary at-cost methodology). The target represents approximately 12.6 percent of the \$18.64 billion FY2027 General

Fund. The Table 2 per-capita target applies because Arizona's state-only General Fund per-capita expenditure is approximately \$2,446 (\$18.64B / 7.62M residents). The expansion goal of \$609 per resident per year (approximately \$4.64 billion per year, 24.9 percent of GF) is retained as the multi-decade horizon once the program achieves operational self-sufficiency through volume surcharges.

D. THE FEDERAL SNAP COST-SHIFT. Federal H.R. 1 (2025) shifted SNAP administrative costs from 50 percent to 75 percent state share effective October 1 2026 [SOURCE: P.L. 119-21]. Arizona currently routes approximately \$2.015 billion per year in SNAP benefits through commercial retailers where 75.7 cents of every food dollar pays for markup rather than food [SOURCE: USDA ERS Food Dollar Series; FRAC SNAP State Fact Sheet 2025]. At at-cost routing through Division I, approximately 95 cents of every dollar reaches the recipient as food (production cost plus 5 percent surcharge), a 3.9-fold increase in delivered food value per SNAP dollar that independently offsets the federal cost-shift.

E. THE FISCAL CONVERGENCE. The arithmetic says ending the gap costs single-digit percentage of the markup the state already pays [SOURCE: USDA Food Dollar Series 2024]. The operational template has run for one hundred fifty-nine (159) years inside the same federal apparatus the state already funds [SOURCE: 10 U.S.C. § 2484; Defense Commissary Agency, 2026]. Arizona is not asked to attempt something untested. Arizona is asked to deliver to its own residents what its veterans have received since 1867, at five federal installations operating today on Arizona soil.

F. THE FISCAL LOCK. The argument that this state cannot afford this Act is refuted by the state's existing expenditure on the less efficient version of the same program while absorbing a federal SNAP cost-shift the state did not request. The fiscal question is not whether to spend, but whether to continue spending approximately four times as much as required to accomplish the same objective. Denial is no longer neutral.

SECTION 5. Severability.

If any provision of this Act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of the Act that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this Act are severable. All provisions of this Act are declared severable.

SECTION 6. Voter Protection Act declaration.

This Act is enacted as a statutory initiative pursuant to the initiative power reserved to the People of Arizona by Article IV, Part 1, Section 1 of the Arizona Constitution. Upon approval by the voters at a general election, this Act is PROTECTED by Article IV, Part 1, Section 1, Subsection (6) of the Arizona Constitution (the Voter Protection Act, Proposition 105, 1998).

Pursuant to the Voter Protection Act:

- A. The Legislature SHALL NOT repeal this Act;
- B. The Legislature SHALL NOT supersede this Act;
- C. The Legislature MAY amend this Act ONLY by a three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote of the members of each house of the Legislature AND only if the amendment furthers the purposes of this Act.

This protection is absolute and self-executing upon voter approval. This is the highest legislative bar in American state politics. Once the People of Arizona pass this Act, it stays passed.

SECTION 7. The water objection addressed.

A. This Act does not require new water-intensive agricultural production in Arizona. Arizona's water situation, the Colorado River allocation reductions, Lake Mead depletion, and groundwater overdraft in agricultural areas, is real and acknowledged.

B. This Act restructures DISTRIBUTION of food already being produced, not PRODUCTION of new food requiring new water. Arizona already produces over \$5 billion in annual agricultural cash receipts. The food exists. The water has already been allocated. This Act ensures the food reaches all Arizona residents at production cost rather than at 75.7 percent markup.

C. To the extent that the food assurance program sources additional food from out-of-state suppliers, no additional Arizona water consumption is required.

SECTION 8. The border economy addressed.

A. The United States-Mexico border creates a visible price discontinuity across Arizona's approximately 370-mile southern boundary. Food products available in Nogales, Arizona (retail price) cost substantially less in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico (production-proximate price). This price differential is visible evidence of the 75.7 percent marketing share documented by the USDA Food Dollar Series.

B. The food assurance program eliminates this asymmetry for Arizona residents by pricing food at production cost plus 5 percent facility surcharge, approximating the pricing structure available across the border.

SECTION 9. Effective dates.

A. This Act takes effect upon the date of the official canvass of the general election at which this Act is approved by the voters, or, if introduced through the Legislature, on the general effective date following signature by the Governor.

B. ARIZONA FOOD ASSURANCE PROGRAM (Chapter 24, Title 3):

1. Pilot food assurance centers shall be operational within two (2) years of the effective date;

2. Statewide expansion to twenty-five (25) or more food assurance centers within five (5) years.

C. ARIZONA ESSENTIAL GOODS PROGRAM (Chapter 24.1, Title 3):

1. First procurement contracts awarded within one (1) year of the effective date;

2. Heat-mitigation supply distribution operational by the first Arizona heat season following the effective date.

D. SELF-SUFFICIENCY TARGET: Within seven (7) years of program launch, the food assurance program shall achieve operational self-sufficiency through facility surcharges, with state general fund appropriation reduced to capital improvement and expansion funding only.

SECTION 10. Amendment to existing statutes.

A. A.R.S. § 3-101 (Department of Agriculture definitions) is amended to add:

"'Food assurance center' has the meaning given in Section 3-3002."

"'Tribal food assurance center' has the meaning given in Section 3-3002."

B. A.R.S. § 41-1502 (Arizona Commerce Authority duties) is amended to add:

"The Authority shall administer the Arizona essential goods program established in Chapter 24.1 of Title 3, pursuant to Section 3-3103."

SECTION 11. Repeal of conflicting provisions.

All acts and parts of acts in conflict with this Act are repealed to the extent of the conflict.

REFERENCES

The research and citations referenced in this Act are drawn from the following sources:

COOPER, HISTORICAL APOPLEXY SERIES (2025-2026):

- Cooper, Imran. Historical Apoplexy (Cooper): On the Stroke-Like Loss of Civilizational Memory and the Deliberate Severance of Intellectual Lineage. Paper I (December 2025).
- Cooper, Imran. Historical Apoplexy: Historical Arc II. Paper II (January 2026).
- Cooper, Imran. The Mathematics of Abundance: Two Proofs That Scarcity Is a Policy Choice. Paper III (December 2025).
- Cooper, Imran. Stolen Futures: The Intergenerational Theft of Technical Possibility. Paper IV (December 2025).
- Cooper, Imran. The Targeting Error. Paper V (2026).
- Cooper, Imran. The Resuscitation Document. Paper VI (2026).
- Cooper, Imran. The Structural Overload: A Case for the Triple Presidency and Expanded Representation. Paper VII (2026).
- Cooper, Imran. Venus Prime: Biological Planetary Engineering and the Venus Biosphere Thesis. Paper VIII (2026).
- Cooper, Imran. The Maturity Void: Subclinical Affluence Pathology and the Developmental Arrest of the Middle Class. Paper X (2026).

FOOD AND COMMODITY ASSURANCE PRIMARY SOURCES:

- Penck, Albrecht. Earth carrying capacity calculation (1925).
- Cohen, Joel. How Many People Can the Earth Support? (1995).
- United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. Food Dollar Series; Household Food Security in the United States in 2023 (December 2024).
- Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA), operational since 1867, codified at 10 U.S.C. § 2484. Government Accountability Office, Defense Commissaries: DOD Needs to Improve Business Practices and Assess Alternative Business Models, GAO-19-344 (2019).
- Federal Reserve Board, Industrial Production and Capacity Utilization (G.17).
- Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and

Wages, manufacturing establishments by subsector (Q4 2024).

- Galbraith, John Kenneth. *The Affluent Society* (1958).
- Veblen, Thorstein. *The Engineers and the Price System* (1921).
- Feeding America. *Map the Meal Gap* (2025).
- USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Mountain Regional

Field Office. *Vegetables 2024 Summary, Arizona* (February 2025).

- USDA NASS. *Arizona Annual Statistical Bulletin 2023-2024*.
- Food Research and Action Center (FRAC). *SNAP State Fact Sheet:*

Arizona (February 2025).

- USAFacts. *How many people receive SNAP benefits in Arizona? (FY2025)*.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND HIERARCHY (PHYSIOLOGICAL EVIDENTIARY BLOCK):

• Marmot, Michael. *Whitehall Studies I and II* (1967 to present); *The Status Syndrome* (2004); *The Health Gap* (2015); WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health (2005-2008).

• Sapolsky, Robert. *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers* (1994); *Behave: The Biology of Humans at Our Best and Worst* (2017).

• Shively, Carol. *Social Stress, Visceral Obesity, and Coronary Artery Atherosclerosis* (2009); *Stress, Depression, and Coronary Artery Disease* (2014).

• Blackburn, Elizabeth. *Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine* (2009); *The Telomere Effect* (2017, with Epel).

• Bowles, Samuel and Gintis, Herbert. *Schooling in Capitalist America* (1976).

• Calhoun, John B. *Universe 25 mouse experiment* (1968-1973); see Cooper Paper X (2026) for the rebuttal-by-institutional-scaffolding.

HISTORICAL AND BIOLOGICAL PRECEDENT:

• Suetonius. *Lives of the Twelve Caesars, Life of Augustus 27* (Pinarius episode). Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press.

• Appian. *Civil Wars 4.5* (Triumviral proscriptions). Loeb Classical Library.

• Cassius Dio. *Roman History* (annona and alimenta). Loeb Classical Library.

• Pliny the Younger. *Panegyricus* (Nerva's alimenta).

• Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (CIL) XI 1147. *Tabula Alimentaria* from Veleia. Bronze inscription, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Parma.

- Yang, Y., et al. Lake-centred sedentary lifestyle of early Tibetan Plateau Indigenous populations at high elevation 4,400 years ago. *Nature Ecology & Evolution*, volume 8, pages 2297-2308 (September 2024).
- Brinkhuis, H., et al. Episodic fresh surface waters in the Eocene Arctic Ocean. *Nature* 441, pages 606-609 (2006).

FEDERAL AND STRUCTURAL:

- Congressional Research Service R48832. Government Shutdowns: Frequently Asked Questions (updated 2026).
- 10 U.S.C. § 2484 (Defense Commissary Agency pricing requirements).
- H.R. 1 (2025), 119th Congress; P.L. 119-21 (SNAP administrative cost-shift).
- Permanent Apportionment Act of 1929, 46 Stat. 26.
- admin.ch; gfs.bern. Swiss Federal Council citizen-trust surveys (1848 to present).

ARIZONA-SPECIFIC SOURCES:

- Arizona Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting. Governor Katie Hobbs FY2027 Executive Budget Summary (January 2026), page 66
 | "General Fund Sources and Uses."
- Arizona Joint Legislative Budget Committee. FY2026 Appropriations Report; FY2027 Baseline Book.
- Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity. Arizona at-a-Glance: Population & Employment Trends (April 2025).
- U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts Arizona, Vintage 2025 release PST045225 (July 2025 population estimate 7,623,818).
- Arizona Department of Health Services. Heat-Related Mortality Year 2013-2024.
- Maricopa County Department of Public Health. Heat Surveillance Reports 2023-2024.
- Arizona Department of Education, Office of Indian Education. 22 Federally Recognized Tribes in Arizona.
- Indian Health Service. Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) fact sheets.
- Navajo Health Study, *Journal of Nutrition* (2023).
- Planet Forward (2019). 13 grocery stores: The Navajo Nation is a food desert.
- PMC9113337. Shopper Purchasing Trends at Small Stores on the Navajo Nation.
- PMC7196009. The complexities of selling fruits and vegetables in remote Navajo communities.
- PMC1349991. Prevalence of diabetes in a Navajo Indian community.

- Defense Commissary Agency store-locations directory (corp.commissaries.com): Luke AFB, Davis-Monthan AFB, Fort Huachuca, MCAS Yuma, Yuma Proving Ground.
- Arizona Constitution Article IV, Part 1, Section 1 (initiative power and Voter Protection Act).
- Arizona Constitution Article XI, Section 1 (general and uniform public-school clause; cited as context for the companion Education bill).
- *Shofstall v. Hollins*, 110 Ariz. 88, 515 P.2d 590 (Supreme Court of Arizona, En Banc, November 2 1973). (Education-clause holding; travels to Lane 3 with Division III.)
- *Roosevelt Elementary School District No. 66 v. Bishop*, 179 Ariz. 233, 877 P.2d 806 (Supreme Court of Arizona, 1994). (Education -clause holding; travels to Lane 3 with Division III.)
- Arizona Proposition 105 (1998), Voter Protection Act.
- Arizona Proposition 134 (2024), defeated.
- A.R.S. Title 19 (initiative process).
- TSMC Arizona. \$165 billion investment, semiconductor fabrication, Phoenix.
- Intel Corporation. Chandler, Arizona operations.
- Sassafras and Maple Research Foundation (SMRF), Colorado DPOS registration (2016).

END OF BILL

Arizona Food, Resource, and Commodity Assurance Act

Initiated Measure

57th Legislature, First Regular Session, 2025

Historical Apoplexy (Cooper), 2025-2026

The Sassafras and Maple Research Foundation (SMRF)

The Amanuensis

"The food grows here. The people who pick it are hungry.

The commissary operates at five federal installations across this state. The Navajo Nation has thirteen grocery stores for twenty-seven thousand square miles. The gradient is not between states. It is within Arizona, under the same sun.

Pass it. The Voter Protection Act ensures it stays passed."



APPENDIX A

Citizen Initiative Ballot Language

Prepared pursuant to Article IV, Part 1, Section 1
Arizona Constitution

255,949 signatures required
Protected by the Voter Protection Act (Proposition 105, 1998)

ARIZONA CITIZEN INITIATIVE: BALLOT LANGUAGE

Arizona Food, Resource, and Commodity Assurance Act

Scarcity is a Policy Choice

Filed with the Arizona Secretary of State pursuant to Article IV,
Part 1, Section 1 of the Arizona Constitution.

PETITION HEADING

INITIATIVE MEASURE TO BE SUBMITTED DIRECTLY TO THE VOTERS

Petition Serial Number: [Assigned by Secretary of State]

Filing Date: _____

OFFICIAL TITLE: Arizona Food, Resource, and Commodity Assurance Act

SIGNATURES REQUIRED: Pursuant to Article IV, Part 1, Section 1 of the

Arizona Constitution, the number of signatures required for a statutory initiative equals ten percent (10%) of the total votes cast for all candidates for Governor at the last preceding general election.

Based on the November 8, 2022 gubernatorial election total of approximately two million five hundred fifty-nine thousand (2,559,490) votes cast for all candidates for Governor, the required number of valid signatures is TWO HUNDRED FIFTY-FIVE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED FORTY-NINE (255,949) (Arizona Secretary of State, 2026 Election Cycle).

NOTE: In November 2024, Arizona voters DEFEATED Proposition 134, which would have imposed per-legislative-district signature distribution requirements on citizen initiatives. The initiative process remains intact; signatures may be collected statewide without geographic distribution mandates.

100-WORD DESCRIPTION

(for petition signature sheets)

This initiative establishes the Arizona Food, Resource, and Commodity Assurance Act: state-operated food assurance centers selling groceries at production cost plus a five percent (5%) facility surcharge, modeled on the United States military commissary system operating at Luke AFB, Davis-Monthan AFB, Fort Huachuca, MCAS Yuma, and Yuma Proving Ground. An essential goods program distributes clothing, household supplies, tools, and heat-mitigation supplies at below-retail pricing. Mandatory tribal partnership for any center on tribal land. Total appropriation \$350 million, 1.88 percent of Arizona's FY2027 General Fund. Protected by the Voter Protection Act (Proposition 105, 1998); the Legislature cannot repeal it.

BALLOT TITLE

(as it would appear on the ballot)

PROPOSITION ____

ARIZONA FOOD, RESOURCE, AND COMMODITY ASSURANCE ACT

A "yes" vote shall have the effect of establishing state-operated food assurance centers selling groceries at production cost, and an essential goods program distributing clothing, household supplies, and heat-mitigation supplies at below-retail pricing, all protected by the Voter Protection Act.

A "no" vote shall have the effect of retaining the current system in which Arizona's food distribution relies exclusively on commercial retail at the seventy-five and seven-tenths percent (75.7%) USDA Food Dollar Series marketing share, while the United States military commissary system operates at-cost food distribution for military families at five federal installations on Arizona soil that Arizona civilian taxpayers fund and cannot access.

BALLOT TEXT

The People of the State of Arizona enact as follows:

DIVISION I, ARIZONA FOOD AND COMMODITY ASSURANCE

Establishes state-operated food assurance centers where all Arizona residents may purchase grocery products at production cost plus a five percent (5%) facility surcharge. Modeled on the United States military commissary system (10 U.S.C. § 2484), which has operated at-cost food distribution for one hundred fifty-nine (159) years and currently operates at Luke Air Force Base, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Fort Huachuca, Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, and Yuma Proving Ground, on Arizona soil. Creates ten (10) pilot centers within two (2) years, including centers in Phoenix, Tucson, Yuma, Flagstaff, and tribal communities including the Navajo Nation and Tohono O'odham Nation. Yuma, where ninety percent (90%) of America's winter leafy greens are grown by workers who cannot afford to eat the food they harvest, shall be the first center operational. Requires Arizona-first procurement: fifty percent (50%) Arizona-sourced products within three (3) years, seventy percent (70%) within five (5) years.

Establishes mandatory tribal partnership provisions: no food assurance center may be placed on tribal land without express consent of the relevant tribal government. Tribal centers shall integrate with existing tribal food sovereignty programs. Creates the Arizona essential goods program for clothing, household supplies, tools, educational materials, and heat mitigation supplies at below-retail pricing, with food assurance centers designated as cooling stations during declared heat emergencies.

The USDA Food Dollar Series documents that the farm share of the food dollar is 24.3 cents. The remaining 75.7 cents is markup.

In Arizona, this markup is visible at the border: the same food products cost substantially less one hundred yards south in Nogales, Sonora. This program eliminates the markup for Arizona residents.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Appropriates THREE HUNDRED FIFTY MILLION DOLLARS (\$350,000,000) across two departments: TWO HUNDRED FIFTY MILLION DOLLARS (\$250,000,000) to the Arizona Department of Agriculture for the Food Assurance Program; ONE HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS (\$100,000,000) to the Arizona Commerce Authority for the Essential Goods Program. Establishes phased effective dates: food assurance pilot centers operational within two (2) years; statewide expansion to twenty-five (25) or more centers within five (5) years; first essential goods procurement contracts within one (1) year; self-sufficiency target through facility surcharges within seven (7) years. The Voter Protection Act (Proposition 105, 1998) shields the Act from legislative repeal. Severability clause. Repeal of conflicting provisions.

A companion Education and Public Service framework, tracked separately as Lane 3, is being prepared as its own standalone bill and is not part of this Act.

FISCAL IMPACT SUMMARY

ESTIMATED INITIAL APPROPRIATION: Three hundred fifty million dollars

(\$350,000,000), representing approximately one and eighty-eight hundredths percent (1.88%) of Arizona's FY2027 General Fund operating budget appropriations of eighteen and six-tenths billion dollars (\$18,639,851,000) [SOURCE: Governor Katie Hobbs FY2027 Executive Budget Summary, January 2026, page 66, "General Fund Sources and Uses" table; Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting].

Full implementation target at three hundred nine dollars (\$309) per resident per year, multiplied by Arizona's population of approximately seven million six hundred twenty-three thousand eight hundred eighteen (7,623,818) residents [SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts Arizona, Vintage 2025 release PST045225], equals approximately two billion three hundred fifty-six million dollars (\$2,356,000,000), representing approximately twelve and six-tenths percent (12.6%) of the FY2027 General Fund. The Table 2 per-capita target (\$309/person/yr) applies because Arizona's state-only General Fund per-capita expenditure is approximately \$2,446 (\$18.64B / 7.62M residents). The initial appropriation funds the pilot phase; the full program scales over five (5) to seven (7) years.

DIVISION I APPROPRIATION BREAKDOWN:

Arizona Department of Agriculture

(Food Assurance Program): \$250,000,000

Arizona Commerce Authority

(Essential Goods Program): \$100,000,000

TOTAL: \$350,000,000

FISCAL CONTEXT:

Arizona SNAP benefits brought approximately \$2,015,194,104 to the state in FY2024 [SOURCE: FRAC SNAP State Fact Sheet, February 2025; USAFacts FY2025]. At at-cost routing through Division I, approximately 95 cents of every dollar reaches the recipient as food (production cost plus 5 percent surcharge), a 3.9-fold increase in delivered food value per SNAP dollar compared with commercial retail at the 75.7 percent marketing share.

Federal H.R. 1 (2025) shifted SNAP administrative costs from 50 percent to 75 percent state share effective October 1 2026 [SOURCE: P.L. 119-21]. This Act's at-cost routing independently offsets the federal cost-shift.

Arizona civilian taxpayers already fund the federal commissary system through income taxes, providing at-cost food to military families at five (5) federal installations on Arizona soil while 889,600 Arizona civilians receive SNAP because they cannot afford retail food prices [SOURCE: FRAC; corp.commissaries.com store-locations directory].

The food assurance program targets operational self-sufficiency within seven (7) years through facility surcharges, reducing ongoing general fund requirements to capital improvement and expansion funding only.

Healthcare cost offsets: the Marmot/Sapolsky/Shively/Blackburn hierarchy-gradient research predicts measurable reductions in chronic disease and AHCCCS expenditures in served communities. Heat mortality cost offsets: 977 confirmed heat-related deaths in Arizona in 2024 [SOURCE: Arizona Department of Health Services Heat-Related Mortality Year 2013-2024]. The essential goods program's cooling-supply distribution and the food assurance centers' cooling-station designation directly reduce these costs.

PROPONENT STATEMENT

Arizona feeds the nation in winter and cannot feed itself.

Yuma County grows approximately ninety percent (90%) of the nation's winter leafy greens. The agricultural workers who harvest them are food insecure. Meanwhile, the United States military commissary system, funded by Arizona civilian taxes, has been selling food at cost for one hundred fifty-nine (159) years at Luke Air Force Base, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Fort Huachuca, MCAS Yuma, and Yuma Proving Ground. The proof that at-cost food distribution works is already operating at five federal installations on Arizona soil.

This measure extends that model to every Arizona resident.

The Navajo Nation, approximately 27,000 square miles, approximately 180,000 residents, is served by 13 full-service grocery stores. About one in five (1 in 5) Navajo adults have Type 2 diabetes, among the highest documented rates in the United States. The food-desert conditions on the Navajo Nation are among the most extensive documented within the country, inside a state that feeds the nation.

The gradient between Scottsdale and the Navajo Nation is not between states; it is within Arizona, under the same sun.

977 Arizonans died of heat in 2024. They died because survival resources, shelter, cooling, water, are distributed by the socioeconomic gradient. Heat death is hierarchy death. The essential goods program established in this Act, which includes heat-mitigation supply distribution and the cooling-station designation of food assurance centers during heat emergencies, directly addresses the material conditions that kill.

This measure is fiscally conservative. Three hundred fifty million dollars (\$350,000,000), 1.88 percent of Arizona's FY2027 General Fund. The full program scales over five to seven years toward an operating target of approximately \$2.356 billion per year, 12.6 percent of the General Fund, at \$309 per resident per year. At-cost routing through Division I delivers 3.9 times the food value per dollar that the current commercial retail markup permits. The federal SNAP cost-shift the state did not request is offset independently by this Act.

The Voter Protection Act (Proposition 105, 1998) ensures that once Arizona voters pass this measure, the Legislature cannot repeal it. The Legislature cannot supersede it. The Legislature can only amend it with a three-fourths supermajority AND only to further its purpose. This is the highest legislative protection bar in American state politics.

The food grows here. The commissary operates here, at five federal installations. The gradient kills here. The arithmetic checks.

Denial is no longer neutral.

Vote YES.

This Act is protected by Arizona's Voter Protection Act.

Once you pass it, it stays passed.

SUBMISSION CLAUSE

Shall there be enacted in the Arizona Revised Statutes the Arizona Food, Resource, and Commodity Assurance Act, establishing state-operated food assurance centers selling groceries at production cost and an essential goods program distributing clothing, household supplies, and heat-mitigation supplies at below-retail pricing, with mandatory tribal partnership provisions and a total initial appropriation of three hundred fifty million dollars (\$350,000,000), protected by the Voter Protection Act (Proposition 105, 1998)?

YES / FOR THE MEASURE _____

NO / AGAINST THE MEASURE _____

SIGNATURE LINES

WARNING: It is a class 6 felony to sign an initiative or referendum petition with a name other than one's own or to knowingly sign one's name more than once for the same measure or to sign a petition when not a qualified elector of this state. (A.R.S. § 19-119.01)

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Address (including city and zip code):

County of Registration: _____

PROCESS

STEP 1: File application with Arizona Secretary of State (description and full text).

STEP 2: Receive official serial number and title.

STEP 3: Prepare petition sheets conforming to A.R.S. § 19-121.

STEP 4: Collect 255,949+ valid signatures from registered Arizona voters (10% of 2022 gubernatorial vote total).

STEP 5: File petitions with Secretary of State not less than four (4) months before the target general election.

STEP 6: Secretary of State certifies signatures and places measure on the general election ballot.

STEP 7: Simple majority of voters approves the measure.

STEP 8: THE VOTER PROTECTION ACT ACTIVATES. The Legislature cannot repeal it. Cannot supersede it. Can only amend it with 3/4 supermajority AND only to further its purpose. It stays passed.

END OF BALLOT LANGUAGE

Arizona Food, Resource, and Commodity Assurance Act

Citizen Initiative, Statutory Measure

Filed pursuant to Article IV, Part 1, Section 1,

Arizona Constitution

"The food grows here. The commissary operates here, at five federal installations. The gradient kills here.

Pass it. The Voter Protection Act ensures it stays passed."