

John Kavanagh Extremism Spotlight

Kavanagh introduced legislation which criminalized protesting as felonies.

In December 2023, Arizona Senator John Kavanagh proposed legislation advocating for stricter penalties for individuals who engage in protests. Currently blocking traffic to create an "inconvenience or hazard" is considered a class 2 misdemeanor, punishable by up to four months in a county jail and a \$750 fine. According to his legislation, obstructing 200 vehicles or people on a highway, bridge, or tunnel for more than 15 minutes after being instructed to stop by a police officer would be classified as a class 6 felony which can result in jail time ranging from four months to nearly six years. [3TV/CBS 5, [12/27/2023](#)]

Kavanagh sponsored legislation attacking transgender students.

Senator John Kavanagh sponsored Senate Concurrent Resolution 1013 which combines two past attacks on preferred pronoun use and inclusive policies in schools. According to the Phoenix New Times, "Faced with the certainty of Gov. Katie Hobbs' veto, GOP lawmakers are hoping to circumvent her entirely by sending a proposal to voters in November that would restrict how teachers respect the identities of their trans students, and bar those same students from using school facilities that best fit who they are. 'This bypasses the governor and goes right to the ballot, where — if all the polling I've seen is correct — it'll probably pass with 60, 65 percent of voters who don't really believe that this type of stuff should be going on in our schools,' said Sen. John Kavanagh. Senate Concurrent Resolution 1013 combines two bills rejected by Hobbs last year that targeted preferred pronoun use and inclusive policies in schools. The proposal would ask voters to require that teachers obtain written parental permission before using a student's preferred pronouns or name and mandate that schools separate their restrooms, locker rooms and sleeping accommodations by biological sex and provide a single-occupancy alternative for trans students." [[SCR1013](#), Senate First Read, 01/24/2024; Phoenix News Times, [2/14/2024](#)]

In 2021, Kavanagh made comments suggesting the "quality of votes" was more important than access to voting. After former President Donald Trump's attempt to overturn the 2020 election, Republicans in Arizona advanced dozens of voter suppression bills. Speaking to CNN in 2021, Senator Kavanagh gave his rationale for why they needed to be much stricter voter suppression measures in Arizona saying "Not everybody wants to vote, and if somebody is uninterested in voting, that probably means that they're totally uninformed on the issues... Quantity is important, but we have to look at the quality of votes, as well." [CNN, [3/11/2021](#)]