



2014 Arizona Out-of-School Time Survey

District: **CD 7**

Candidate: **Ruben Gallego**

QUESTION 1:

The 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) initiative is a federally-funded program that provides free high-quality afterschool, before school, and summer programming to children in high-poverty areas. Students who participate in 21st CCLC programs often show improvements in their math and English grades, as well as in classroom behavior and participation. Additionally, 21st CCLC and other affordable out-of-school time (OST) programs alleviate the burden of afterschool care for tens of thousands of Arizona families. Only 5% of Arizona children who are eligible to participate in a 21st CCLC program are currently enrolled, due largely to limited federal funding, which is currently at less than 50% of its authorized level. Do you support continued funding of the 21st CCLC program, and if so, at what level?

ANSWER:

“I support funding of 21st Century CCLC at 100% of its authorized level. Investing in our children and students is the best investment we can make. I know firsthand how programs such as these can make a difference to a child for a lifetime. I grew up with very little, but with the guidance from my single mom and with support like the school-lunch program, I was able to work hard, earn a scholarship to Harvard, join the Marines, and get involved politically to improve the lives of others. We should be doing what we can to support working families and ensure that children have opportunities to learn, grow, and achieve their American dream. Investing in after-school, before-school, and summer programs is a big component of the support we can provide.”



QUESTION 2:

Jobs in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) professions are becoming a larger share of the job market, and the demand for skilled workers in these fields is increasing. However, many students graduating from high school are not prepared for the college-level math and science required for the vast majority of these jobs. With young people spending less than 20% of their waking hours in school, out-of-school time programs are essential for increasing interest in and aptitude for STEM – and are proven to do just that. The recently introduced **Supporting Afterschool STEM Act** will create a grant process to support afterschool/out-of-school STEM programs. Will you pledge to support legislation that provides funding for out-of-school time STEM programs?

ANSWER:

“STEM education is already critical to preparing students for the jobs of today, and will only increase in its importance going forward as our world becomes more digital. I would support legislation that provides funding for out-of-school time STEM programs, because investments today in our children will lead to more opportunities for them for good, high-paying jobs of the future. That is not just beneficial for them, but for the economy and for all of us.”



QUESTION 3:

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) is an initiative that began in the 1990s to assist low-income families in obtaining child care, including through out-of-school time programs, so that parents can work or receive job training. In Arizona, these subsidies are administered through the Department of Economic Security. In FY 2013, over 25,000 Arizona children were served by these subsidies; however, over 6,000 children who are eligible for services remain on the waitlist. Without child care assistance, families are often forced to lose time at work, go on welfare, or leave their children in low-quality and less stable care. As a Member of Congress, will you support continued funding for the CCDF, and if so, at what level?

ANSWER:

“I would support CCDF funding at 100% of the level requested by the Department of Health and Human Services, because we should not be leaving children who need support on a waitlist to fend for themselves. Supporting these children is not just the right the thing to do morally, but economically. We know from early childhood education that a dollar invested stimulates the economy by multiples of that. Similarly, assisting families to put their kids in proper child care allows the children to be in a better environment and learn more, and allows the parents to go to work and provide for their families, which is good for everyone. I know how hard it is for families, especially single-parent households, to juggle the responsibilities of both work and home. We should provide support to the children of these families who desperately need it.”