

Republicans made reckless decisions; now vote them out

by Guest Opinion

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Seriously, are you happy with Arizona's leadership? I'm not.

There's not a lot to be happy about right now. Arizona has become the only state in the union to eliminate its Children's Health Insurance Program, KidsCare. When California and Tennessee capped enrollment in their Children's Health Insurance Programs last year, they quickly removed the cap upon realizing the long-term consequences for kids.

Where is the good judgment of our Arizona leaders? And, cuts to KidsCare will eliminate 42,000 jobs, according to a study by ASU's W.P. Carey School of Business. Not to mention the millions of dollars in federal matching funds that also will be lost.

If we look to the past to solve issues for today, one of the first things we learn is that during times of economic downturn, the wisest investments are those made in human capital. Some examples would be making college more affordable, increasing opportunities for job retraining, and maintaining community spaces such as state parks and arts venues. Especially important is preserving safety-net services for the most vulnerable in our population and protecting quality education programs for our children.

Did I mention job creation? In Arizona, we should be investing in public/private partnerships to bring in high-tech and clean-energy jobs. So why would anyone support policies that eliminate jobs? Who are these people that are cutting health care for our most vulnerable populations? The Republican-led Legislature. It is time we elect people with good judgment, not slaves to ideology.

We should all ask these kinds of hard questions of candidates this fall. How can the incumbents defend their votes on these destructive policies? Do we all count as part of Arizona's family, or just a few special interests? Is this how they honor the past and make Arizona a better place for generations to come?

Seriously, I think I have already heard their answer.

- Jackie Thrasher, a Democrat, is a former representative in the Arizona House from District 10.

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