



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Rex Scott, District 1

Tuesday, December, 5 2023

Prosperity Initiative Statement

PIMA COUNTY- I am both proud and enthused to vote in favor of these items today so that we can move forward with the Prosperity Initiative. These endeavors may be the most significant actions we undertake as a county government. The challenge of addressing generational poverty, which has so many individual and social costs, should be a priority at all levels of government. We can and should insist that our colleagues at the state and federal levels do their parts to take on all the dire needs and profound concerns associated with generational poverty. That does not relieve us at the local level of the solemn necessity to do all that we can as well.

The policies I hope we support today came about as the result of extensive and ambitious work led by county staff. I want to thank everyone on our team for all the care, time and thought that went into creating the Prosperity Initiative. They know well that the work they accomplished to bring us to this day is just the beginning of a very long and arduous journey.

Thanks are also due to the county team for sending the policy document to each supervisor's office so that we could offer feedback and suggestions for revision. I am grateful to see my suggestions dealing with a more fulsome explanation of the three cross-policy strategies and the policy addressing college and other post-secondary educational and training opportunities incorporated into the final draft. There were several implementation steps where I suggested revisions and am glad to see them included.

With regard to those implementation steps, it is apparent that the Prosperity Initiative will be a central, guiding focus for all the work we do. In our budget and in the monthly financial reports the Board receives, the public will see an emphasis on the values and priorities embedded in the policy document. We will chart the work we do within county government and with our partners in other jurisdictions based on these policies. The outreach we have done within the private and nonprofit sectors will continue so that this work always retains its necessary community wide scope.

The public we serve will rightly expect that we are able to point to the tangible results of our efforts. The Aspen Institute, who will assist us with determining the metrics for measuring our progress, has long championed one of the cross-policy strategies, the "two generation" approach. One of their standards is to "foster evidence and innovation together." The people we represent will expect us to be true to this standard, especially if the Prosperity Initiative is to be so central to everything we do as a local government.

The Prosperity Initiative represents much more than our board merely adopting a set of policies and the means for implementing them; it is a moral undertaking. If we do this right, we can help to improve the lives of thousands within our community, especially its children. We should enact these policies, get to work and keep our focus on those who will benefit from our efforts.

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