



PRESS RELEASE

Arizona State Senate

1700 W Washington Street, Phoenix, AZ 85007

Senator Lisa Otondo, LD4
Senate Democratic Whip

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 15, 2019

Sen. Otondo urges Speaker Bowers to stop HB2476 *Bill puts Arizona's water future at risk*

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – Senator Lisa Otondo (D-4), a member of the Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan Steering Committee, released the following statement on Speaker Rusty Bowers' [HB2476](#) and the Gila River Indian Community's [threat to back out of the DCP](#) because of it:

"Speaker Bowers' HB2476 is perplexing in three ways: first, it represents a deliberate attack against the Gila River Indian Community and their water rights; second, Speaker Bowers agreed to the DCP plan and literally stood behind the governor at its ratification, yet now he is deliberately attempting to upend years of hard work that went into it, putting Arizona's water security at risk; and third, it is clearly unconstitutional under the 1999 Arizona Supreme Court decision on *The San Carlos Apache Tribe, The Tonto Apache Tribe, et al. vs. The Superior Court of Arizona, et al.* and would undoubtedly result in years of expensive litigation. In that ruling, the Court stated, "*The consequences of failure to make use of appropriated water on all of the appropriator's land must be determined on the basis of the law existing at the time of the event, not on the basis of subsequently enacted legislation that may change the order of priority.*"

"Speaker Bowers' audacious flip from supporting the DCP to sabotaging it, and his further pursuit of this legislation risks invalidating the DCP and putting Arizona's water future in the hands of the federal government. That's not something we want and that's why members of the DCP Steering Committee worked long and hard to arrive at a delicate compromise. I urge Speaker Bowers to acknowledge that moving his bill forward jeopardizes our water future, and to realize his actions actually hurt those he claims to be helping."

###

Media Contact:

Aaron Latham, Director of Communications, Arizona State Senate Democratic Caucus, 602-926-4477, alatham@azleg.gov
www.azsenatedems.com | Twitter: [AZSenateDems](https://twitter.com/AZSenateDems) | Facebook: [AZSenateDems](https://www.facebook.com/AZSenateDems)