



# Felicia French

ARIZONA STATE LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT 6

## SISTER DISTRICT POLICY SCORECARD

This candidate has pledged commitment to the following statements:

- ✓ We must protect a **woman's right to choose** the health care and reproductive services she wants and needs.
- ✓ We need to protect and expand our **social safety net**, not dismantle it.
- ✓ We should pursue **common-sense gun safety** policies, consistent with the Second Amendment and local community standards and needs, which vary from community to community.
- ✓ Climate change is real and we need to **protect our environment**.

## TIMELINE & VOTER INFO

**Election Day:** November 6, 2018

**Last day to register:** 29 days before Election Day.

**Voter IDs:** Voters must bring [a valid ID](#) to the polls in order to vote.

**Vote by mail:** Any registered Arizona voter may apply for an absentee ballot and vote by mail. The application must be received by 5pm on the second Friday before Election Day.

**Nested Congressional Districts:** 1, 4

## PAST RESULTS

### 2016 Presidential Election

Hillary Clinton (D)	42,179	41.7%
Donald Trump (R)	52,696	52.1%



## 2016 State Legislature Election

Democrat:	44,229	31.40%
Republican:	47,631	33.80%

## Cook Partisan Voting Index

AZ-01: R+2; AZ-04: R21

## BACKGROUND

Colonel (Ret) Felicia French is a third generation Arizonian, who lives in rural Arizona. She has a proven commitment to public service, and family well being which she has shown by taking on the roles of a combat veteran, MedEvac helicopter pilot, registered nurse, an educator, and a single mother with over 32 years of leadership experience. Felicia is running alongside another Sister District candidate, Bobby Tyler, who is a candidate for the Arizona House of Representatives in the same district.

Felicia has her B.S. in Nursing, her M.S. in Management and an M.S. in Sustainable Solutions. During her military career, she also received training in Alternative Dispute Resolution

techniques and in mediation- making her a strong bipartisan candidate.

Her leadership skills were formed through her many experiences by working her way up the ranks from a Private to a Colonel in her 32 years serving in the United States Army, as a combat helicopter pilot and medic, to a nurse manager and senior medical advisor, and through mentoring at-risk youth to becoming an educator at Mesa Community College.

Felicia is known to be accomplished in leading organizations during multiple deployments, including a combat tour in Afghanistan, and humanitarian missions in Honduras and the Dominican Republic.

Her capacity and dedication to public service is also reflected in her volunteer work.

She was recognized in her community as "Volunteer of the Year" in 2016 for her role in the Take Pride Pine & Strawberry Project. She also supports her community by volunteering with the local Civil Air Patrol, Tonto Rim Search and Rescue, Community Emergency Response Team, and the Sierra Club.

Felicia is knowledgeable and experienced in matters of the military, healthcare, and education, which helped create her political platform. She is a strong advocate for veterans' affairs, affordable accessible quality healthcare for all, improving our education system starting with early-childhood, and creating more sustainable jobs.

She is currently case managing as a hospice nurse in rural Arizona. When she has time to spare, she enjoys hiking, reading, and staying up to date on current events.

## **ON THE ISSUES**

### **EDUCATION**

- Encourage quality educators to stay in Arizona by offering them competitive wages and comprehensive benefits by prioritizing K-12 education in the state budget.
- Reduce class sizes to improve student-teacher ratios and decrease teacher turn over.
- Fund full-day kindergarten and pre-school (Studies have shown that kids who attend full-day kindergarten are more prepared for first grade, show increased student achievements, and these early education investments provide a 3 to 1 financial return for every tax dollar spent. Studies have also shown that full-day public pre-schools result in improved test scores and evident improvement in verbal and math abilities).
- Make college tuition more affordable for everybody who dreams of furthering their education, so that young adults entering the workforce are not overwhelmed with student debt
- Improve access and availability of certified vocational schools for young adults who want to pursue a trade, starting with incorporating vocational training in high schools and community colleges.

### **AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE**

Affordable access to healthcare for all Arizonans is essential. As someone who has worked as an Army medic, nurse, a senior medical advisor in combat zones, as a civilian nurse manager, and now as a hospice nurse, Felicia recognizes the faults within our healthcare system. She wants to put more emphasis on prevention of disease and illness, make sure medical prescriptions are affordable, and improve access to quality healthcare in rural areas. She believes in single-payer healthcare, similar to the military model, because she has seen it work first hand.

### **Solutions:**

- Work together across the aisle to fix, NOT repeal affordable care and funding for AHCCCS, which currently provides coverage for 1.9 million Arizonans.
- Require coverage for regular physical and mental health check-ups, to prevent and diagnose any disease or illness before it becomes deadly and more expensive to manage.
- Require a school nurse and counselor at every school who is trained to teach health and hygiene, and detect serious mental and physical illness early on.

- Support comprehensive medical coverage that includes: dental, eye, and mental health for all Arizonans.
- Put a cap on how much pharmaceuticals can charge, so Arizonans can afford the prescription drugs they need
- Use the medical assets in the Arizona National Guard and Reserves to do military medical readiness training in underserved and rural communities in Arizona
- Provide grants to Public Health students (e.g. mental health, social work, nursing, and physician assistants) in exchange for their tuition, they would be required to serve in communities where there is a high demand and lack of quality health services
- Continue funding for family planning, which has been proven to reduce the number of abortions, decrease infant and maternal mortality, decrease the spread of STDs, and is estimated to save 75% in public expenditures. Therefore, publicly funded family planning should be secured because it is a public health and economic issue.

## **ECONOMY**

- Create government incentives to bring steady, quality jobs in the rapidly growing renewable energy sector to Arizona (jobs in the renewable energy sector have surpassed the number of jobs available in the fossil fuel sector nationwide 5 to 1 with about 373,807 jobs in solar alone vs. 187,117 in fossil fuel jobs in 2016 and Arizona is one of the sunniest states in the nation, ranking 2nd in solar energy potential). So we should be leading the way in solar energy production and jobs.
- Ensure economic policies protect our children's resources for the future.
- Make sure Arizona invests in infrastructure development for our rural communities (e.g. safe roads, broadband access, and emergency services).
- Partner with the National Guard to help build and maintain roads and bridges in our under-served rural and tribal areas.

- Close the gender pay gap, because equal pay for equal work is necessary for our shared economic success.
- Don't allow privatization of our prisons and jails, to reduce the incentive to imprison minor and non-violent offenses for profit, which also reduces the amount of members who are able to contribute to the economy and society.

## **VETERANS & MILITARY FAMILIES**

- Increase access and knowledge of services available to veterans, including health services and educational opportunities.
- Ensure that PTSD is properly treated before and thoroughly followed up with after soldiers are discharged from the military.
- Streamline the process to improve the efficiency of getting veterans healthcare services from the VA, so they don't fall through the cracks.
- Keep the Veterans Administration under government oversight (allowing veterans to be served by people who understand their unique needs).
- Provide quality care for soldiers and their families for life.

## **RESPONSIBLE GUN OWNERSHIP**

As a combat veteran, Felicia saw firsthand the physical and emotional damage that assault weapons can cause. As a former teacher, she doesn't believe educators should be put in the position to have to shoot one of their students or another young adult regardless of self-defense. Felicia intends to push for laws that require criminal background and mental health checks, waiting periods and weapons training, and laws that do not allow the sale of assault weapons and ammunition that were designed for use in a military war zone. She also believes gun owners should be required to show proof of the ability to safely secure their weapons (ie. gun safes). All of these requirements are a part of her agenda to reduce the incidence of mass gun violence, as well as homicide and suicide.

## Solutions:

- Require criminal background checks, waiting periods, and weapons training (whether you purchase a gun at a gun show or through a private owner).
- Require clearance from a mental health professional to ensure that no one who is a potential danger to themselves or others can possess a gun.
- Require proof that gun owners can safely store their guns (so unauthorized users such as children cannot obtain access to weapons in gun owners' homes, and reduce the rates at which guns are being placed in the hands of dangerous people through theft).
- Ban the sale of assault weapons, armor-piercing bullets, bump stocks, and magazine clips intended for mass casualties.
- Require de-escalation training for all law enforcement personnel as a part of their core and on-going training to help protect themselves as well as citizens in high-intensity situations (Use Salt Lake City Police Department as a model).

## ENDORSEMENTS

VoteVets.org  
Arizona Nurses Association  
Arizona List  
Arizona Association of Nurse Anesthetists  
Moms Demand Action

## ABOUT THE DISTRICT

LD-6 reaches from the Grand Canyon, through Flagstaff and Sedona and east through Payson to the White Mountains. The population is over 216,000, and Flagstaff is the largest metropolitan area.

## ABOUT THE INCUMBENT

Brenda Barton serves in leadership as the Chairman of the House Agriculture, Water and Lands Committee. She has served on the committee since 2010 and been Chairman since 2012.

Frustrated by the economic impacts to her rural district caused by the United States federal government shutdown in 2013, as well as the administration's initial refusal to allow Arizona to keep their national parks open, Barton took to Facebook to express her anger over the losses of over \$1.6 million per day being suffered by her rural communities and [compared President Barack Obama to Adolf Hitler](#).

Barton is term limited and cannot seek reelection this year. The other LD6 house seat is held by Republican Bob Thorpe, who is seeking reelection. There are two other Republicans running for the two LD6 house seats in 2018: Stuart McDaniel-R, and Walt Blackman-R.

Thorpe, who was first elected by LD6 voters in 2012, is a retired computer and software consultant and educator. During his time in office he has spearheaded efforts to increase state control over federal lands, and he supports reducing government regulation. Last year he ran a bill that would have prohibited college students from voting in the place where they go to school.

McDaniel, who lives in Flagstaff, emphasized his work on behalf of the business community around Flagstaff. He's also touting his involvement in the Elevate Flagstaff campaign, which placed a repeal of the city's voter-approved minimum wage on the 2018 ballot.

Blackman served in the U.S. Army for 22 years. His campaign website states that Blackman is "determined to take a stand for the families and decency in public discourse."

## WHY IS THIS RACE IMPORTANT?

Arizona has 30 House Districts that each elect two representatives for a total of 60 representatives. Republicans control 35 of 60 seats, so Democrats are within striking distance of taking control of the lower chamber.

Republicans have controlled the State House since 1966, albeit at times with very thin majorities. Three districts in the House voted for Clinton, but are represented by a GOP legislator or have at least 1 GOP representative.

While Arizona may only offer a handful of electoral votes in a presidential election, the state will feature a hotly contested U.S. Senate race for Jeff Flake's seat. Beyond that, the age and failing health of Senator John McCain will also pose an open seat in the coming years as well.

Arizona is a new opportunity for Democrats to bring together a strong coalition of Latinos, Native Americans, and Moderates who want to see functional governance in an era of political chaos.

### **REDISTRICTING IN ARIZONA**

The Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission is responsible for drawing both congressional and state legislative district lines. The commission is composed of five members. Of these, four are selected by the majority and minority leaders of each chamber of the state legislature from a list of 25 candidates nominated by the state commission on appellate court appointments. These 25 nominees comprise 10 Democrats, 10 Republicans, and 5 unaffiliated citizens. The four commission members appointed by legislative leaders then select the fifth member to round out the commission. The fifth member of the commission must belong to a different political party than the other commissioners. The governor, with a two-thirds vote in the Arizona State Senate, may remove a commissioner "for substantial neglect of duty, gross misconduct in office, or inability to discharge the duties of office." The Arizona State Legislature may make recommendations to the commission, but ultimate authority is vested with the commission.

The Arizona Constitution requires that both congressional and state legislative districts be "contiguous, geographically compact, and respect communities of interest—all to the extent practicable." The state constitution further mandates that district lines "should [follow] visible geographic features, city, town, and county boundaries, and undivided census tracts." In addition, the constitution requires that "competitive districts be favored where doing so would not significantly detract from the goals above."

### **MORE ABOUT ARIZONA**

Arizona is home to a unique mix of partisan elements on all sides. Sheriff Joe Arpaio, prominent Trump supporter and immigrant fear monger, was the Sheriff of Maricopa County for decades before finally being unseated in 2016. This is contrasted with GOP U.S. Senator Jeff Flake who, while voting nearly 100% with Trump, also donated to the Doug Jones campaign for Alabama Senate and has been a vocal critic of the GOP's lurch rightward.

While there are strong, right-wing elements in AZ there is also a rising moderate and Democratic demographic as well. The influx of retirees and immigrants matched with the hard right turn of the GOP lately has made Arizona one of the best new pickup opportunities outside of the normal Southern battleground states like North Carolina, Virginia, and Florida.

### **CANDIDATE LINKS**

Website: [www.feliciafrench.com](http://www.feliciafrench.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/frenchforaz](https://www.facebook.com/frenchforaz)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/French4Arizona>

SDP ActBlue Link: <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/sdp-az-french>