

Some State Senators got the idea to gut Arizona's Open Meeting Law. Here is the letter I wrote to all state legislators regarding proposed bill, SB 1435.

State Senators and State Representatives,

Below is a letter a fellow Sedonan sent to sponsors and supporters of SB 1435, a dreadful bill that would gut Arizona's Open Meeting Law.

I am in complete agreement with Ms. Maddock's letter.

I'll add that anyone favoring this bill needs a reality check because clearly they are out of touch with same.

For example, State Senator Bob Worsley, just what the heck were you thinking when you said this?:

"I have heard just really painful stories over at the Corporation Commission, where they're unable to sit down and discuss things without violating these rules," he said. "My reason for signing on was really in concern for those folks — that they have a chance without all the limelight to really discuss issues." ( <http://www.azcentral.com/story/news/arizona/politics/2015/02/14/lawmakers-want-keep-government-secret/23445623/> )

Oh right, the poor folks at the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) just can't do business outside "the limelight." My heart bleeds for them.

Senator Worsley, all you have done is demonstrate your spectacular ignorance.

First of all, the ACC already does enough business outside "the limelight." It's so bad that the ACC appears to be in collusion with APS and I have asked the FBI to investigate. I have discussed this in previous, recent emails. Were you paying attention, Senator Worsley?

Secondly, with 24 hour previous public notice, the ACC can meet just about any time they like. While they *do* have to provide for public access, they do not have to take public comment if they don't want to. So they could discuss an issue all day long if they were really interested in getting to the truth of any given issue.

The "really painful story" at the ACC is not that they are hobbled by the current Open Meeting Law and cannot hash out issues. The "really painful story" is that they lack the requisite intelligence or interest to do so. They are simply not interested in the truth. I have demonstrated and documented that repeatedly over the years regarding the "smart" meter issue. The recent solar fee issue at the ACC was the same. By the ACC commissioners' own conscious choice, neither issue was resolved by evidentiary hearings with parties under oath. As a result, and in both instances, lies were told to which the commissioners and their staff were oblivious.

At an ACC meeting I attended last January 22, ACC commissioner Robert Burns proposed that

commissioners schedule a sort of pre-meeting (open to the public of course) to their regular meetings so that the commissioners could more fully discuss issues and proposed amendments. His proposal received ZERO support from the other commissioners. Incredibly, a couple of them felt they could use the break time of the regular meetings if there was more to discuss. (For the painful details, listen to the audio minutes, agenda item #7, here: [http://azcc.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=3&clip\\_id=1817](http://azcc.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=3&clip_id=1817) )

The current Open Meeting Law is not a hindrance to good government. It ensures it. If the people we elect to do the public's business can't handle public scrutiny then they need to resign and find something they can do in the dark.

Sincerely,

Warren Woodward  
Sedona, Arizona

February 14, 2015

TO: Sponsors & Supporters of SB 1435, Open Meeting Law

Why, may I ask, are you attempting to relax open meetings mandate? All fifty states have enacted some type of legislation providing the public with a statutory right to openness in government. This was "in response to mounting public concerns over informal, undisclosed meetings held by local elected officials. City councils, county boards, and other local government bodies were avoiding public scrutiny by holding secret 'workshops' and 'study sessions,'" source: Ralph M. Brown Act, 1953.

It's unfortunate that apparently you need to be reminded that you were elected to serve the voting public and not to accommodate you the pleasure of making questionable decisions in closed meetings with the only offering to the public is a vote after issues have been decided.

This is clandestine government at its worst. The mere suggestion to display such arrogance of power in such a short time after the opening of the recent sessions is despicable.

During a time of extreme public mistrust in government functions at all levels, you have the audacity to even suggest such a thing. If you continue to move forward with this disrespectful slap in the faces of those who elected you, shame. You will not be seated in your self-imposed glory forever, but the damage you feel empowered to do will very likely take another 50, 60, 70 years to correct if, in fact, such a thing is even possible.

Please, reconsider this preposterous suggestion. We are already aware the public is not hearing everything even with the current Open Meeting Law constraints, which is part of the problem.

If anything consideration might be better directed toward reassuring the voting public that closed door, back room deals are unacceptable. Transparency should prevail. Encouraging activities contrary to that should be deemed unacceptable if public trust is to be restored and sustained.

Sincerely,

(Ms.) Eddie S. Maddock  
Sedona , AZ