



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gila River Arena Becomes the First Entertainment Establishment in Arizona to Provide a Universal Changing Table for Guests

June 3, 2019 (Glendale, Ariz) – On June 3, 2019, Gila River Arena will be the first entertainment venue in Arizona, to offer a universal changing table for guests, including both babies and adults. The installation was in-part made possible through the efforts of a growing movement in Arizona, known as *Dignified Changes*.

Founded by four local women, *Dignified Changes* seeks to ensure that private, dignified changing spaces are provided throughout Arizona. These are spaces that can accommodate individuals who may be larger than the weight limits of standard baby changing tables but still need accommodations while in the restroom, including individuals with special needs, veterans, elderly or anyone in need of assistance.

Adding universal changing tables to venues such as Gila River Arena and other public places, will mark Arizona as a model and leader of inclusion after which other states can follow.

“Without these accommodations, many cannot fully participate in their communities. We are grateful that Gila River Arena has recognized this and has embraced the continual need for a more inclusive society,” stated Courtney Burnett, co-founder of Dignified Changes.

Earlier this month, Arizona Governor Doug Ducey, signed into law House Bill 2113 which “requires a public entity [open to the public] that constructs or renovates a restroom in a public[ly funded] building to include at least one diaper changing station that is capable of serving babies and adults and that is accessible to both men and women.” Arizona is now the second state in the country, behind California, to pass such legislation.

Gila River Arena learned of the efforts of *Dignified Changes* through their “Home Run” event at Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza in March. When arena managers saw the game on the news, they immediately wanted to learn more. After meeting with leadership, they decided with or without a law, they were going to do what was right for all of their guests and provide a restroom equipped with a universal changing table.

“Adding a universal changing table aligns with our desire to have every guest experience be a positive and welcoming one,” stated Paul Serbic, guest services manager at Gila River Arena. “We want to be an all-inclusive venue so guests of all ability levels can enjoy the first-class entertainment that we provide, and we are doing our part to make accommodations where possible.”

Gila River Arena didn’t just stop with installing a universal changing table, they have also provided a mother’s lounge for nursing moms and have sensory bags available for those who may need one while attending an event.

“We really wanted to provide an inclusive experience for our guests, where everyone would be

comfortable,” continued Serbic.

HB2113, originally HB2529, was first introduced by Representative Richard Andrade of legislative district 29, also where Gila River Arena is located.

“I am ecstatic that Gila River Arena is the first entertainment venue to have installed a changing table to accommodate family members with disabilities,” stated Representative Richard Andrade. “I am forever grateful to *Dignified Changes* for championing this issue as it becomes the ‘norm’ in Arizona.”

“We are thrilled that members of our community have taken notice and are ready to do the right thing,” said Susann Van Tienderen, co-founder of Dignified Changes. “Gila River Arena listened. They remind us that good, old-fashioned kindness and understanding is the glue that holds communities together. I am grateful for the example they are setting for other establishments to follow.”

For more information, please visit dignifiedchanges.org

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About Dignified Changes

Dignified Changes started as a grassroots movement that has evolved to be an organization that has made big waves at the Arizona Capitol. Dignified Changes has advanced legislation that offers universal changing places for our community. It is simply unacceptable to have to change our loved ones on dirty bathroom floors anymore. Social media tags include #DignifiedChanges. For more information, please visit dignifiedchanges.org

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