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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Supervisors will appeal Goldwater lawsuit attacking jobs in Pima County**

PIMA COUNTY – The Pima County Board of Supervisors Feb. 7 voted 3-2 to authorize the appeal of Superior Court Judge Catherine Woods' Feb. 2 ruling to void a lease between Pima County and near-space technology firm World View, which is bringing up to 400 or more high-paying jobs to the region.

The Phoenix-based Goldwater Institute brought the politically motivated lawsuit last year, claiming violations of state law by Pima County despite ignoring similar economic incentive agreements in Maricopa County.

Goldwater alleges the county violated the state's gift clause, failed to follow state procurement rules, and failed to follow state law governing leases of public property, all of which the county vigorously denies. Woods only ruled on the leases of public property portion of the complaint, which the county will now appeal to the Arizona Court of Appeals.

Pima County entered into an economic development agreement with World View in January 2016 in an effort to retain the innovative company in Pima County. New Mexico and Florida both offered World View incentives, which was ready to transition from the development phase to manufacturing and service delivery.

The company had pending contracts and needed a manufacturing facility as soon as possible. New Mexico and Florida were offering ready-made facilities; however, the Tucson region had no facilities available that would meet the company's needs.

The region's business community asked Pima County to explore options to retain this growing company and the potentially hundreds of high-paying jobs.

Woods ruling potentially voids the lease, putting the 400 jobs in jeopardy. At issue are two conflicting state statutes: ARS 11-254, which gives counties the authority to enter into economic development agreements, including leasing public property; and ARS 11-256, which lays out the rules for the leasing of public property, including obtaining appraisals and conducting a public auction of the lease. Pima County contends 11-254 and subsequent case law exempts the county from the requirements of 11-256. The county will ask the Court of Appeals to decide which statute prevails when it comes to economic development.

While Goldwater is preoccupied with killing jobs in southern Arizona, they routinely ignore other economic development incentives in their own backyard, including:

1. The City of Mesa's construction of a \$20 million manufacturing facility for Able Engineering, a for-profit company. Mesa will recover its costs through a 20-year lease agreement. Goldwater filed no litigation.

2. The City of Scottsdale's construction on behalf of for-profit Gemini Air Group of two hangars and an aero-business center at a cost in excess of \$25 million. The City will recover its cost through a lease and "miscellaneous revenues." Goldwater filed no litigation.
3. The Town of Gilbert's design and construction of a four-year liberal arts campus for the private San Xavier University on town-owned property. The town financed this \$37 million project primarily to attract a university and students – not jobs. The university opened in August 2015 and less than a year later announced its intent to close in fall 2016. Goldwater filed no litigation.
4. The City of Chandler's \$10 million in economic incentives to PayPal and General Motors. Goldwater filed no litigation.
5. Mesa's partnership with a private developer to construct over 200,000 square feet for commercial and residential tenants. Goldwater filed no litigation.
6. Mesa's offer, in partnership with the state, of \$10 million to lure an Apple facility to Mesa. Goldwater filed no litigation.
7. The City of Peoria's provision of bonds, via the Industrial Development Authority, to construct facilities for a private business enterprise. Lease payments by the enterprise will repay the bonds. Goldwater filed no litigation.

When asked by the media why it took no action or did not conduct a media campaign to denigrate and decry these agreements as it has with the Pima County-World View agreement, Goldwater officials said it was because no one in these Maricopa County cities and towns complained to them about those agreements.

While this lawsuit travels through the appellate courts, World View and the County will continue to operate as normal. World View has moved into the completed facility and begun paying rent. On the day of Judge Woods' ruling, World View conducted a successful test of its unique "stratolite" technology, which launches payloads to the stratosphere via balloon and is able to keep them aloft for lengthy periods, eventually up to months at a time. The first launch at Spaceport Tucson is expected this spring.