

2017 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES OF CITIES & TOWNS

LOCAL CONTROL & HOME RULE

The Colorado Municipal League is a strong advocate for the state's tradition of local control and home rule, which allow cities and towns the maximum flexibility and discretion in municipal finance, implementation of local policy, and delivery of public services. **Local control should remain local and home rule should stay at home.** Neither should be centralized at the Statehouse.

Municipal government is the cornerstone of good government in Colorado, and we value the partnership that exists with state and federal officials. The citizens who municipal officials represent are the same citizens who legislators represent. The policies legislators enact affecting municipalities must be implemented by municipal leaders and local taxpayers. To maintain the strength of this partnership, CML urges legislators to consider the impacts of decisions on the municipalities in their respective districts.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

CML, as it has done in the past, will continue to support the preservation of the Affordable Housing Grants and Loans line items within the Division of Housing in the Department of Local Affairs.

BROADBAND

With voters in 65 municipalities and 27 counties having overwhelmingly voted to exempt themselves from the requirements of SB 05-152, CML would support repealing this unnecessary hurdle to bringing fast, reliable broadband to areas of the state where the private sector has not made it available.

CONSTRUCTION DEFECTS

CML will support legislation that provides a statewide solution for the issue of construction defects. We support any legislation that will promote the construction of owner-occupied attached housing while maintaining the local control of municipalities that have adopted their own ordinances.

FISCAL FAIR PLAY

In 2016, CML attempted to address an inequity in the statutes through legislation addressing a county's unilateral authority to reduce the municipal share of road & bridge property taxes without a voice in the process or a seat at the table. Counties opposed even a notice and consultation provision. CML supports continued efforts to ensure fair distribution of badly needed municipal road and bridge dollars.

MARIJUANA

CML supports legislation creating an opt-in provision for private marijuana clubs and creating a statewide minimum definition of "open & public consumption."

CML always supports maximum local control of medical and recreational marijuana issues. CML believes significant additional state resources and personnel are needed to mitigate the impact on local law enforcement of gray and black market marijuana activity. CML

will oppose any legislation that changes compromises on local special excise taxation and supports barring counties from collecting a special sales tax from within a municipality without consultation and an intergovernmental agreement.

MUNICIPAL COURTS

After the adoption of HB 16-1309, which mandated defense counsel at first appearance in certain municipal cases, CML worked with the Office of the Governor to fund the state mandate through the Office of the State Public Defender. CML will support a program for municipalities to utilize the state public defender at local discretion.

Restorative justice has proven to be an important tool to reduce recidivism in the state criminal justice system. CML supports state assistance for municipal courts to expand their use of restorative justice.

OIL AND GAS

CML recognizes the cooperation between the Colorado Oil & Gas Conservation Commission, industry, and municipal interests. We urge the General Assembly to resist preemptions upon traditional municipal authority, and where such authority may need clarification, we look forward to working with the General Assembly.

PUBLIC SAFETY

CML will support the preservation of the Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant Program that currently provides much needed funding to local governments, nonprofits, and homeowners' associations for the mitigation of flammable materials in residential communities.

SEVERANCE TAX & FEDERAL MINERAL LEASE

CML opposes reductions of severance tax and federal mineral lease revenue to municipalities and opposes the appropriation of local governments' energy impact or direct distribution revenue to finance state programs and administrative costs of state government.

TAX AUTHORITY

On average, more than 70 percent of municipal tax revenues are derived from sales and use taxes. CML discourages state sales tax exemptions that negatively impact statutory municipalities and cities without any local input. CML supports the state as a partner with the business community and municipalities that self-collect their sales and use taxes, but efforts to simplify local sales tax cannot be addressed by state legislation and cannot undermine constitutionally granted municipal home rule authority.

Property taxes are important to municipal governments as well. Proposals in the General Assembly to alter the property tax base, most notably by eliminating the business personal property tax, must be "back-filled" by the state, otherwise local government tax revenues will be reduced significantly.

TRANSPORTATION

Colorado's transportation system of roadways and transit is a state and local network vital to Colorado's future. Municipal officials support increased state transportation and transit funding that includes the return of an equitable portion of new revenue to cities, towns, and counties. A statewide solution includes planning and funding for all public roads, not just state highways.

URBAN RENEWAL AND DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

CML supports continued repair to ambiguous language added to urban renewal statutes in 2015 that is impairing urban renewal. CML will oppose any legislation that would similarly do damage to the ability of downtown development authorities to function properly.

WORKERS COMPENSATION

CML would not oppose reasonable reform to the workers compensation statutes to address issues of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in public safety employees. CML would support the development of a statewide employee assistance program (EAP) for public safety employees that do not otherwise have access to one.



THE VOICE OF COLORADO CITIES & TOWNS

The Colorado Municipal League (CML) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that has served and represented Colorado's cities and towns since 1923. As such, CML is a reliable source of information about legislative issues and their impact on Colorado's cities and towns and their residents.

268 cities and towns are members of the League, and policies are determined by members through the CML Policy Committee and the CML Executive Board.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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QUESTIONS ABOUT MUNICIPAL POLICY?

CML employs four full-time advocates to assist in development and communication of policies. They closely watch proposed legislation and work with legislators to understand municipal impacts.



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