



## GET THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE

Media Contact:  
Kevin Bommer, Executive Director  
1144 Sherman St., Denver, CO 80203  
(p) 303-831-6411 · (f) 303-860-8175  
[kbommer@cml.org](mailto:kbommer@cml.org)  
[www.cml.org](http://www.cml.org)

## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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### CML opposes sweeping preemptions of local authority: “Not the ‘Colorado Way.’”

**March 22, 2023, Denver, Colo.** – Today, Gov. Polis and others lauded legislation aimed squarely at taking away a century of municipal authority over land use and zoning and placing state agencies in Denver in charge of regulating and enforcing decisions currently made at the local level. The proposed legislation represents the most sweeping attempt in recent Colorado history to remove local control and home rule authority from elected leaders, professional planning staff, and the people of Colorado by putting it into the hands of developer interests and unelected third parties.

“It is a breathtaking power grab,” said Kevin Bommer, CML executive director. “Although the bill is being sold as a ‘menu of options’ with ‘flexibility’ to create affordability, it mainly benefits developer interests to the detriment to the quality of life and access to local elected officials expected by Coloradans and with no guarantees that anything built will be ‘affordable.’ The League could support the bill if folks are willing to step away from a California-style, top-down approach, and support local government efforts to address density while guaranteeing affordable housing. Unfortunately, powerful special interests are more interested in preemptions than solutions.

CML officially opposes the legislation, and the League expects legislators will hear loud and clear from many of the over 1800 mayors, council members, and trustees – as well as planners and other local land use and housing experts – that preemption is not the answer to affordable housing questions. CML previously released [housing and land use principles](#), and CML’s [2023 State of Our Cities and Towns Report](#) shows overwhelming local action implementing many of the same goals and policies as the legislation’s proponents. Combined with existing strong regional partnerships with counties, special districts, and other municipalities, local efforts are achieving successes that can be enhanced with support and collaboration from state leaders.

CML’s report confirms that inflation and workforce shortages are major contributors to affordable housing, workforce housing, and infrastructure development. With the recent approval of Proposition 123, supported by CML, and hundreds of millions in state grant funds now available, the State of Colorado is positioned to support local efforts. Instead of building on these collaborative efforts, special interests instead seek to go around municipal leaders and their constituents.

“This bill is not at all the ‘Colorado Way.’ Unlike California or Oregon, Colorado has rich tradition of local control and constitutional home rule, the latter of which cannot be legislated away,” said Bommer. “If either of those foundational principles still mean anything to legislators, we expect they will reject this legislation and throw their support behind partnering with the bill’s proponents and local governments to tackle affordability issues together.”

*CML is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization established in 1923 that provides advocacy, information, and training for 270 member cities and towns. For more information on the Colorado Municipal League, please visit [www.cml.org](http://www.cml.org) or call 303-831-6411.*

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