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MAYORS STRESS JOB CREATION, PARTNERSHIP WITH STATE:
Urge Lawmakers to Respect Local Control

PHOENIX (March 13, 2012) – Mayors from around Arizona converged on the state Capitol last week with a strong message for lawmakers: Let cities and towns lead the way on job creation and do not preempt those efforts with legislation that erodes local control.

Mayors’ Day at the Capitol included meetings with legislative House and Senate leaders, Gov. Jan Brewer’s staff and the media to talk about the vital role cities and towns play in attracting and retaining high-quality jobs. Led by Clarkdale Mayor Doug Von Gausig, president of the League of Arizona Cities and Towns, the contingent of mayors included Kenny Evans of Payson, Jonathan Rothschild of Tucson, Elaine Scruggs of Glendale, Scott Smith of Mesa, Greg Stanton of Phoenix and Jay Tibshraeny of Chandler.

The mayors delivered a unified message that Arizona’s cities and towns have been successful in bringing quality jobs to the state, and that some of the legislation moving through the Statehouse threatens to impede the ongoing economic recovery.

"The message I want to deliver to the state Legislature is let cities do what they need to do,” said Tucson Mayor Jonathan Rothschild. “We are the people that really need to be motivated by the business community.”

Mesa Mayor Scott Smith said that bills designed to exert legislative control over city elections, to outlaw photo radar enforcement and to provide tax credits to businesses that believe they have been “overregulated” will add layers of government oversight and stifle economic development.

“It’s a little bit disconcerting when we see at the Legislature what seems to be yesterday’s news, solving problems that really don’t exist to the level that they might have existed, they’re merely perceptions,” Smith said. “We see a lot of solutions running around chasing problems.”

Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton said lawmakers should be partners with cities on job creation, not road blocks.
"We want our friends at the Legislature to do all they can not to interfere with the job creation at the city level," Stanton said. "Be our partner. Don't pass bills that hurt our ability to create jobs."

Payson Mayor Kenny Evans said the Legislature has made strides to create jobs, but then hurts local efforts with excessive micromanaging of cities.

“It’s like they are giving us nitrous oxide to increase the horsepower of our motor, and then throwing two anchors out the back,” Evans said. “We cannot have the kind of uncertainty that this mish-mash of rules and regulations that keep getting hatched and re-hatched creates for an industry.”

About the League:
The League of Arizona Cities and Towns is a voluntary association of all the 91 incorporated cities and towns in the state of Arizona. It provides policy and legislative advocacy, information and inquiry services, along with publications and educational programs to strengthen the quality and efficiency of municipal government. It was founded in 1937 to serve the interests of cities and towns and to preserve the principles of home rule and local determination. For more information, visit www.azleague.org.

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