

# 2012 Annual Report

## of the League of California Cities

Our mission is to expand and protect local control for cities through education and advocacy to enhance the quality of life for all Californians.



Since the League was formed in 1898, the governance and management of city government has changed and evolved, but the mission of the League remains the same: expanding and protecting local control through: 1) advocacy in the Legislature, courts and at the statewide ballot box; and 2) education of city officials, state officials, media and the public in the basics of city government. The League's approach to advocacy involves intensive grassroots engagement by our members, fierce advocacy in the Capitol and on statewide ballot measures, highly focused media outreach and strategic litigation. During 2012, the League worked with key legislators to soften the impact of the dissolution of redevelopment agencies and to create new tax increment financing tools for community development. Other important local control issues also emerged that are reported below.



### Legal Advocacy

In the past 18 months, the League directly filed lawsuits in the Sacramento County Superior Court on behalf of member cities to defend the revenue protections in Propositions 1A (2004) and 22 (2010) by challenging the constitutionality of:

- The diversion of Vehicle License Fee funds from cities in 2011; and
- The sales and property tax clawbacks in the 2012 redevelopment budget trailer bill.



Member cities may request League support in cases to which they are a party if statewide interests are at stake. During 2011 and 2012, the League also participated as a "friend of the court" on behalf of member cities in 94 cases in state and federal courts. The League also reviewed and made recommendations in 10 requests for formal review and input from the California Attorney General regarding legal questions on which the Attorney General will prepare formal opinions.



### Legislative Advocacy

The Legislature is the main battle front of the League's efforts to expand and protect local control. The League achieved a number of critical offensive and defensive victories this year including:

- **Pension Reform.** A top League priority for two years, pension reform was achieved with the passage of AB 340. The League helped craft this historic reform that takes effect Jan. 1, 2013, and makes significant changes to public employee pensions. Long term, this reform will help cities save on pension costs, freeing up funds to pay for vital services for residents. More information and a primer are available at [www.cacities.org/pensions](http://www.cacities.org/pensions).
- **Employee Presumptive Death Benefits.** AB 2451 was defeated with a strategy that engaged editorial writers who are concerned about the rising costs of public employee



benefits. This bill would have dramatically increased workers' compensation costs for local governments by removing the four-and-a-half-year statute of limitations for presumptive death benefit claims for firefighters and peace officers.

- **Parking Restrictions.** AB 904 was defeated. It would have imposed uniform parking restrictions in transit-oriented areas and prohibited cities from determining the level of sufficient parking appropriate for their neighborhoods.
- **Community Redevelopment and Tax Increment Financing.** Based on the recommendations of an economic development task force, the League worked very closely with the Speaker and other key legislators to lessen the impact of redevelopment dissolution and authorize new forms of tax increment financing through the passage of key bills. The League helped fashion and supported a number of very helpful provisions in AB 1484, the redevelopment budget trailer bill, which the League is not challenging in the lawsuit mentioned earlier. More information about AB 1484 is available at [www.cacities.org/redevelopment](http://www.cacities.org/redevelopment). The League will work in 2013 to secure the Governor's support for new tax increment legislation.
- **Other Legislation and Issues.** The League helped with the passage of legislation to position cities to receive future cap-and-trade revenues, improve communication opportunities with regional water boards, assist in 200-year flood plain issues, and helped a group of small cities resolve an application review problem involving state allocations of Community Development Block Grants. In 2012, the League also helped successfully defeat AB 1692, an effort to unravel the pre-municipal bankruptcy mediation process established by AB 506 of 2011.
- **Track Record with Governor and Legislature.** In 2012, the Governor's actions were consistent with the League's request on 72 percent of priority bills — up from 56 percent in 2011. For details on how individual legislator's votes affected cities, see the 2012 Legislative Score Card at [www.cacities.org/2012voterecord](http://www.cacities.org/2012voterecord). Please also read "2012 Legislative Year in Review," *Western City*, January 2013.

## Education

Responding to cities' needs, the League expanded the use of webinars, with thousands of city officials participating in a range of sessions on legislative matters and educational topics. The 2012 Annual Conference & Expo brought more than 2,000 attendees from 395 cities to San Diego. Collectively,

League conferences and seminars reached more than 4,000 city officials in person and thousands more by webinar.

## CaCities.org

To enhance and streamline our news distribution and education services, the League launched a completely redesigned website ([www.cacities.org](http://www.cacities.org)) in early 2012. The website effectively integrates social media platforms and multimedia to provide improved resources for members.

## Telling the City Story

The League maintains active relations with media outlets around the state, providing the League's view on current statewide and national issues affecting cities. The League also has recently partnered with the California City Management Foundation to launch the **Strong Cities|Strong State** program to profile the innovative ways cities are serving the public and building a stronger state in times of resource shortages. For more information, please visit [www.StrongCitiesStrongState.com](http://www.StrongCitiesStrongState.com).

## Membership

The League enjoyed a high rate of city participation in 2012 with 97 percent of California's 482 cities renewing membership. This strong involvement allows the League to speak effectively for the cities of California.

## Looking Ahead to 2013

The League board of directors met Nov. 14–16 with the leadership of the divisions, departments, caucuses and policy committees to develop and adopt the following League 2013 Strategic Goals:


1. Build Lasting Partnerships;
2. Expand Community and Economic Development Tools and Funding Options for City Services;
3. Continue Pension and Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Reform; and
4. Implement an Effective League Branding Strategy.

Detailed 2013 League Strategic Goals are available at [www.cacities.org/priorities](http://www.cacities.org/priorities).



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