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**Arizona Mayors & Community Leaders Champion True ‘Starter Home’
Legislation for Residents – Not Wall Street Investors**
Striker Amendment supports families & first-time home buyers

PHOENIX – The League of Arizona Cities and Towns, along with leaders from across the state, announced today they are championing new legislation that ensures residents – not Wall Street investors – have the first opportunity to buy starter homes.

Rep. Janeen Connolly (D-Tempe) introduced a Strike Everything Amendment – or striker bill – that would replace a competing bill, SB1229. The striker specifically supports working families, first-time homebuyers and middle-income earners – those who are most impacted by a lack of affordable housing options.

“Our goal is to put Arizona residents at the front of the line when it comes to buying and owning starter homes, not Wall Street investors who sell to the highest bidder,” said Chandler Mayor Kevin Hartke, President of the League. “This bill would help increase the affordable housing pipeline and make homeownership attainable for hard-working families and residents.”

Arizona Mayors, along with public safety groups and community leaders, are pushing to replace a so-called “Starter Home” bill because it lacks appropriate safeguards to prevent real estate speculators from buying new starter homes and converting them into short-term rentals or re-selling them on the market.

More specifically, SB1229 offers zero guarantees of affordable starter home production and allows developers to ignore concerns from residents or the expertise of municipal planners who have worked for years creating desirable communities. Developers are the only stakeholders whose voice is being heard in this bill. It also eliminates design standards and amenities that are standard for successful housing developments creating wildly irresponsible and unplanned growth.

The League’s Striker Amendment will:

- Ensure that starter homes are sold to Arizona residents – not Wall Street speculators. This will support middle-income earners, first-time homebuyers, and working families.
 - SB 1229 contains no provisions prohibiting ownership by speculators or prioritizing Arizona residents.
- Maintain local authority over infrastructure and water services while integrating starter homes into new residential developments. This balances local decision making while providing developers with certainty and ensures cities can commit to providing the public services to support new growth.
 - SB 1229 weakens the quality of housing development by eliminating design standards and common amenities like sidewalks and open space to the detriment of livability, walkability and quality of life.
 - Additionally, it introduces uncertainty into the planning process, posing long-term challenges for sustainable growth.
- Provides a density bonus to developers that guarantee the construction of affordable starter homes for residents while maintaining local authority over infrastructure and planning. This ensures responsible growth and sustainable development.
 - In contrast, SB 1229 strips local authority in exchange for an empty promise of affordable starter homes, instead promoting unchecked overdevelopment. It risks overcrowding while gutting essential quality-of-life amenities like sidewalks, open spaces, and community features—turning future neighborhoods into bare-bones developments that lack the character and livability of traditional residential communities.

“Buying an affordable house is a legitimate challenge across Arizona,” said Tom Belshe, Executive Director of the League. “We are looking out for the needs of Arizonans and are asking legislators to ensure that hard-working residents are able to buy homes – not out-of-state investors and speculators.”

Since 2020, more than 300,000 housing permits have been issued in Arizona. Municipalities across Arizona have been working to expedite zoning approvals and other barriers to homeownership.

About the League: *The League of Arizona Cities and Towns, a voluntary membership organization of the incorporated municipalities in Arizona, exists to provide vital services and tools to all its members, focusing principally on representing the interests of cities and towns before the legislature, and secondarily on providing technical and legal assistance, coordinating shared services and producing high quality conference and educational events.*