

# 2024

## WESTMARC LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

6751 N. Sunset Blvd. Suite 210  
Glendale, AZ 85305



*Fifteen Communities...One Voice*

WESTMARC Communities - *Fifteen Communities...One Voice*

Avondale	Peoria	Buckeye	West Phoenix
El Mirage	Surprise	Gila Bend	Tolleson
Glendale	Wickenburg	Litchfield Park	Youngtown
Goodyear	Sun City	Sun City West	

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## Intent & Purpose:

This legislative agenda is intended to guide conversation and position statements of WESTMARC during the 2024 Legislative Session. If proposed legislation requires further clarity in terms of establishing an official position or providing for action, it will be brought forward for consideration through the existing operating policies and procedures. All position statements or actions regarding proposed legislation will be communicated to WESTMARC's members.

## Economic Development

- WESTMARC supports efforts to enhance the range of economic development funding mechanisms available in Arizona.
- WESTMARC supports governments' ability to review, evaluate and sunset economic development incentives.
- WESTMARC supports the protection of existing Economic Development tools such as the foreign trade zone and opportunity zone benefits that attract business to Arizona.
- WESTMARC supports efforts to grow and expand a diverse, inclusive, skilled, and knowledgeable workforce.
- WESTMARC supports workforce housing solutions that are affordable and sustainable.

## Education

- WESTMARC supports high expectations for all Arizona students via rigorous academic standards, an aligned assessment system and a fair, equitable and meaningful accountability system to measure academic progress.
- WESTMARC supports a referendum to permanently remove the Aggregate Expenditure Limit (AEL) for pre K-12 education, and the annual override of the AEL until such time as the voters approve the referendum.
- WESTMARC supports a uniform system of reporting on public education spending of all education resource delivery systems (elected governance, appointed governance, ESAs and STOs for taxpayer transparency.)
- WESTMARC supports nationally competitive funding and fiscal management for sustainable, long term funding mechanism that provide a competitive level of resources for teacher compensation, pre-school, all-day kindergarten, and the support and operation of K-12 education, including all-day kindergarten.
- WESTMARC supports workforce market competitive funding for Career and Technical Education Districts (West-MEC) and Career Technical Education programs and excellent workforce participation.
- WESTMARC supports competitive funding and fiscal management for the Maricopa County Community College District.
- WESTMARC supports strengthening universities with a stable funding model to ensure access for qualified students, world class research capabilities and excellent workforce preparation.
- WESTMARC supports reducing the amount of unfunded mandates to be tasked to our pre K-12 schools and any initiatives or efforts that advance the Arizona Education Progress Meter goals that culminate with Achieve 60AZ (the statewide attainment goal of 60% by the year 2030).

## Fiscal Responsibility/Taxation

- WESTMARC supports clear, understandable, and practicable tax and fiscal policies that will retain and grow existing business, attract new capital investments, and promote job growth in Arizona.
- WESTMARC supports the preservation of state shared revenues at current levels and opposes any reduction or cap.
- WESTMARC opposes rollovers and sweeps of dedicated funds as a mechanism for balancing the budget.
- WESTMARC supports continuous improvement of Department of Revenue policies and procedures to ensure tax collection accuracy, management and system ease of use by taxpayer.
- WESTMARC supports finding a revenue offset for cities' losses as a result of residential rental tax preemption, and / or delayed implementation of the preemption beyond January 1, 2025.

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## Healthcare

- WESTMARC supports appropriate reimbursement of healthcare providers.
- WESTMARC supports continuing and improving access to healthcare and use of telehealth and other consumer friendly options.
- WESTMARC supports efforts to grow a diverse, efficient, and effective healthcare system.
- WESTMARC supports available treatment and support for behavioral health and substance abuse issues.
- WESTMARC supports healthcare workforce policies that address the unprecedented health care worker shortages across the healthcare industry and build a high-quality health professions pipeline that seeks to meet the demands of Arizona communities for years to come. Support solutions that leverage Arizona's existing healthcare workforce in areas of training, retention and recruitment opportunities to mitigate statewide healthcare workforce shortages.

## Infrastructure

- Recognizing that infrastructure is essential to enable job creation and economic development, WESTMARC supports ongoing efforts to develop new short and long term funding as well as expand and increase existing funding (i.e. gas tax) to meet Arizona's infrastructure needs.
- WESTMARC supports the passage of Prop 479 on the November 2024 ballot.
- WESTMARC supports multimodal transportation options for the West Valley.
- WESTMARC supports the planning and development of an efficient transportation system in the West Valley.
- WESTMARC supports the planning and construction efforts of I-11.
- WESTMARC recognizes that water is a finite resource and thus supports responsible water management practices and conservation efforts, including preservation of the 1980 Groundwater Management Act.
- WESTMARC supports appropriate action to ensure Arizona has an adequate supply of gasoline, broadband, electricity, natural gas, water and other critical resources.
- WESTMARC supports the protection of critical energy infrastructure, including generation, transmission, and distribution assets.
- WESTMARC supports the implementation and funding for the Drought Contingency Plan (DCP). We support the ongoing negotiation regarding future Colorado River operating rules (Reconsultation) and the pursuit of larger contributions from other Colorado River Basin States to conserve additional Colorado River water and ensure Arizona does not continue to carry a disproportionate burden of reductions for the benefit of others.
- WESTMARC supports the distribution of federally appropriated funds to projects that provide durable, long-term water savings on the Colorado River.
- WESTMARC supports responsible, strategic development & implementation of AI technologies that support workforce, business and economic development within legal and safety best practices.

## Legal and Regulatory Affairs

- WESTMARC supports a pro-business environment that does not place undue burden on business.
- WESTMARC supports local governments as partners in economic development.
- WESTMARC supports each individual community's (municipality) ability to maintain local control regarding planning, zoning, community development and fiscal decision making.
- WESTMARC supports the thoughtful handling of and outcomes of certified election results in Maricopa County and the state. WESTMARC supports any challenges be handled through the judiciary process.

## Military Preservation

- WESTMARC supports managed growth and development surrounding Luke Air Force Base and we strongly support existing state legislation and local ordinances that help to protect its long-term mission.

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## Quality of Life

- WESTMARC supports diverse opportunities for residents and visitors to experience arts & culture, sports & entertainment and food & fashion that enrich the region for economic development and celebrate and enhance the uniqueness of the West Valley.
- WESTMARC supports responsible growth with respect to preserving the natural environment and open spaces.
- WESTMARC supports the development and enhancement of events, venues and regional partnerships that provide opportunities for recreation, health and wellness.
- WESTMARC supports a balanced approach to regional homelessness including provision of services and support of lawful enforcement.