

It's time to stop micromanaging

Mar. 20, 2011 12:00 AM
 The Arizona Republic

Maybe Arizona cities should just add 90 chairs at their city council tables.

Legislators are trying to micromanage local government at an unprecedented level. They're looking to pile on unfunded mandates.

The Imperial Legislature is in session.

From traffic enforcement to fire safety to contracting, legislators have filed bills that dictate policies down to the tiniest detail.

The push is from the same GOP legislators who rail against federal meddling in state affairs. Who cry foul at unfunded federal mandates. Who argue passionately for local control.

Now, they want to saddle cities and towns with reams of new regulations and expenses.

There isn't enough room in an editorial for all the terrible proposals. Here's just a sample:

Local permits would have to be processed within 60 days or be automatically approved. No extensions, no recognition of complexity, no concerns about public input. A giant [manufacturing plant](#)

would be treated the same as a residential remodeling.

Phoenix and Tucson would have to put virtually all city services out to bid, r

egardless of efficiency and economics. Our two biggest cities would be guinea pigs for a scale of privatization far beyond what any government of any significant size has done.

Cities would have to allow private companies to haul trash from apartment buildings, letting them cherry-pick the most profitable places and undermining the efficient use of local equipment.

And the list goes on, from weakening photo traffic enforcement (and a ballot measure to prohibit it) to limiting local restrictions on fireworks.

One mindboggling bill could make [Swiss cheese](#)

of our cities and towns. Groups of 1,500 people or more could de-annex from a city, wreaking havoc on police, fire and transportation.

What's going on here?

Special interests are trying to make end runs around local regulations. Lawmakers are seizing on one or two anecdotal

Advertisement



Fast, convenient,
 AND affordable

Save on select
 Wireless*
 All-in-Ones,
 Photo Printers
 and Lasers

Save Today

Limited time offers

Shop Now >

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

problems to propose sweeping bills that affect the entire state. Proposals based on ideology, whatever their practicality or cost, are gaining traction.

Legislators are overreaching so much that a conservative Republican finally called them out.

Mesa Mayor Scott Smith has had enough. "You have complex situations for which there is legislation coming through that is very simplistic," he said at a council meeting. "And in many of these cases it appears the cure is potentially much worse than the disease that's there."

Legislators have their own seats at the Capitol, with plenty of statewide issues to tackle. They should stop trying to take over local government.

Copyright © 2011, azcentral.com. All rights reserved. Users of this site agree to the Terms of Service and Privacy Policy/Your California Privacy Rights

Advertisement



Fast, convenient,
AND affordable

Save on select
Wireless*
All-in-Ones,
Photo Printers
and Lasers

Save Today

Limited time offers

Shop Now >

Dell

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™