



HB 2570: Municipalities; Vegetation Requirements; Prohibition

Arizona Forward strongly opposes HB 2570

Dear Esteemed Senators & Representatives:

Arizona Forward opposes the above referenced bill, which would prevent Arizona cities and towns from requiring that native plants be salvaged when land is developed.

Our 46-year-old business-based environmental public interest organization believes this bill would jeopardize our unique desert landscape, as well as Arizona's water future. As written, it removes protection of the Saguaro Cacti, an iconic symbol of the Sonoran Desert.

This legislation also prohibits municipalities from requiring a specific type or size of vegetation. Such requirements help preserve the character of our precious desert environment.

Arizona Forward's diverse membership of large corporations and small businesses, government agencies and local municipalities, educators, non-profit organizations and concerned citizens understand that we must work together to protect Arizona's natural assets. Managing the delicate balance between protection of our natural desert environment and new development is critical to our long-term sustainable future.

Several cities now require that native plants be salvaged when the desert land is cleared. They also specify what type of vegetation can be planted in a development. The cities of Phoenix, Scottsdale, Peoria, Mesa, and even the small Town of Clarkdale have additional rules to protect native plants, preserve desert views and maintain a sense of place.

Furthermore, one of the most effective and economically efficient ways to protect our declining aquifers is to require native vegetation in new developments. The reason is simple – native plants are adapted to the local climate and generally require no irrigation.

Native landscaping makes sense for Arizona's communities. We respectfully oppose passage of this bill and urge your reconsideration of its merits.

Thank you for your public service.

Sincerely,

Diane Brossart
President & CEO, Arizona Forward

Dan Litteral
2015 Chair of the Board