



## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** July 2 ,2024

**TO:** CAST Membership

**FROM:** Jonathan Godes, CAST President

**RE:** 2024 Legislative Position Statement on Housing

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Please find attached the CAST 2024 Colorado Legislative Position Statement on Housing. As you will see, the legislative proposals it contains would give local governments more tools and revenue options to address housing issues in the discretion of each individual local government and its residents. We have developed these concepts through a great deal of collaboration within the CAST Housing Task Force, including working groups for each proposal, and they have the support of the CAST Board of Directors.

**The CAST board requests that each Colorado CAST member governing body consider lending its support to this position statement as well.** It would be ideal to have this support **by August 9**. While each CAST member will find different value in the various proposals, by working in concert we demonstrate greater backing for the package as a whole and for our fellow local governments seeking to pursue one of these options. We intend to engage other partner organizations in the effort as described in the position statement, and as we work with others, these proposals may evolve or expand. As they do, our intent will remain to secure more opportunities to address our housing needs while preserving our existing means of serving and representing our communities.



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## COLORADO ASSOCIATION OF SKI TOWNS

### 2024 COLORADO LEGISLATIVE POSITION STATEMENT ON HOUSING

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**OVERVIEW:** The Colorado Association of Ski Towns (CAST) represents the mountain resort communities throughout Colorado. Colorado's ski industry generates \$4.8 billion in annual economic output, supports more than 46,000 year-round equivalent jobs, and generates \$1.9 billion per year in labor income. ([RRC Associates](#)). The lack of available and attainable housing for employees in Colorado mountain resort communities has reached a crisis level which is directly impacting the provision of basic services as well as the ability to adequately staff and operate all businesses, from ski resort companies to local, small businesses. CAST supports targeted legislation to provide additional financial tools for Colorado mountain communities to address housing needs.

**AUTHORIZE LOCAL SHORT-TERM RENTAL TAXES:** CAST supports legislation to specifically authorize counties and municipalities to refer short term rental taxes to the voters with the proceeds of such revenues to be dedicated to local workforce and affordable housing.

**AUTHORIZE LOCAL VACANCY TAXES:** CAST supports legislation to clearly allow municipalities and counties to refer residential vacancy taxes to their voters. Census data shows residential vacancy rates soaring above 40% in some Colorado mountain towns facing acute housing shortages. Vacancy taxes, also known as empty homes taxes, incentivize homeowners to rent their homes to local residents rather than rent them at peak times and leave them empty most of the year. Additionally, this would disincentivize the use of homes as investments and result in a higher utilization as actual homes. Revenue from the tax would fund local affordable and workforce housing. CAST proposes that county assessors or the state facilitate the process by identifying the vacant homes in a taxing jurisdiction and tying enforcement into existing administrative processes

**AUTHORIZE LOCAL REAL ESTATE TRANSFER FEES:** The Colorado Constitution prohibits new *taxes* on the transfer of real estate, but the courts have long held fees to be different from taxes. CAST supports legislation to expressly allow municipalities and counties to adopt fees on the transfer of real estate, with the fee revenues to fund local affordable and workforce housing. This can be a powerful tool; total revenues from legacy real estate transfer taxes in CAST member municipalities have risen above \$80 million annually.

**CAST TO WORK WITH PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:** In supporting this position statement, CAST members support CAST seeking to work with the Colorado Municipal League; Colorado Counties, Inc.; Colorado Counties Acting Together; and any other organizations who agree to support these proposals, and members formally request these organizations initiate and pursue this legislation on their behalf.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** For more information please contact, Margaret Bowes, Executive Director, Colorado Association of Ski Towns, (970) 389-4347, [mbowes@coskitowns.com](mailto:mbowes@coskitowns.com); or Dan Kramer, CAST Housing Task Force Chairperson, [dkramer@estes.org](mailto:dkramer@estes.org).