

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5322

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 11, 1991

Brief Description: Permitting emergency exemptions from building codes.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Commerce & Labor (originally sponsored by Senators Conner, Rasmussen, Snyder, Pelz and McCaslin).

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5322 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Matson, Chairman; Anderson, Vice Chairman; Bluechel, McCaslin, McDonald, McMullen, Moore, and Skratek.

Staff: Dave Cheal (786-7576)

Hearing Dates: February 6, 1991; March 1, 1991; March 4, 1991

BACKGROUND:

Vacant buildings occasionally become available that could be converted into emergency shelters or transitional housing of some type. Under current law such use can occur only if the buildings are brought in compliance with the State Building Code, and local variations, relating to residential occupancy.

SUMMARY:

Local government legislative authorities are allowed to exempt certain buildings from State Building Code requirements whose use or occupancy has been changed in order to provide shelter and housing for homeless people.

The exemption must be limited to existing buildings and resulting code deficiencies must pose no threat to human life, safety, or health. The building must be owned or administered by a public agency or nonprofit corporation. The exemption is limited to a five-year duration, but can be renewed by the same procedure. The State Building Code Council is required to adopt guidelines for cities and counties who wish to exempt buildings.

The effective date is January 1, 1992.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR:

Cities and counties will be better able to provide emergency shelter for homeless people by making reasonable modifications to existing buildings without the full expense of complete building code compliance.

The stock of potential structures that can be used will be greatly expanded by being able to use buildings that are not currently used for residential purposes.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Senator Conner (pro)