

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2628

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to condemnation of blighted property.

Brief Description: Revising provisions relating to condemnation of blighted property.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Representatives R. Fisher, Campbell, Edmondson, Sommers, Appelwick and Dorn).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Local Government, February 4, 1994, DPS;
Passed House, February 10, 1994, 91-4;
Passed Legislature.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives H. Myers, Chair; Springer, Vice Chair; Edmondson, Ranking Minority Member; Reams, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dunshee; R. Fisher; Horn; Moak; Rayburn and Zellinsky.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Van Luven.

Staff: Steve Lundin (786-7127).

Background: Counties, cities, and towns are authorized to condemn property, dwellings, buildings, and structures constituting a blight on the surrounding neighborhood. A "blight on the surrounding neighborhood" is defined as property that: (1) has not been lawfully occupied for one year or more; (2) constitutes a threat to the public health, safety, or welfare, as determined by the county health department; and (3) is or has been associated with illegal drug activity during the previous 12 months.

In addition, the county, city, or town governing body must adopt a resolution declaring that the acquisition of the property is necessary to eliminate neighborhood blight before the property may be condemned.

Summary of Bill: The requirements are altered for a county, city, or town to condemn property that constitutes a blight on the surrounding neighborhood. Such property may be condemned only if two of the following three factors are met: (1) if there is a structure on the property, the structure has not been lawfully occupied for one or more year; (2) the executive authority of the county, city, or town determines the property constitutes a threat to the public health, safety, or welfare; and (3) the property is associated with illegal drug activity during the previous 12 months.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The Hilltop area of Tacoma has many rundown buildings where bad things happen. We need to condemn this property and improve it.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Gary Pederson, city of Tacoma; and Alberta Canada, Hilltop Action Coalition.