

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HJM 4011

As Reported By House Committee On:
Trade, Economic Development, and Housing

Title: An act relating to calling on the federal government to ensure affordable housing.

Brief Description: Calling on the federal government to ensure affordable housing.

Sponsors: Representatives J. Kohl, Sommers, Ballard, Wineberry, Ogden, G. Fisher, Casada, R. Johnson, Miller, Pruitt, Jacobsen, Holm, Morris, Jones, Forner, Anderson, Wolfe, Foreman, Voloria, Thibaudeau, Johanson, Brown, Brumsickle, Brough, Leonard, Reams, Bray, Orr, R. Fisher, Kremen, Basich, Wang, Cooke, Van Luven and Kessler.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Trade, Economic Development, and Housing, February 26, 1993, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRADE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Wineberry, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Forner, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Campbell; Conway; Schoesler; Sheldon; Springer; Valle; and Wood.

Staff: Kenny Pittman (786-7392).

Background: The federal government's involvement in housing dates back 50 years. This involvement has been most visible in the areas of: mortgage finance, housing assistance to low-income households, tax treatment of real estate, and enforcement of anti-discrimination laws.

During the 1980s, federal funding for housing assistance to low-income households declined. According to Congressional Research Service reports, the number of additional households (incremental units) receiving assistance dropped from approximately 325,000 per year in the late 1970s to approximately 73,400 in fiscal year 1992. The reductions in federal funding were during a period when the nation experienced an increase in the numbers of homeless

individuals and families, and the home ownership rate dropped for the first time since 1940.

Various housing groups feel that with the ending of the "cold war," that a portion of defense spending savings should be transferred to housing assistance programs. This additional funding would be used to meet the unmet need for decent, permanent, and affordable housing for low-income households.

Summary of Bill: The members of the Washington State Senate and the House of Representatives ask President Clinton and the United State Congress to restore past budget cuts in housing programs and provide adequate funding to ensure affordable, permanent, and habitable housing for all people.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: There is a great need for affordable housing. The federal government must now fund housing at past levels if this need is to be met.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Representative Kohl, prime sponsor (Pro); and Kim Herman, Washington State Housing Finance Commission (Pro).