

FINAL BILL REPORT

SB 5584

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SYNOPSIS AS ENACTED

Brief Description: Creating the Washington housing policy act.

SPONSORS: Senators Franklin, Winsley, McAuliffe, Skratek, M. Rasmussen, Hargrove, Wojahn, Niemi, Drew and Pelz

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & COMMERCE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRADE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING

BACKGROUND:

There are a number of state programs that seek to stimulate the development of and access to affordable housing for individuals of all income levels.

The Department of Community Development administers a number of housing programs including the Housing Trust Fund that provides funding for the capital construction costs of housing for low-income individuals and special needs populations. The Washington State Housing Finance Commission, created by the Legislature in 1983, is a self-supporting agency that assists individuals, nonprofit organizations and others in financing the purchase, construction or rehabilitation of single family and multi-family housing units. The commission accomplishes its goals through the issuance of tax exempt bonds, the proceeds of which are used for the commission's programs.

There is no comprehensive statewide housing policy. It is suggested that the lack of such a policy inhibits the effective, coordinated delivery of housing programs in this state.

SUMMARY:

The Washington Housing Policy Act is established. The purposes of the act are to: provide policy direction to the public and private sectors seeking to meet the housing needs of state residents; reevaluate housing-related programs and policies to ensure proper coordination of these programs and policies; improve the delivery of state services to low-income and special needs populations; strengthen partnerships among all levels of government, and the public and private sectors involved in the production and operation of housing for low and moderate-income households; increase the supply of housing for special needs populations; encourage collaborative planning with social service providers; encourage financial institutions to increase residential mortgage lending; and

coordinate housing into comprehensive community and economic development strategies at the state and local levels.

It is the stated goal of the state of Washington to assist, when necessary, the efforts of the public and private sectors and to cooperate and participate, when necessary, in the attainment of a decent home in a healthy, safe environment for every resident of the state.

A 21-member Affordable Housing Advisory Board is established within the Department of Community Development (DCD) to analyze solutions and programs and make recommendations that address the state's need for affordable housing; assist in the preparation of a five-year housing advisory plan; and advise and provide policy direction to DCD on housing and housing-related issues. Beginning December 1, 1993, the Affordable Housing Advisory Board must prepare an annual report to DCD on specific program, legislative, and funding issues. Members are appointed by the Governor.

The Department of Community Development is directed, in consultation with the Affordable Housing Advisory Board, to prepare a five-year housing advisory plan.

The Department of Community Development is directed, in consultation with the Affordable Housing Advisory Board, to conduct a study and make recommendations concerning the development and placement of accessory apartments. The recommendations must be submitted to the Legislature by December 15, 1993, and are not effective until 90 days following adjournment of the 1994 Regular Session. By December 31, 1994, local governments are to incorporate the recommendations in the accessory apartment study into their development or zoning regulations.

The Department of Community Development must provide technical assistance and information to state agencies and local governments to assist in the identification and removal of regulatory barriers to affordable housing. The assistance may include: (1) analyzing the affordability implications of state and local government actions; (2) assisting all levels of government in determining the impact of existing and proposed regulations on housing affordability; (3) developing techniques and opportunities to reduce the cost of housing through regulatory reform; (4) developing model standards and ordinances designed to reduce regulatory barriers to affordable housing; and (5) preparing state regulatory barrier removal strategies.

The Department of Community Development may develop and administer a Home-Matching Program in up to five local jurisdictions.

The Department of Community Development is designated as the principal state department for coordinating and evaluating the use of federal and state resources and activities for housing.

The state's housing authority law is amended to allow a public housing authority to exercise any powers of an urban renewal agency or of a public development corporation, when requested by a local government. The requirement to dedicate 30 percent of an individual building's interior space for persons of low-income is removed. Housing projects financed by a public housing authority and developed for intended sale to low- and moderate-income persons by nonprofit organizations or governmental units are not subject to the requirement that the units be dedicated to low-income occupancy for a 20-year period. The 20-year occupancy requirement does not apply to projects where the public housing authority only provides short-term financing.

All cities, towns, or counties are prohibited from enacting or maintaining an ordinance, regulation, policy, or administrative procedure that treats a residential structure occupied by persons with handicaps differently from a similar residential structure occupied by a family or other unrelated individuals.

VOTES ON FINAL PASSAGE:

Senate	42	5	
House	93	1	(House amended)
Senate	33	7	(Senate concurred)

EFFECTIVE: July 25, 1993