

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5584

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 10, 1993

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

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Moore, Chairman; Amondson, Fraser, McAuliffe, Pelz, Prince, and Vognild.

Staff: Traci Ratzliff (786-7452)

Hearing Dates: February 23, 1993; February 26, 1993

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRADE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING

BACKGROUND:

Currently, 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 the tax exempt bonds, the proceeds of which are used for the commission's programs.

Under current law, 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.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

Washington is doing a good job of providing housing for its citizens but there is no set policy regarding the delivery of housing services. It would seem helpful to have a clear policy regarding the delivery of housing services in this state.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Senator Franklin, prime sponsor

HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):

The amended bill includes the following provisions: (1) creates a 21-member affordable housing advisory board; (2) outlines the duties of the advisory board; (3) requires a study on the siting of accessory apartments in local governments; (4) designates the Department of Community Development as the principal state department to coordinate and evaluate the use of federal and state resources for housing; (5) gives the department authority to provide technical assistance and information to state agencies and local governments to assist in the identification and removal of regulatory barriers to the development and placement of affordable housing; (6) amends the state's housing authority law concerning the powers as an urban renewal agency and the occupancy requirements of buildings and individual units; (7) gives the department the authority to develop and administer a home matching program designated to encourage intergenerational house sharing in up to five local jurisdictions; and (8) prohibits local governments from imposing requirements on housing for persons with handicaps that are different from similar housing that is for unrelated individuals.