

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SHB 2459

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C 140 L 98

Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Regulating public housing authorities in large jurisdictions.

**Sponsors:** By House Committee on Trade & Economic Development (originally sponsored by Representatives Veloria, Van Luven, Butler, Cody, Mason, Conway, McDonald, Kenney, Kastama, Dickerson and Keiser).

**House Committee on Trade & Economic Development**  
**Senate Committee on Financial Institutions, Insurance & Housing**

**Background:** The state's Housing Authorities Law, enacted in 1939, authorizes counties and cities to establish local public housing authorities to provide housing for persons of low-income. Providing public housing is accomplished through the administration of various federal, state, or local housing programs.

Public housing authorities are governed by a five-member commission. The commissioners are appointed by the mayor of a city or the governing body of the county establishing the housing authority. Commissioners generally serve five-year terms. They do not receive a salary, but are compensated for travel and other expenses they incur.

Commissioners and employees are prohibited from having any direct or indirect interest in any housing project, property, contract for materials or services to be furnished to the public housing authority. Commissioners and employees are required to disclose, in writing, if they have an interest in any property used or planning to be used for a housing project. The commissioner or employee cannot participate in any action by the public housing authority regarding the property. Failure to disclose an interest is considered misconduct in office.

**Summary:** The state's Housing Authority Law is revised regarding the appointment of commissioners in cities with a population of 400,000 or more and the conflict of interest provisions that govern commissioners and employees.

The required number of commissioners on a public housing authority board is increased from five to seven in a city with a population of 400,000 or more. At least two of the commissioners must be tenants who reside in a housing project that is owned by the public housing authority. The term of the public housing authority commissioners is for four years. A commissioner may be reappointed only after a public hearing of the city council.

The conflict of interest provisions for public housing authority commissioners and employees are expanded to include any appointee to a decision-making body of the public housing authority. A tenant of a public housing authority who serves as a commissioner, employee, or appointee to any decision-making body of the public housing authority may vote on any issue or decision, or participate in any action of the housing authority unless a conflict of interest exists for that particular tenant.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House 95 0  
Senate 48 0 (Senate amended)  
House (House refused to concur)  
Senate 47 0 (Senate amended)  
House 98 0 (House concurred)

**Effective:** June 11, 1998