
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4009

State of Washington 59th Legislature 2005 Regular Session

By House Committee on Housing (originally sponsored by Representatives Ormsby, Dunn, Miloscia, Jarrett, Pettigrew, Flannigan, Springer, Morrell, Sells, O'Brien, Conway, Priest, Simpson, Kagi, Darneille, Lantz, Kenney, Clibborn, Cody, Schual-Berke, Chase, Hasegawa and Wood)

READ FIRST TIME 03/02/05.

1 TO THE HONORABLE GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
2 AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
4 UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO THE SECRETARY OF THE
5 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT:

6 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
7 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully
8 represent and petition as follows:

9 WHEREAS, Affordable, safe, and sanitary housing is vital to the
10 quality of life for individuals, families, and communities throughout
11 the United States. It is also a necessary component of a healthy
12 economy; and

13 WHEREAS, Owning one's home has long been considered a part of the
14 "American Dream"; and

15 WHEREAS, The cost of owning a home in Washington has dramatically
16 increased; and

17 WHEREAS, In the 2000 Census, Washington homeownership among White
18 householders was more than 67 percent, higher than the rate of 41
19 percent for Hispanics; however, less than 38 percent of Black
20 householders were found to own their own home; and

1 WHEREAS, It is a goal of the United States Department of Housing
2 and Urban Development to add 5.5 million minority homeowners by the end
3 of the decade; and

4 WHEREAS, Congress has appropriated a \$113 million increase in the
5 HOME Investment Partnerships Program - allowing local governments to
6 encourage the production of affordable housing in communities
7 nationwide; an additional \$10 million to provide counseling services to
8 Americans who wish to become homeowners; and \$200 million for the
9 American Dream Downpayment Initiative to help an estimated 40,000 low-
10 income families a year become first-time homeowners; and

11 WHEREAS, The department's comprehensive plan to end chronic
12 homelessness is the largest total award of federal funds for homeless
13 assistance in history, totaling more than 4,400 projects nationally;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, The Section 8 program, 42 U.S.C. Sec. 1437f, provides
16 funds for rental subsidies for qualified low-income households in
17 Washington and throughout the nation and is one of the best models of
18 public-private partnerships. The goal of the Section 8 program is to
19 make rental housing, both private and public, more affordable to low-
20 income people. By making the rental housing more affordable, Section
21 8 funds benefit the states and their communities, in general, and
22 property owners and low-income individuals and families, in particular;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, Two-thirds of the housing authorities in Washington which
25 administer Section 8 vouchers have already had to close their Section
26 8 waiting lists because of the huge number of people already on the
27 lists. Those on the lists already face a wait of eighteen months to
28 five years for Section 8 rental assistance. This state saw a decrease
29 from 2003 to 2004 in the number of Section 8 vouchers and the amount of
30 Section 8 assistance available. Based on information provided by the
31 United States Department of Housing and Urban Development in January of
32 2005, it is projected that Washington will lose funding for an
33 additional 2,169 Section 8 vouchers in calendar year 2005. Reductions
34 to Section 8 funding in calendar year 2005 will likely result in an
35 increase in the number of people that are homeless or live in unsafe
36 and unsanitary housing. These changes and reductions will also
37 severely challenge private landlords who are anxious to partner with

1 the public and rent their housing stock, but who are financially unable
2 to shoulder the burden of a Section 8 budgeting process which does not
3 take into account market forces;

4 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists recognize the role of the United
5 States Department of Housing and Urban Development for assisting
6 Washington families with rental assistance and home ownership programs.

7 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the number
8 of Section 8 vouchers and the Section 8 funding levels and formulas be
9 maintained as provided in Public Law 108-7, Independent Agencies, VA,
10 and HUD Appropriations for 2003 as part of the 2003 Omnibus Bill.

11 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
12 transmitted to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United
13 States, the Secretary of the United States Department of Housing and
14 Urban Development, the President of the United States Senate, the
15 Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress
16 from the State of Washington.

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