

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2827

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Human Services

**Title:** An act relating to expanding the department of community, trade, and economic development's housing pilot program.

**Brief Description:** Expanding the department of community, trade, and economic development's housing pilot program.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Roberts, Kagi, Dickerson, Appleton, Darneille, Pedersen, Walsh, O'Brien, Sullivan and Goodman.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Human Services: 1/29/08, 1/31/08 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Expands the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development's housing assistance pilot program.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Dickerson, Chair; Roberts, Vice Chair; Ahern, Ranking Minority Member; Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Darneille, McCoy and O'Brien.

**Staff:** Jim Morishima (786-7191).

**Background:**

The Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (DCTED) is required to establish a pilot program that awards grants to organizations that provide housing assistance to offenders reentering the community. Organizations receiving funds under the pilot program must:

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- operate in collaboration with a community justice center existing in the same location as the pilot site;
- offer transitional supportive housing that includes individual support and mentoring, life skills training, and close working relationships with community justice centers and community corrections officers;
- give priority to offenders who are designated as high risk or high needs as well as those determined not to have a viable release plan by the Department of Corrections (DOC);
- optimize available funding by utilizing cost-effective community-based shared housing arrangements or other non-institutional living arrangements; and
- provide housing assistance for a period of time not to exceed 12 months for a participating offender.

The DOC is required to collaborate with organizations receiving funds under the pilot program to:

- help identify appropriate housing solutions in the community for offenders;
- facilitate, where possible, an offender's application for housing;
- identify training enhancements that may assist an offender to effectively transition into the community;
- maintain communication between the organization, the housing provider, and corrections staff; and
- assist the offender in accessing resources and services available through the DOC and a community justice center.

The DCTED was required to select at least two pilot sites by January 1, 2008. The DCTED selected four organizations to receive funding, one in King County, one in Pierce County, one in Spokane County, and one in Clark County.

The DCTED was authorized to use up to 20 percent of the funding appropriated for the pilot to support the development of additional supportive housing resources for offenders who are reentering the community. The DCTED has not exercised its authority to use 20 percent of the funds in this manner.

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### **Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The DCTED must expand the housing assistance pilot program to include sites in other counties. The requirement that the organizations receiving funds collaborate with community justice centers is eliminated. The DCTED's authority to use 20 percent of the funds to support the development of additional housing resources is also eliminated.

### **Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The original bill eliminated references to "pilot" program, which are restored in the substitute bill. The substitute bill removes the requirement that organizations work in collaboration with community justice centers and community transition coordination networks, if any. The substitute bill removes provisions stating that the lack of community justice centers or

community transition coordination networks does not make an organization ineligible for funding.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Preliminary fiscal note available.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This bill corrects an unintended consequence. The current law does not take into account the diversity within the state with respect to housing; instead, funding is only allowed for counties with criminal justice centers. Offenders reside in every county in the state, not just the large ones. This bill allows expansion of the pilot program into counties that do not have criminal justice centers. The pilot program provides supervised housing that helps ensure the successful transition of offenders into the community.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Roberts, prime sponsor.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.