

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 2415

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As of February 26, 2014

**Title:** An act relating to creating a temporary homeless status certification.

**Brief Description:** Creating a pilot program to provide certification of homeless status for persons in need of an address for purposes of employment.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs (originally sponsored by Representatives Parker, Ormsby, Zeiger, Walsh, Holy, Christian, Lytton, Riccelli, Fagan, Kagi, Gregerson, Orwall and Santos).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 2/13/14, 90-8.

**Committee Activity:** Financial Institutions, Housing & Insurance: 2/25/14.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, HOUSING & INSURANCE

**Staff:** Alison Mendiola (786-7483)

**Background:** The State Homeless Housing Program. The Legislature enacted the Homeless Housing and Assistance Act in 2005, which directs the Department of Commerce (Commerce) to develop a statewide homeless housing program. Commerce must implement the program through a ten-year strategic plan with the goal of reducing homelessness by 50 percent in the state and within each county by 2015.

Local governments must develop their own ten-year homeless housing plans in coordination with the statewide plan. Local government plans may include specific performance measures and may include recommendations for state legislation that is needed to meet a goal of the local plan. Local governments are also eligible to participate in a state homeless housing grant program, administered by Commerce.

State Identification. The Department of Licensing (DOL) issues the state driver's license and identicard which serve as official forms of personal identification. The driver's license and identicard can be used to verify a person's name, residency, and age for various purposes. In order for a driver's license or Identicard to be valid for identification purposes, an applicant must provide DOL with certain identifying documentation that contains the person's name and signature. DOL may waive this requirement if a person is unable to provide any of these forms of identification and if the person provides other documentation that clearly establishes

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that person's identity. In addition, DOL regulations require an applicant to provide a current mailing and state residential address and telephone number.

**Summary of Bill:** Commerce must establish a homeless status certification pilot program within one county where there are homeless housing and service providers, community leaders, and businesses that are willing to partner with Commerce. The program must create a homeless status form that verifies a person's homeless status and provides an address of a homeless housing or service provider to be used by the person. Commerce must develop procedures for collecting the information provided on the homeless status forms. Commerce must convene regular meetings with homeless housing and service providers, community leaders, homeless persons, and businesses for purposes of creating and implementing the program and defining responsibilities among the interested parties.

By December 1, 2016, Commerce must submit a report to the Legislature on the outcomes of the program, including the number of persons who used the homeless status form and the number of persons who obtained employment. The report also must evaluate and make recommendations on expanding the program statewide.

The program expressly does not create an entitlement. The program expires June 30, 2017.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: The idea for this bill came from a town hall meeting. When a homeless person applies for a job, or is hired, that person does not have an address which can be a barrier to employment. Lack of employment is what may lead some people into homelessness in the first place. This bill is permissive; agencies and business can participate if they choose to. This bill would allow people to move up and out of homelessness.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Parker, prime sponsor; E.B. Vodde, Associated Students of Eastern WA University.