
Judiciary Committee

HB 2051

Title: An act relating to providing adequate time and assistance for tenants to relocate due to a rent increase or change of use of the residential unit.

Brief Description: Concerning the provision of time and assistance for tenants to relocate due to a rent increase or change of use of the residential unit.

Sponsors: Representatives Farrell, Tarleton, Pollet, Robinson, Gregerson, Ryu, Orwall, Walkinshaw, Appleton and Kagi.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerning relocation assistance and notice of rent increases.
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Hearing Date: 2/17/15

Staff: Daniel Rusk (786-7290) and Edie Adams (786-7180).

Background:

Washington's Residential Landlord-Tenant Act (RLTA) governs the relationship between landlords and tenants of residential dwelling units and establishes each parties' duties.

A landlord may change the terms of the tenancy, including rent price, upon the completion of the rental term if all the affected tenants have been provided 30 days written notice. A termination of tenancy is not a change of rule. A landlord may terminate a periodic tenancy if the landlord provides at least 20 days written notice prior to the end of the month.

Specific cities, counties, or towns must develop comprehensive use plans. If the city, county, or town is required to adopt one of these plans, the city, county, or town may require property owners to provide relocation assistance to low-income tenants upon the demolition, substantial rehabilitation, change of use, or removal of use restrictions in an assisted-housing development (change in use). Relocation assistance must not exceed \$2,000—adjusted by the consumer price

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index—and the property owner's portion must not exceed one half of the total relocation assistance. The city, county, or town is obligated to pay the other portion of the relocation assistance. A property owner is not obligated to pay relocation assistance if the tenant moves out of the dwelling prior to the property owner's application for a permit for the change in use.

A low-income tenant is a tenant or tenants whose combined total income per dwelling unit is at or below 50 percent of the median income in the county where the tenants reside. An assisted-housing development is a multifamily housing development that either receives government assistance and is defined as federally assisted housing, or receives other government assistance and is subject to use restrictions.

Summary of Bill:

Any city, county, or town that is required to develop a comprehensive use plan may require, after public notice and a public hearing, property owners to provide tenants up to 90 days written notice for a rent increase exceeding 10 percent of the current rent price.

A property owner may be responsible for paying his or her portion of relocation assistance, even if the tenant moved out prior to the owner's application for a change in use permit, if the local jurisdiction finds that the property owner violated the requirement to provide relocation assistance after the tenant has moved out.

A low-income tenant is a tenant or tenants whose combined total income per dwelling is at or below 80 percent of the median income in the county where the tenant or tenants reside.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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