

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1987

As Reported by House Committee On:
Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs

Title: An act relating to allowing affordable housing development on religious organization property.

Brief Description: Concerning allowing affordable housing development on religious organization property.

Sponsors: Representatives McBride, Macri, Robinson, Stanford, Slatter, Senn, Santos, Chapman, Ortiz-Self and Jenkins.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs: 2/14/17, 2/16/17 [DPS], 1/25/18 [DP2S].

Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill

- Requires cities and counties planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA) with populations of more than 125,000 to allow an increased density bonus for certain affordable housing development on property owned or controlled by a religious organization.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: The second substitute bill be substituted therefor and the second substitute bill do pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Ryu, Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; Reeves.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives McCabe, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Jenkin.

Staff: Kirsten Lee (786-7133).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Local Development Regulations.

Cities and counties engaging in comprehensive planning may enact ordinances and codes to regulate the use of land and zoning certain development and activities. Such regulations generally include: the location, construction and size of buildings for residence, industry, trade, and other purposes; the height, construction, and design of buildings and structures; the size of yards, open spaces, lots, and tracts; the density of population; the set-back of buildings; the subdivision and development of land; and adoption of standard building codes and fire regulations.

Summary of Second Substitute Bill:

Governing bodies of cities and counties planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA), with a population of over 125,000, must allow an increased density bonus consistent with local needs for any affordable housing development of single-family or multifamily residences located on real property owned or controlled by a religious organization when the affordable housing development:

- is set aside for, or occupied exclusively for, low-income households. "Low-income household" means a single person, family, or unrelated persons living together whose adjusted income is less than 80 percent of the median family income, adjusted for household size for the county where the affordable housing development is located;
- is part of a lease or other binding obligation that requires development to be used exclusively for affordable housing purposes for at least 40 years, even if the religious organization no longer owns the property; and
- does not discriminate against any person who qualifies as a member of a low-income household.

The religious organization developing the qualifying affordable housing must pay all fees, mitigation costs, and other charges required and work with local transit agencies to ensure appropriate transit services are provided to the affordable housing development.

The definition of "affordable housing" is changed and requires qualifying units to have sales prices or rental amounts that do not exceed 30 percent of the income limit for the low-income housing, rather than defining what sales prices and rents are affordable based on federal, state, or local government housing programs.

Second Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The second substitute bill:

- changes the jurisdictions effected by the bill, eliminating counties not planning under the GMA and counties planning under the GMA that have a population of 125,000 or less;
- eliminates the allowable restrictions, including density and height for affordable housing developments on property owned or controlled by a religious organization;
- requires cities and counties to allow religious organizations developing specific types of affordable housing to increase the density by an amount consistent with local needs;

- requires religious organizations constructing an affordable housing unit to pay all costs associated with the construction;
 - changes the definition of "affordable housing development" to require that the sales prices or rent amounts of the low-income household units within the development do not exceed 30 percent of the income limit for the low-income housing unit;
 - encourages a religious organization constructing an affordable housing development to work with the local transit agency to ensure appropriate transit services are provided to the affordable housing development; and
 - changes references to "construction" or "constructing" to "development" or "developing."
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Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Religious organizations have been partners in providing affordable housing and are working to prevent homelessness by building affordable housing. Sometimes underlying zoning requirements prevent religious organizations from being able to build affordable housing for multifamily housing. The bill allows religious organizations to carry on their mission to provide affordable housing but does not relieve a developer or religious organization from abiding by other guidelines and requirements not related to the density increase. Local jurisdictions retain the ability to increase density within their local needs.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative McBride, prime sponsor; and Paul Benz, Faith Action Network.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.