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**SENATE BILL 6647**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2020 Regular Session**

**By** Senator Zeiger

AN ACT Relating to department of commerce data on homeless clients, spending, and performance; and creating new sections.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that the department of commerce maintains multiple systems to collect data on homeless clients, spending, and performance. The department of commerce supports a homeless management information system to collect and manage data gathered by providers during the course of providing assistance to people already experiencing homelessness and to households at risk of losing their housing. The department of commerce collects data on federal, state, local, and private spending for the state's homeless housing strategic plan. The department of commerce also maintains a Washington state homeless system performance system to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of homeless crisis response systems. The legislature finds that despite the substantial amount of information and data being gathered on the homeless population, spending, and performance, the information is not easily accessible to policymakers and the public. Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to increase public confidence and transparency in government spending on assistance provided to persons who are homeless or at risk of being homeless through a review of these data collection systems and the development of a web-based public portal to provide one-stop information on homeless assistance, spending, and performance.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The joint legislative audit and review committee must conduct a study of the reliability, accuracy, and completeness of the following data and data collection systems at the department of commerce:

(a) The Washington homeless client management information system provided in RCW 43.185C.180;

(b) Federal, state, local, and private spending on assistance reported by the department of commerce in the annual homeless housing strategic plan required in RCW 43.185C.045; and

(c) The Washington state homeless system performance system and other performance systems used to measure the effectiveness of homeless assistance programs contained in chapter 43.185C RCW.

(2) The study shall include an assessment of the processes the department of commerce uses to confirm information obtained from local government agencies, community organizations, and providers of homeless assistance is accurate and complete.

(3) The study shall also make recommendations for improvements to these systems, including identifying gaps in information and opportunities to streamline and consolidate these homeless data collection systems.

(4) By September 1, 2022, the joint legislative audit and review committee must report to the legislature on its findings from the review, including recommendations on the improvement of the state's homeless data collection systems.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislative evaluation and accountability program must implement and maintain an internet-based portal that provides the public with accessible, interactive, and informational access to government spending on assistance to persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The portal must use data and information contained in the data collection systems in section 2(1) of this act to provide citizens the opportunity to view, for each local jurisdiction and statewide, annual spending by fund source and assistance type. The portal must also provide information, for each local jurisdiction and statewide, on the number of clients served, by provider and by assistance type. The legislative evaluation and accountability program must continue to supplement the portal with additional information as its workload can accommodate.

(2) The department of commerce must provide the legislative evaluation and accountability program with immediate access to all information and systems necessary to develop the portal and provide any assistance the legislative evaluation and accountability program may require. The legislative evaluation and accountability program may contract, in whole or in part, the development of the portal.

(3) By September 1, 2021, the legislative evaluation and accountability program must provide a project implementation plan report to the legislature.

(4) By September 1, 2022, the legislative evaluation and accountability program must make the portal available to the public.

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