

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6212

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Housing Stability & Affordability, February 3, 2020

Title: An act relating to the authority of counties, cities, and towns to exceed statutory property tax limitations for the purpose of financing affordable housing for very low-income households and low-income households.

Brief Description: Concerning the authority of counties, cities, and towns to exceed statutory property tax limitations for the purpose of financing affordable housing for very low-income households and low-income households.

Sponsors: Senators Das, Keiser, Lovelett, Zeiger, Dhingra, Saldaña, Nguyen, Kuderer, Warnick, Randall, Darneille, Van De Wege, Conway and Wilson, C.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Housing Stability & Affordability: 1/17/20, 2/03/20 [DP-WM].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands use of the affordable housing property tax levy to include affordable homeownership, owner-occupied home repair, and foreclosure prevention programs for low-income households with income at or below 80 percent of median income.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING STABILITY & AFFORDABILITY

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Kuderer, Chair; Das, Vice Chair; Zeiger, Ranking Member; Fortunato, Assistant Ranking Member; Darneille, Saldaña and Warnick.

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7428)

Background: Counties and cities may impose an affordable housing property tax levy to finance affordable housing for very-low income households. The additional regular property tax levy is up to \$0.50 per \$1,000 assessed valuation each year for up to ten consecutive years, and must be approved by a majority of voters of the taxing district. Very-low income households are defined as 50 percent or less of the county's median income.

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.

Summary of Bill: Funds from the affordable housing property tax levy may be used for affordable homeownership, owner-occupied home repair, and foreclosure prevention programs for low-income households. Low-income households are defined as a single person, family, or unrelated persons living together whose income is at or below 80 percent of the median income, with adjustments for household size, for the county where the taxing district is located.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on October 1, 2020.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: With the current housing crisis, the state needs additional affordable housing tools that are flexible to address the variety of needs in each community. Homeownership is more than having a healthy place to live, it can break the cycle of poverty. Local governments need more tools to help low-income families in their community, and the changes in the bill would allow for assistance with home repair and foreclosure prevention. Most existing funding sources for affordable housing serve those under 60 percent of the area median income. The expanded uses of the funds could be used to better leverage existing local funds to address the shortage of affordable housing in Washington.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Mona Das, Prime Sponsor; Jason Gauthier, Habitat for Humanity of Tacoma & Pierce County; Denise Nicole Johnson, citizen; Amanda DeShazo, Tacoma-Pierce County Affordable Housing Consortium.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.