HOUSE BILL REPORT
HB 1183

As Reported by House Committee On:
Housing, Human Services & Veterans
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to creating the home sharing support grant program.

Brief Description: Creating the home sharing support grant program.

Sponsors: Representatives Caldier and Johnson, J..

Brief History:
Committee Activity:
Housing, Human Services & Veterans: 1/21/21, 2/11/21 [DP];
Appropriations: 2/19/21, 2/22/21 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Home Sharing Support Grant Program (Program) in the Department of Commerce.

- Allows homeless housing and assistance surcharges to be used to fund the Program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, HUMAN SERVICES & VETERANS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Peterson, Chair; Taylor, Vice Chair; Caldier, Ranking Minority Member; Gilday, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Barkis, Bateman, Chopp, Leavitt and Thai.

Staff: Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

Background:

Homeless Housing and Assistance Surcharges.

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

The state and local homeless housing programs receive funding from the homeless housing and assistance surcharge collected by each county auditor when a document is recorded. The surcharge is applied in addition to any authorized surcharges, as well as any administrative fees collected by the county auditor. Two surcharges are collected when a document is recorded: a $62 surcharge and an $8 surcharge.

For the $62 surcharge, approximately 60 percent is distributed to counties for their homeless housing programs. The remainder is distributed to the state to be used as follows:
- The Department of Commerce (Commerce) may use up to 12.5 percent for managing the state homeless housing program, including the costs of creating the statewide homeless housing strategic plan, measuring performance, providing technical assistance to local governments, and managing the homeless housing grant program.
- Of the remaining 87.5 percent, at least 45 percent must be set aside for private rental housing payments and the remainder are to be used by Commerce to:
    1. provide housing and shelter for homeless people; and
    2. fund the homeless housing grant program.

For the $8 surcharge, 90 percent is distributed to counties for their homeless housing programs and 10 percent is distributed to the state. The funds distributed to the state may be used by Commerce for managing the state homeless housing program, including the costs of creating the statewide homeless housing strategic plan, measuring performance, providing technical assistance to local governments, and managing the homeless housing grant program.

Commerce may also use funds to:
- provide housing and shelter for homeless people; and
- fund the homeless housing grant program.

Summary of Bill:

Home Sharing Support Grant Program.
The Home Sharing Support Grant Program (Program) is created in Commerce for the purpose of providing financial support to nonprofit organizations that operate home sharing programs. Commerce must manage, oversee, and evaluate Program applications and award grants annually. Commerce may establish application procedures and criteria for the receipt of grants. Grants may be used only for administrative costs of home sharing programs.

"Home sharing program" refers to a program operated by a nonprofit organization in which the organization assists homeless persons, or persons at risk of becoming homeless, with locating individuals seeking to share their residences, and facilitates meetings between program applicants who may choose to enter into a home sharing arrangement on mutually agreeable terms. Services provided by home sharing programs may include, but are not limited to, screening of program applicants for compatibility, background checks of

applicants, case management, and conflict resolution.

<u>Homeless Housing and Assistance Surcharges</u>.
Commerce may use funds from the homeless housing and assistance surcharges to fund the Program:
- For the $62 surcharge, the distribution of state funds by percentage remains the same except that Commerce must use remaining funds to fund the Program in addition to other allowable uses.
- For the $8 surcharge, funding the Program is included among allowable uses of state funds.

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Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Home sharing is one of the least expensive ways to house someone who is homeless. On average, it costs around $1,000 per person to provide home sharing, which is incredibly inexpensive compared to other housing programs. Home sharing programs have struggled during the pandemic, but they are an innovative approach that should be supported.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) Shared housing is an important strategy for housing those living outside or at risk of living outside. Counties can already use available funding for this type of programming. There are a limited number of these types of programs operating now. Funds from document recording fees move from the state to county governments to help them implement local programming. Counties are in the driver's seat for coming up with plans for how they will distribute those dollars and Commerce's role is to track the outcomes of that spending. Commerce can implement this type of program, but in doing so outside of the county system they would remove decision making from the system that the county runs.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Caldier, prime sponsor.

(Other) Dave Pringle, Department of Commerce.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 32 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Bergquist, Vice Chair; Gregerson, Vice Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Stokesbary, Ranking Minority Member; Chambers, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Corry, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; MacEwen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boehnke, Caldier, Chopp, Cody, Dolan, Dye, Fitzgibbon, Frame, Hansen, Harris, Hoff, Jacobsen, Johnson, J., Lekanoff, Pollet, Rude, Ryu, Schmick, Senn, Springer, Steele, Stonier, Sullivan and Tharinger.

Staff: Jessica Van Horne (786-7288).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee On Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee On Housing, Human Services & Veterans:

No new changes were recommended.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Home sharing programs support homeowners who voluntarily open their homes to individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The organizations who operate these programs screen participants and help mitigate any issues between homeowners and the individuals sharing their homes. Home sharing programs are innovative and extremely cost effective. Programs have had difficulty obtaining state funding. Current programs have had difficulties maintaining funding. This bill will help them receive funds to continue operating these programs.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) The Department of Commerce (Department) has worked with the sponsor on this bill. Home sharing programs are an important part of the overall strategy to address homelessness and can be a helpful tool in getting individuals indoors. The Department currently does not provide specific guidelines for home sharing programs, but home sharing programs are an allowable use of existing grant funding. A few home sharing programs have received state or county funding in the past. If this bill moves forward, the Department is ready to implement it.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Caldier, prime sponsor.

(Other) Dave Pringle, Department of Commerce.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.