
Housing, Human Services & Veterans Committee

SB 5825

Brief Description: Establishing a rental and vacant property registration program work group.

Sponsors: Senators Kuderer, Das, Lovelett, Nobles and Wilson, C..

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Commerce to convene a work group to make recommendations on creating a statewide rental and vacant property registration program.

Hearing Date: 2/22/22

Staff: Lena Langer (786-7192).

Background:

The Residential Landlord-Tenant Act (RLTA) regulates the creation of residential tenancies and the relationship between landlords and tenants of residential dwelling units. Under the RLTA, local municipalities may require landlords to provide a certificate of inspection as a business license condition to operate as a landlord. A local municipality does not need to have a business license or registration program to require that landlords provide a certificate of inspection. A local municipality may only require a certificate of inspection on a rental property once every three years.

Numerous local municipalities throughout the state have exercised this authority in establishing rental housing safety, inspection, or registration programs, with many having a goal to ensure that all rental housing units comply with specific life and safety standards and provide a safe place for tenants to live. Some local municipalities have implemented a business license

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requirement for landlords.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Commerce (Commerce) must convene a work group to make recommendations on creating a statewide rental and vacant property registration program for inventorying tenant-occupied and potentially available rental housing. The work group must include relevant stakeholders, including, but not limited to:

- tenant representatives;
- multifamily housing representatives;
- housing developer representatives; and
- representatives from cities and counties.

The work group must meet at least three times. The work must evaluate:

- current local rental property registration and landlord licensing programs, and strategies to synthesize and collect registration information from such programs into a statewide database;
- which property and landlord information should be collected and disclosed in a database;
- the need to implement a rental and vacant property registration requirement;
- the imposition of registration or licensing fees and fee amounts, use of revenue, and appropriate penalties;
- which types of housing units should be exempted from a statewide registration requirement;
- the use of a statewide registration program database to provide rental assistance program information to tenants and landlords;
- the feasibility of requiring landlords to report rent rate data as part of a registration program; and
- any other considerations discussed by the work group.

Commerce must issue a final report with any work group findings or recommendations to the Legislature by December 1, 2022.

The section requiring Commerce to convene a work group expires January 1, 2023.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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