

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5825

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

Title: An act relating to establishing a rental and vacant property registration program work group.

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

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

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Housing, Human Services & Veterans: 2/22/22, 2/24/22 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Bill
(As Amended By Committee)

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

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, HUMAN SERVICES & VETERANS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Peterson, Chair; Taylor, Vice Chair; Bateman, Chopp, Donaghy and Leavitt.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Gilday, Ranking Minority Member; Barkis, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Jacobsen.

Staff: Lena Langer (786-7192).

Background:

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 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 requirement for landlords.

Summary of Amended 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 group 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 June 1, 2023.

The section requiring Commerce to convene a work group expires June 1, 2024.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The deadline by which Commerce must issue a final report, including any work group findings and recommendations, to the Legislature is changed from December 1, 2022, to June 1, 2023. The section requiring Commerce to convene a work group to make recommendations on creating a statewide rental and vacant property registration program expires on June 1, 2024, rather than January 1, 2023.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on February 24, 2022.

Effective Date of Amended 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) None.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.