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**SENATE BILL 5662**

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**State of Washington**

**67th Legislature**

**2022 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Kuderer, Trudeau, Hasegawa, Lovelett, Nguyen, Saldaña, Stanford, and C. Wilson; by request of Office of the Governor

Prefiled 01/05/22. Read first time 01/10/22. Referred to Committee on Housing & Local Government.

1 AN ACT Relating to intergovernmental coordination to address  
2 transitioning persons encamped on state public rights-of-way to  
3 permanent housing solutions; adding a new section to chapter 43.20A  
4 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 43.185C RCW; and creating a new  
5 section.

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

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that many  
8 individuals experience homelessness as a result of a lack of  
9 available and affordable housing, increasing rents, insufficient  
10 income, complex and long-term behavioral health conditions, or  
11 disabilities, or as a result of domestic violence. Every night  
12 thousands of Washingtonians go to sleep in places not meant for human  
13 habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, and  
14 spaces along the public rights-of-way. More than 1,750 unsanctioned  
15 encampments exist on public rights-of-way managed by state agencies.  
16 Public right-of-way encampments present increasing concerns for the  
17 health and safety of those encamped in this space, the public, and  
18 those workers who are responsible to maintain and improve public  
19 lands.

20 (2) (a) The legislature intends that persons experiencing  
21 homelessness be treated with dignity, care, and compassion. The

1 legislature recognizes that the primary drivers of homelessness stem  
2 from a lack of investment in affordable housing, behavioral health,  
3 and other supports that provide economic stability.

4 (b) Furthermore, the legislature intends that local jurisdictions  
5 and providers engage persons experiencing homelessness with teams of  
6 multidisciplinary experts focused on trauma-informed care and  
7 provision of services with the goal of transitioning persons  
8 experiencing homelessness into permanent housing solutions. The  
9 legislature further intends that every effort must be made to avoid  
10 furthering existing trauma to persons experiencing homelessness by  
11 causing displacement that does not result in a transition to  
12 permanent housing. To that end, the legislature intends that a  
13 multidisciplinary team within state government be established to  
14 coordinate across state agencies, and collaborate with local  
15 governments, nonprofit organizations, and persons encamped on state  
16 rights-of-way to find housing solutions.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.20A  
18 RCW to read as follows:

19 (1) There is created the office of intergovernmental coordination  
20 on public right-of-way homeless encampments within the department.

21 (2) Activities of the office must be carried out by a director  
22 and supervised by the secretary of the department or his or her  
23 designee.

24 (3) The office is responsible for leading efforts under this  
25 section to coordinate the spectrum of ongoing and future funding,  
26 policy, and practice efforts related to reducing the number of  
27 persons in unsanctioned encampments on state public rights-of-way.  
28 This includes coordination across state agencies, through local  
29 governments, and with persons in unsanctioned encampments on state  
30 public rights-of-way with the goal of reducing the number of encamped  
31 persons through transition to a permanent housing solution so that  
32 the encampment is closed with the site either restored to original  
33 conditions or preserved for future use.

34 (4) The office shall establish:

35 (a) Regional coordination teams charged with state agency, local  
36 government, and nonprofit organization collaboration on identifying  
37 or creating solutions that bring persons encamped on public rights-  
38 of-way into permanent housing to include traditional and  
39 nontraditional housing options. Collaboration partners will provide

1 regional knowledge and support to address specific and unique  
2 regional needs. Collaboration partners may include the health care  
3 authority, the health benefit exchange, the department of health, the  
4 department of transportation, the department of ecology, the  
5 department of commerce, the department of veterans' affairs, tribal  
6 authorities, counties and cities, and private not-for-profit  
7 agencies;

8 (b) Regional outreach teams charged with outreach with the  
9 homeless population. Each team will include state, local, and private  
10 partners in addition to a core team from the department. Outreach  
11 teams are part of an intergovernmental team for initial assessment to  
12 identify and target individual needs, such as medical issues and  
13 treatment, mental health treatment, acquisition of medication,  
14 identification acquisition (such as birth certificates and social  
15 security cards), poly-substance abuse treatment, housing needs, need  
16 for immediate sheltering, need for social services (including  
17 supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, women, infants,  
18 and children benefits, supplemental security income acquisition,  
19 medicaid, medicare, and social security benefits), and reengagement  
20 with family and relatives; and

21 (c) A data analysis team charged with data infrastructure  
22 development to create a performance monitoring infrastructure,  
23 establish a baseline, and then track outcomes for individuals  
24 experiencing homelessness in locales around encampments on public  
25 rights-of-way. The team shall also estimate the impact on client  
26 outcomes and services as well as estimate public program cost  
27 savings, where applicable. The data analysis team must provide a  
28 report to the governor and appropriate legislative committees by  
29 December 1, 2023, and annually thereafter.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.185C  
31 RCW to read as follows:

32 The department shall collaborate with the office of  
33 intergovernmental coordination on public right-of-way homeless  
34 encampments created in section 2 of this act on developing and  
35 implementing a statewide effort to reduce the number of persons  
36 encamped on the state public rights-of-way by transitioning to  
37 permanent housing solutions. The department shall use any funds  
38 appropriated by the legislature for this purpose to provide grants to  
39 local governments or nonprofit organizations to meet the individual

1 needs of persons encamped on state public rights-of-way in order to  
2 facilitate their transition to permanent housing.

--- **END** ---