

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 1046

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As Passed Senate, April 10, 2023

**Title:** An act relating to expanding housing supply by supporting the ability of public housing authorities to finance affordable housing developments by rebenchmarking area median income limits.

**Brief Description:** Expanding housing supply by supporting the ability of public housing authorities to finance affordable housing developments by rebenchmarking area median income limits.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Walen, Leavitt, Ryu, Bateman, Peterson, Doglio, Reeves, Wylie, Bergquist, Springer, Kloba, Santos and Ormsby.

**Brief History:** Passed House: 1/25/23, 96-0.

**Committee Activity:** Housing: 2/01/23, 2/10/23 [DP].

**Floor Activity:** Passed Senate: 4/10/23, 49-0.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Increases the area median income limits on a public housing authority financed, low-income housing development to 80 percent.

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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kuderer, Chair; Frame, Vice Chair; Fortunato, Ranking Member; Braun, Cleveland, Gildon, Saldaña, Shewmake, Trudeau and Wilson, J..

**Staff:** Melissa Van Gorkom (786-7491)

**Background:** Public housing authorities (PHA) are public bodies established to provide safe and affordable rental housing for low-income individuals and families. A PHA must

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be activated by a resolution of the governing body of a city or county, and a PHA's boundaries are coextensive with the creating city or county, unless established as a joint housing authority comprised of two or more jurisdictions. With some exceptions, PHAs are governed by a five-member commission appointed by a city's mayor or a county's commissioners.

PHAs primarily serve as a conduit for federally funded housing programs, such as tenant-based vouchers and publicly owned housing. PHAs also own and operate other rental housing, such as emergency and transitional housing, senior housing, and properties funded through low-income housing tax credits. PHAs have no taxing authority.

A PHA may finance a low-income housing development if certain conditions are met. In general, the development must be subject to a 20-year agreement that requires 50 percent of the dwelling units or 50 percent of the interior space of the development, whichever produces the greater number of units, to be made available to low-income households. For mobile home parks, 50 percent of the total number of mobile home lots in the park must be made available to low-income households. The low-income dwelling units or mobile home lots of a PHA financed development must be rented to persons whose income does not exceed:

- 50 percent of the area median income, if owned by a for-profit entity; and
- 60 percent of the area median income, if owned by a governmental entity or a nonprofit organization.

**Summary of Bill:** The low-income dwelling units or mobile home lots of a PHA financed development owned by a for profit entity, government entity, or a nonprofit organization must be rented to persons whose income does not exceed 80 percent of the area median income.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: This update would greatly enhance our ability to partner with private entities to bring newly built affordable housing to our region. Rebenchmarking AMI to 80 percent recognizes that today's affordable housing crisis impacts a broader swath of the public than before. With the cost of interest rates, construction and land, financing housing of any type is very difficult and not financially feasible unless the AMI is increased to 80 percent. This bill allow housing authorities to leverage their size, credit rating, bonding capacity, and full faith and credit in these partnerships to finance housing. By providing some amount of financing housing

authorities can negotiation longer and deeper affordability requirements for the housing and the inclusion of a purchase option that would provide the opportunity to acquire the property in the future. Native communities have and continue to experience housing instability and we've seen success of joint efforts to build affordable housing and provide housing at a reduced cost for community members.

OTHER: Concerned that it causes confusion and misdirected needs calling market rate housing affordable housing. Increasing to 80 percent AMI can cause displacement of a large amount of the most vulnerable population from public housing and mobile home communities. Tax incentives should only be given to those committing to preserve housing for 50 and 30 percent AMI. We need to retain low and extremely low income people in this bill and support protecting housing that supports those who are most vulnerable.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Angela Rozmyn, Natural and Built Environments; Dan Watson, King County Housing Authority; Andrew Calkins, King County Housing Authority; Mercedes White Calf, NAYA-Native American Youth & Family Center Action Fund.

OTHER: Stacey Valenzuela.

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