

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5553

---

---

As Passed Senate, February 27, 2023

**Title:** An act relating to authorizing standards for temporary emergency shelters for local adoption.

**Brief Description:** Authorizing standards for temporary emergency shelters for local adoption.

**Sponsors:** Senators Lovelett, Robinson, Conway, Nguyen, Nobles, Wellman and Wilson, C..

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs: 2/07/23, 2/14/23 [DP].

**Floor Activity:** Passed Senate: 2/27/23, 48-0.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires the State Building Code Council to adopt standards for temporary emergency shelters to be made available for local adoption.

---

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, LAND USE & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Lovelett, Chair; Salomon, Vice Chair; Torres, Ranking Member; Kauffman and Short.

**Staff:** Maggie Douglas (786-7279)

**Background:** Temporary Shelters. Temporary tent or building encampments provide shelter for homeless individuals and may rotate between various host properties, with some employing managers or a security team, and imposing a code of conduct for residents. Religious organizations may host or offer shelter or housing to persons experiencing

---

*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.*

homelessness on property the organizations own or control, with limitations on the ability of local governments to regulate such shelters. Local governments may regulate conditions necessary to protect public health and safety, so long as they do not substantially burden the decisions or actions of the religious organization. Some local governments have enacted regulations that outline additional rules and procedures related to temporary homeless encampments.

State Building Code. The State Building Code (SBC) establishes minimum performance standards and requirements for construction and construction materials in the state, consistent with accepted standards of engineering, fire, and life safety. The SBC comprises a number of model codes and standards, developed and published by international and national organizations, which are adopted by reference in the State Building Code Act (act). Model codes and standards adopted in the act include the International Building Code, the International Residential Code, and the Uniform Plumbing Code Standards.

The State Building Code Council (SBCC) is responsible for adopting, amending, and maintaining the SBC. The SBCC must regularly review updated versions of the model codes and adopt a process for reviewing proposed statewide and local amendments.

**Summary of Bill:** By July 1, 2026, the SBCC must adopt, by rule, standards for temporary emergency shelters and make them available for local adoption.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**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: Many local jurisdictions encounter challenges when authorizing temporary shelters in their communities because of unclear building code standards, such as occupancy or electrical standards. This bill requires the State Building Code Council to define temporary shelters in their next code cycle. This would provide local governments the clarity they need when constructing or authorizing temporary shelters in their communities.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Liz Lovelett, Prime Sponsor.

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