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**SENATE BILL 5615**

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**State of Washington**

**68th Legislature**

**2023 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Valdez, Hasegawa, Hunt, Kuderer, Lovelett, Nguyen, and Nobles

Read first time 01/30/23. Referred to Committee on Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs.

1 AN ACT Relating to enabling local governments to plan and adopt  
2 programs to stabilize and control rents; creating a new section; and  
3 repealing RCW 35.21.830 and 36.01.130.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the  
6 prohibitions on cities and counties from adopting policies and  
7 ordinances to stabilize rents and provide renters with the ability to  
8 plan for housing security harms community health and has contributed  
9 to crisis levels of homelessness and community displacement. Forty  
10 percent of residents in the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue metropolitan  
11 statistical area paid over 30 percent of their income in rent in  
12 2022, and 20 percent paid over half of their income in rent. Rents in  
13 the greater Seattle area skyrocketed by 69 percent between 2010 and  
14 2018. In total, rents have gone up 255 percent in the two decades  
15 from 1998 to 2018. Rent increases at similar levels have occurred  
16 statewide and continue. The legislature finds that senior residents  
17 and others on fixed and lower incomes are increasingly displaced and  
18 unable to plan for housing security due to the local lack of  
19 authority to adopt innovative programs to provide rent security and  
20 stabilization.

1       The legislature further finds that it directed all cities and  
2 counties planning under the growth management act to plan for housing  
3 affordable to all economic segments of their community. However, the  
4 legislature finds that barring cities and counties from adopting rent  
5 control or stabilization programs undermines this important planning  
6 goal. The legislature further finds that city and county councils are  
7 best suited to determine if rent stabilization programs should be  
8 adopted in their jurisdiction and to design such programs based on  
9 their community's unique circumstances.

10       Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to repeal  
11 prohibitions on rent control and stabilization, which will allow  
12 cities and counties to develop programs that reflect their local  
13 housing needs and create housing security for all economic segments  
14 in their community.

15       NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 2.**   The following acts or parts of acts are  
16 each repealed:

17       (1) RCW 35.21.830 (Controls on rent for residential structures—  
18 Prohibited—Exceptions) and 1981 c 75 s 1; and

19       (2) RCW 36.01.130 (Controls on rent for residential structures—  
20 Prohibited—Exceptions) and 1991 c 363 s 43 & 1981 c 75 s 2.

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