

Weekly Legislative Update: **Housing/Homelessness**

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Overview

Monday, February 5, is the cutoff for bills to move from the fiscal committees and they will die if they haven't been passed by the end of the day Monday. Some of the League's priority bills are pending the work this weekend and on Monday. Some have already died for lack of movement by this time.

Bills We Are Following

HB 1892 Concerning the workforce housing accelerator program. This bill, with 41 sponsors, would establish a program within the Department of Commerce (DOC) under which loans may be issued to eligible organizations to assist with the development of housing for low-income households. It passed the House Housing Committee as a substitute and had a public hearing on January 25 in the House Capital Budget Committee. It was scheduled for executive session on February 2 but the outcome has not yet been posted.

HB 1998/SB 5901 Concerning co-living housing. This bill would authorize shared housing where residents each have their own bedroom and share living and kitchen space, in any area where multi-family housing is permitted. This type of housing, formerly considered "boarding houses", has been prohibited in many jurisdictions but could offer lower cost housing for those who need it. **HB 1998** passed out of the House Housing Committee as a substitute bill and has now been referred to the House Rules Committee. **SB 5901** has passed the Local Government, Land Use and Tribal Affairs Committee on January 25 and has been referred to the Senate Rules Committee.

HB 2008 Creating a task force on housing cost driver analysis. This bill would create a task force to ascertain the primary factors driving housing costs in Washington. It passed the House Housing Committee as a substitute bill and has been referred to the House Appropriations Committee. It has not had a public hearing in that committee so has likely died.

HB 2114 Improving housing stability for tenants subject to the residential landlord-tenant act and the manufactured/mobile home landlord-tenant act. (Called the Rent Stabilization Bill) This bill would limit rent and fee increases, require notice of rent and fee increases, limit fees and deposits, establish a landlord resource center and associated services, authorize tenant lease termination, create parity between lease types, and provide for attorney general enforcement. **HB 2114** passed the House Housing Committee and was referred to the House

Appropriations Committee, where it had a public hearing and was scheduled for executive session on Saturday, February 3.

HB 2160 Promoting community and transit-oriented housing development. These bills would make a number of changes to regulatory requirements to facilitate more development of multi-family housing near transit facilities. **HB 2160** passed the House Housing Committee as a substitute and has been referred to the House Capital Budget Committee, where it had a public hearing and was passed out of committee as a new substitute bill on February 2. It will go next to Rules Committee.

HB 2270 Creating a Washington state department of housing. This bill, which has 48 co-sponsors, would direct the Office of Financial Management to contract for a study to help facilitate the transition of state housing programs to a new state agency and identify gaps in current state housing programs. This would recognize the importance of housing in this period when it is so limited. The bill passed out of the House Housing Committee as a substitute and had a public hearing on February 3 in the House Appropriations Committee. It is scheduled for executive session on February 5.

Bills We Are Watching

HB 2474 Concerning compliance with siting requirements for transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, indoor emergency shelters, and indoor emergency housing. This bill would put the State Department of Commerce in a role of monitoring how local jurisdictions permit transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, indoor emergency shelters, or indoor emergency housing. It would authorize Commerce to develop all zoning regulations for any zone within a city that allows residential housing units or hotels until a city ordinance found in violation of housing statutes is amended. This bill is scheduled for executive session in the House Appropriations Committee on February 5.

HB 2464 Concerning the development of new manufactured/mobile homes and new manufactured/mobile home communities. This bill would allow development of manufactured/mobile home communities in rural areas. While additional manufactured/mobile homes would increase the supply of affordable homes, these should not be encouraged as community developments outside the urban growth areas. This bill is now in the House Rules Committee.

Bills That Have Died

HB 2234 Concerning energy assistance for low-income households. This bill would require all electric utilities to provide one or more programs and funding available for energy assistance to low-income households. It had a public hearing in the House Environment & Energy Committee but did not move out of that committee by the cutoff on January 31 so has died.

HB 2276/SB 6191 Increasing the supply of affordable and workforce housing. This bill would establish new permanent funding for affordable housing. It would:

- Increase the "ceiling" for the Tier 1 1.1 percent state real estate excise (REET) from \$525, 000 to \$750, 000 beginning January 1, 2025
- Impose a new Real Estate Transfer tax (RETT) of 1% on the value of the selling price over \$3.025 million
- Direct the RETT revenue to be divided between accounts currently receiving REET moneys and the Washington Housing Trust Fund, Apple Health and Homes Account, the Affordable Housing for All Account, the new Developmental Disabilities Housing and Services Account, and the new Housing Stability Account.
- Create a REET exemption for certain sales or transfers of properties that qualify for a property tax exemption that will be used for a community purpose.

New in 2024, **HB 2276**, with 40 co-sponsors, had a public hearing on January 18 in the House Finance Committee but has not been scheduled for executive session and therefore has died. **SB 6191** had a public hearing on January 25 in the Senate Ways & Means Committee but has not been scheduled for executive session and therefore has also died.

HB 2457 Concerning emergency housing for domestic violence survivors. This bill would support victims of domestic violence, many of whom have challenges finding housing, by creating a Domestic Violence Emergency Housing Voucher Program to assist in obtaining stable housing for people fleeing from intimate partner violence; directing the Department of Commerce to establish a grant program to acquire or renovate housing units for emergency housing for individuals who are at risk from intimate partner violence; and creating a task force to propose recommendations to increase the supply of short-term housing for survivors fleeing intimate partner violence. The bill has a public hearing on January 29 in the House Housing Committee but was not passed out of that committee by the cutoff on January 31 so has died.

SB 5975 Authorizing use of the housing trust fund and other legislative appropriations to finance social housing. This bill would establish a program with the housing trust fund for housing on land that is publicly owned in perpetuity and available to households of any income level, including low-income and moderate-income households. This bill had a public hearing in the Senate Housing Committee but never had an executive session, so it died in committee.

SB 5961 Companion bill to **HB 2114 the rent stabilization bill**, was not passed out of the Senate Housing Committee by the cutoff of January 31 so has died.

SB 6024 Companion bill to **HB 2160 Promoting community and transit-oriented housing** development, had a public hearing in the Senate Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs Committee but was not passed out of committee by the January 31 cutoff so has died.

Resource Information *(cont'd, next page)*

The League belongs to a coalition, the WA Low Income Housing Alliance (WLIHA). Read more about housing issues at their website [here](#).

How You Can Be Involved

- Respond to Action Alerts in the legislative newsletter. These will primarily appear in the section of the newsletter related to transportation.
- Contact [Cynthia Stewart](#), Housing and Homelessness Issue Chair, to receive additional information.