

Weekly Legislative Update: **Housing/Homelessness**

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Bills Needing Action This Week

*Remember, only authorized members can speak for the League; the Issue Chairs will do that, so **please leave the "Organization" box blank**. A more powerful influence is many voices speaking for themselves rather than many voices speaking for the League.*

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 is now scheduled for public hearing on Thursday, January 25 in the House Capital Budget Committee on Thursday, January 25 at 1:30 PM.

 **Sign in PRO on HB 1892 [here](#) before 12:30 PM on Thursday, January 25.**

HB 2160/SB 6024 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 is scheduled to have a public hearing on Thursday, January 25 at 1:30 PM. SB 6024 has had a public hearing in the Senate Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs Committee but has not been scheduled for executive session yet.

 **Sign in PRO for HB 2160 [here](#) before 12:30 PM on Thursday, January 25.**

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 yet been scheduled for executive session. SB 6191 is scheduled for public hearing on Thursday, January 25, at 4:00 PM in the Senate Ways & Means Committee.

 **Sign in PRO on SB 6191 [here](#) before 3:00 PM on Thursday, January 25.**

Overview

This supplemental short session will not generate as much legislation as last year related to housing, but key legislators have indicated that they want to keep the momentum up to address the housing problems and homelessness crisis.

The Governor's supplemental budget included a great deal of additional funding for affordable housing, including nearly \$107 million for capital, including land trusts; \$24 million for supportive programs; and \$10 million for the right of way initiative to move unhoused campers from highway rights of way.

Legislators have additional policy proposals, including those listed below.

Bills We Are Following

This is a limited list, which will be expanded next week.

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 is now scheduled for public hearing on Thursday, January 25 in the House Capital Budget Committee on Thursday, January 25 at 1:30 PM.

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 on January 11 and has been referred to the House Rules Committee. SB 5901 had a public hearing in the Senate Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs Committee on January 9 and is now scheduled for executive session on Thursday, January 25.

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.

HB 2114/SB 5961 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 on January 16 and has been referred to the House Appropriations Committee. SB 5961 had a public hearing on January 12 in the Senate Housing Committee and is scheduled for executive session on Wednesday, January 24.

HB 2160/SB 6024 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 is scheduled to have a public hearing on Thursday, January 25 at 1:30 PM. SB 6024 has had a public hearing in the Senate Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs Committee but has not been scheduled for executive session yet.

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 on January 18 and is scheduled for executive session on January 25.

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 yet been scheduled for executive session. SB 6191 is scheduled for public hearing on Thursday, January 25, at 4:00 PM in the Senate Ways & Means Committee.

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 on January 19 and is scheduled for executive session on January 2.

Resource Information

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.