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**SENATE BILL 5900**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Miloscia and Hasegawa

AN ACT Relating to the hosting of the homeless by religious organizations; and amending RCW 36.01.290, 35.21.915, and 35A.21.360.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 36.01.290 and 2010 c 175 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) A religious organization may host temporary encampments for the homeless on property owned or controlled by the religious organization whether within buildings located on the property or elsewhere on the property outside of buildings.

(2) A county may not enact an ordinance or regulation or take any other action that:

(a) Imposes conditions other than those necessary to protect public health and safety and that do not substantially burden the decisions or actions of a religious organization regarding the location of housing or shelter for homeless persons on property owned by the religious organization;

(b) Requires a religious organization to obtain insurance pertaining to the liability of a municipality with respect to homeless persons housed on property owned by a religious organization or otherwise requires the religious organization to indemnify the municipality against such liability; ((~~or~~))

(c) Imposes permit fees in excess of the actual costs associated with the review and approval of the required permit applications;

(d) Limits a religious organization's availability to host a rotating, established tent encampment to fewer than eight months during any calendar year;

(e) Limits a religious organization's hosting term to fewer than four months unless consented to by that religious organization for a specific instance;

(f) Limits the number of simultaneous religious organization hostings within the same municipality to one religious organization hosting during any given period of time; or

(g) Limits a religious organization's availability to host safe parking efforts at its on-site parking lot, including limitations on any other church-sponsored uses and the parking available to support such uses during the hosting, except for limitations that are in accord with the following criteria that would govern if enacted by local ordinance:

(i) No fewer than one space may be devoted to safe parking per twenty on-site parking spaces;

(ii) Restroom access must be provided either within the buildings on the property or through use of portable facilities;

(iii) If no managing agency oversees the safe parking, the host religious organization must act as managing agency to assure sex offender checks are completed, inform vehicle residents how to comply with laws regarding the legal status of vehicles and drivers, and provide a written code of conduct consistent with area standards.

(3) For the purposes of this section, "religious organization" means the federally protected practice of a recognized religious assembly, school, or institution that owns or controls real property.

(4) An appointed or elected public official, public employee, or public agency as defined in RCW 4.24.470 is immune from civil liability for (a) damages arising from the permitting decisions for a temporary encampment for the homeless as provided in this section and (b) any conduct or unlawful activity that may occur as a result of the temporary encampment for the homeless as provided in this section.

**Sec.**  RCW 35.21.915 and 2010 c 175 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) A religious organization may host temporary encampments for the homeless on property owned or controlled by the religious organization whether within buildings located on the property or elsewhere on the property outside of buildings.

(2) A city or town may not enact an ordinance or regulation or take any other action that:

(a) Imposes conditions other than those necessary to protect public health and safety and that do not substantially burden the decisions or actions of a religious organization regarding the location of housing or shelter for homeless persons on property owned by the religious organization;

(b) Requires a religious organization to obtain insurance pertaining to the liability of a municipality with respect to homeless persons housed on property owned by a religious organization or otherwise requires the religious organization to indemnify the municipality against such liability; ((~~or~~))

(c) Imposes permit fees in excess of the actual costs associated with the review and approval of the required permit applications;

(d) Limits a religious organization's availability to host a rotating, established tent encampment to fewer than eight months during any calendar year;

(e) Limits a religious organization's hosting term to fewer than four months unless consented to by that religious organization for a specific instance;

(f) Limits the number of simultaneous religious organization hostings within the same municipality to one religious organization hosting during any given period of time; or

(g) Limits a religious organization's availability to host safe parking efforts at its on-site parking lot, including limitations on any other church-sponsored uses and the parking available to support such uses during the hosting, except for limitations that are in accord with the following criteria that would govern if enacted by local ordinance:

(i) No fewer than one space may be devoted to safe parking per twenty on-site parking spaces;

(ii) Restroom access must be provided either within the buildings on the property or through use of portable facilities;

(iii) If no managing agency oversees the safe parking, the host religious organization must act as managing agency to assure sex offender checks are completed, inform vehicle residents how to comply with laws regarding the legal status of vehicles and drivers, and provide a written code of conduct consistent with area standards.

(3) For the purposes of this section, "religious organization" means the federally protected practice of a recognized religious assembly, school, or institution that owns or controls real property.

(4) An appointed or elected public official, public employee, or public agency as defined in RCW 4.24.470 is immune from civil liability for (a) damages arising from the permitting decisions for a temporary encampment for the homeless as provided in this section and (b) any conduct or unlawful activity that may occur as a result of the temporary encampment for the homeless as provided in this section.

**Sec.**  RCW 35A.21.360 and 2010 c 175 s 4 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) A religious organization may host temporary encampments for the homeless on property owned or controlled by the religious organization whether within buildings located on the property or elsewhere on the property outside of buildings.

(2) A code city may not enact an ordinance or regulation or take any other action that:

(a) Imposes conditions other than those necessary to protect public health and safety and that do not substantially burden the decisions or actions of a religious organization regarding the location of housing or shelter for homeless persons on property owned by the religious organization;

(b) Requires a religious organization to obtain insurance pertaining to the liability of a municipality with respect to homeless persons housed on property owned by a religious organization or otherwise requires the religious organization to indemnify the municipality against such liability; ((~~or~~))

(c) Imposes permit fees in excess of the actual costs associated with the review and approval of the required permit applications;

(d) Limits a religious organization's availability to host a rotating, established tent encampment to fewer than eight months during any calendar year;

(e) Limits a religious organization's hosting term to fewer than four months unless consented to by that religious organization for a specific instance;

(f) Limits the number of simultaneous religious organization hostings within the same municipality to one religious organization hosting during any given period of time; or

(g) Limits a religious organization's availability to host safe parking efforts at its on-site parking lot, including limitations on any other church-sponsored uses and the parking available to support such uses during the hosting, except for limitations that are in accord with the following criteria that would govern if enacted by local ordinance:

(i) No fewer than one space may be devoted to safe parking per twenty on-site parking spaces;

(ii) Restroom access must be provided either within the buildings on the property or through use of portable facilities;

(iii) If no managing agency oversees the safe parking, the host religious organization must act as managing agency to assure sex offender checks are completed, inform vehicle residents how to comply with laws regarding the legal status of vehicles and drivers, and provide a written code of conduct consistent with area standards.

(3) For the purposes of this section, "religious organization" means the federally protected practice of a recognized religious assembly, school, or institution that owns or controls real property.

(4) An appointed or elected public official, public employee, or public agency as defined in RCW 4.24.470 is immune from civil liability for (a) damages arising from the permitting decisions for a temporary encampment for the homeless as provided in this section and (b) any conduct or unlawful activity that may occur as a result of the temporary encampment for the homeless as provided in this section.

**--- END ---**