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**SENATE BILL 5867**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2022 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Fortunato and Kuderer

AN ACT Relating to compassionate and effective strategies to address the homelessness crisis; adding a new section to chapter 36.01 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that it is imperative that cities and counties of a certain size have the means to provide shelter to the homeless population. The provision of mental health and substance abuse treatment options is an essential service the shelter model should provide as well as security for the residents, staff, and counselors. Whereas the state has allocated money for housing assistance in the housing trust fund, the legislature also finds that such shelters should be funded utilizing that money. By establishing such a shelter, local governments can establish tools to support people experiencing homelessness in confronting mental health and substance abuse problems as well as providing safe secure spaces for sleeping.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 36.01 RCW to read as follows:

(1)(a) Every county and each city with a population over 50,000 may establish and operate an emergency overnight shelter site in its respective jurisdiction. Counties and each eligible city within the county's geographic boundary must coordinate to ensure that there are enough cumulative shelter beds to accommodate, at a minimum, the sheltered and unsheltered portions of the county's most recent point-in-time homeless count.

(b) Counties and each eligible city must make available employment, mental health, and drug counseling services at each shelter location pursuant to funding made available from the housing trust fund. Each shelter may prohibit the possession and use of alcohol and unprescribed drugs on its premises contingent upon evaluation for and compliance with treatment as recommended. Each shelter must provide for security during the shelter's operating hours.

(2) Any county or city establishing a shelter under this section may utilize assistance under the housing trust fund pursuant to RCW 43.185.050. Any application for assistance pursuant to this act must receive priority.

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