

***Education Committee***

***HB 1862***

***Brief Description:*** *Creating a housing allowance program for nonsupervisory educational employees.*

***Sponsors:*** *Representatives Ruderman, Barlean, Keiser, McIntire, Jarrett, McDermott, Conway, Santos, Edwards, Esser, Simpson, Quall, Cairnes, Kagi, Schual-Berke and Edmonds.*

***Brief Summary of Bill***

- *Provides a housing allowance for non-supervisory classified and certificated school employees.*

***Hearing Date:*** *2/12/01*

***Staff:*** *Sydney Forrester (786-7120).*

***Background:***

*In December 2000, the Office of Financial Management reported that: (1) housing costs account for most of the differences in the cost of living among regions in Washington; (2) about two-thirds of teacher households in Washington are homeowner households; (3) estimated differences in annual homeowner costs by school district range from approximately \$8,000 in Klickitat County to more than \$42,000 in King County; and (4) the median annual homeowner cost for the 1998-99 school year was \$16,000.*

*There are state and private programs in Washington providing home-buying assistance for qualified buyers. However, these programs are not specifically designed to assist school employees.*

***Summary of Bill:***

*Eligible districts would be required to provide a housing allowance for actively employed non-supervisory classified and certificated employees. Districts would be deemed eligible-*

*based on housing cost data collected from each district in the state. Districts with housing costs exceeding the statewide median would be eligible for state fund allocations, and also would be authorized to submit to voters a separate excess general fund levy in order to support the state housing allowance amount. The current limitations for excess general fund levies would not apply to levies for the support of the state housing allowance provided by the bill. Housing allowance levies also would not be considered in determining a district's eligibility for local effort assistance.*

*The OSPI would select a nationally recognized entity to collect statistically valid housing cost data. The selection would be subject to approval by legislative fiscal committees and the office of financial management.*

*The state would be required to allocate housing allowance funds for a percentage of the full cost of housing allowances as follows:*

<i>Biennium</i>	<i>State Allocation Required</i>
<i>2001-2003</i>	<i>10% of the full cost</i>
<i>2003-2005</i>	<i>20% of the full cost</i>
<i>2005-2007</i>	<i>40% of the full cost</i>
<i>2007-2009</i>	<i>80% of the full cost</i>

*Individual payment of the housing allowance to non-supervisory classified and certificated employees would be subject to collective bargaining.*

*The housing allowance would not be considered: (1) within the definition of basic education; nor (2) salary for the purposes of current district-level salary limitations and supplemental contracts; nor (3) earnable compensation or compensation earnable for the purposes of retirement benefits.*

***Appropriation:*** *None.*

***Fiscal Note:*** *Not Requested.*

***Effective Date:*** *Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.*