
Housing Committee

HB 2650

Brief Description: Creating programs to end homelessness.

Sponsors: Representatives Miloscia, Pettigrew, Ormsby, Roberts, Hasegawa and Sells.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Changes the name of the Homeless Housing and Assistance Act to the Ending Homelessness Act;
- Requires a Homeless Client Survey and Homeless Client Management System be implemented;
- Provides for additional funding through a General Fund appropriation and the application of an existing surcharge to additional documents; and
- Recodifies homeless-related RCWs and adds performance measures.

Hearing Date: 1/19/06

Staff: Robyn Dupuis (786-7166).

Background:

Homeless Housing Assistance Act Goal

The legislature enacted the Homeless Housing and Assistance Act during the 2005 session, the goal of which is to reduce homelessness by 50 percent statewide and in each county by July 1, 2015. This goal is to be achieved through the identification of, and solutions to, the root causes of homelessness, as well as the implementation of a variety of programs to assist individuals move up the housing continuum from homelessness to stable housing.

Homeless Census

The Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (DCTED) coordinates an annual homeless census to count all homeless individuals in the state. Data collected from the census is used to develop and amend the DCTED's and local government's 10-year Homeless Housing Plans and gauge program success toward interim and ultimate goals.

Homeless Housing and Assistance Program Funding

The Homeless Housing and Assistance Program is funded by a \$10 surcharge for each document recorded by the county auditor with the exception of assignments or substitutions of previously recorded deeds of trust and documents recording a birth, marriage, divorce, or death.

The auditor retains 2 percent of the \$10 surcharge for collection of the fee. Of the remaining funds, 60 percent of the funds remain within the participating county of origin. Any city which assumes responsibility for reducing homelessness within its boundaries receives a percentage of the surcharge equal to the percentage of the city's local portion of the real estate excise tax.

The remaining funds of the total \$10 surcharge is remitted to the CTED for program administration and to be distributed to participating counties and cities through the Homeless Housing Grant Program.

Summary of Bill:

Washington Homeless Client Survey & Homeless Client Management System

By 2009, the DCTED shall implement the Washington Homeless Client Survey which will supplement the current annual Washington Homeless Census. Information about homeless individuals shall be collected and entered into the Washington Homeless Client Management System. Written consent is required from homeless individuals providing information. Confidentiality is required and states and local governments are required to develop privacy plans which shall be audited by the state auditor in 2013.

Local Ending Homelessness Plans and Programs

Local governments must include in their Ending Homelessness Plans, performance measures and results related to efforts to increase living wage employment opportunities, reduce domestic violence and combat escalating housing costs. Local governments shall also identify other leading causes of homelessness and associated performance measures.

DCTED will annually evaluate local Ending Homelessness Programs. Performance measures include the participation of all cities in the county's Homeless Client Census and Client Survey, as well as performance measures included in state and local Ending Homelessness Plans.

Program Funding

The surcharge of \$10 for each document recorded is extended to assignments and substitutions of previously recorded deeds of trust. 70 percent of the surcharge will be remitted to the county for the purpose of the county's, (and cities within a county, if applicable), Ending Homelessness Program.

\$2 million is appropriated from the general fund to the DCTED for the Ending Homelessness Program. \$1.5 million of this funding must be distributed to the participating local governments.

Quality Management Program:

All local governments receiving over \$400,000 annually in funds through the Ending Homelessness Program and the surcharge in RCW 36.22.178 must implement a quality management program and apply to the Washington State Quality Award program every three years.

Homeless Families with Children Plan

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is required to report quarterly to the DCTED on performance measures included in the Homeless Families with Children Plan. The DCTED will annually evaluate the Homeless Families with Children plan and its results.

Homeless Families Services Fund (Washington Families Fund)

The Homeless Families Services program must submit quarterly reports to the DCTED which shall conduct an annual performance evaluation.

DSHS Shelter Assistance Program

DSHS will report to the appropriate legislative committees on performance measures related to the Shelter Assistance Program.

Recodifies statutes dealing with the Affordable Housing Advisory Board, Homeless Families with Children Plan, Homeless Families Services Fund (also known as the Washington Families Fund), and the DSHS Shelter Assistance Program and adds performance measures.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 10, 2006.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.