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**SENATE BILL 6554**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2018 Regular Session**

**By** Senator Miloscia

AN ACT Relating to creating a director of homelessness for certain counties; and adding a new chapter to Title 43 RCW.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "County" means any county with a population of more than one million five hundred thousand.

(2) "Department" means the department of commerce.

(3) "Director" means the director of homelessness created under section 2 of this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The department shall create the position of director of homelessness to be appointed by the governor every four years.

(2) The director shall serve as the department's and each county executive's principal advisor on housing and housing-related issues including, but not limited to, the distribution of document recording fee surcharge funds under chapter 36.22 RCW, and replaces the department's existing boards and task forces on housing and housing-related issues within each county.

(3) The department, in conjunction with the Washington state housing finance commission, the department of children, youth, and families, and the department of social and health services, must supply such information and assistance as are deemed necessary for the director to carry out his or her duties under this section.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The director must work to create greater levels of interagency coordination and to coordinate state and local agency efforts addressing homelessness in every county.

(2) The director must seek to:

(a) Align homeless-related housing and supportive service policies among state and local agencies;

(b) Identify ways in which providing housing with appropriate services can contribute to cost savings for state and local agencies;

(c) Identify policies and actions that may contribute to homelessness or interfere with its reduction;

(d) Review and improve strategies for discharge from state and local institutions that contribute to homelessness;

(e) Recommend policies to either improve practices or align resources, or both, including those policies through state and local housing plans; and

(f) Ensure that the housing status of people served by state and local programs is collected in consistent formats available for analysis.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The director must:

(1) Analyze those solutions and programs that could begin to address each county's need for housing that is affordable for all economic segments of the county, and special needs populations, including, but not limited to, programs or proposals that provide for:

(a) Financing for the acquisition, rehabilitation, preservation, or construction of housing;

(b) Use of publicly owned land and buildings as sites for affordable housing;

(c) Coordination of state initiatives with federal initiatives and financing programs that are referenced in the Cranston-Gonzalez national affordable housing act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12701 et seq.), as amended, and development of an approved housing strategy as required in the Cranston-Gonzalez national affordable housing act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12701 et seq.), as amended;

(d) Identification and removal, where appropriate and not detrimental to the public health and safety, or environment, of state and local regulatory barriers to the development and placement of affordable housing;

(e) Stimulating public and private sector cooperation in the development of affordable housing; and

(f) Development of solutions and programs affecting housing, including the equitable geographic distribution of housing for all economic segments within the county;

(2) Consider both homeownership and rental housing as viable options for the provision of housing. The director must consider various types of residential construction and innovative housing options including, but not limited to, manufactured housing;

(3) Review, evaluate, and make recommendations regarding existing and proposed housing programs and initiatives including, but not limited to, tax policies, land use policies, and financing programs. The director must provide recommendations to the director of commerce and each county executive; and

(4) Prepare and submit to the director of commerce and each county executive, by each December 1st, beginning December 1, 2018, a report detailing his or her findings and make specific program, legislative, and funding recommendations and any other recommendations he or she deems appropriate.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) Six months after the ensuing Washington homeless census, the director, in consultation with the interagency council on homelessness and the affordable housing advisory board, must prepare and publish a ten-year homeless housing strategic plan that must outline countywide goals and performance measures.

(2) The director must work in consultation with the interagency council on homelessness, the affordable housing advisory board, and the state advisory council on homelessness to develop performance measures that address the limitations of the annual point-in-time count on measuring the effectiveness of the document recording fee surcharge funds in supporting homeless programs. The director must report his or her findings and recommendations regarding the new performance measures to the director of commerce and each county executive by December 1, 2018.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 1 through 5 of this act constitute a new chapter in Title 43 RCW.

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