S-4199.1

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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5867**

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

**By** Senate Housing & Local Government (originally sponsored 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 a safe environment 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 the operations and services of such shelters should be sufficiently funded from the state's operating budget and any local funds appropriated for these purposes. By establishing such shelters, local governments can establish tools to support people experiencing homelessness in confronting mental health and substance abuse problems as well as provide safe and 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 must establish and operate at least one 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 with funding made available from the state operating budget or local funds as appropriated for these purposes. Each shelter must provide for a safe environment for shelter residents during shelter 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 to acquire or build shelter. Any application to acquire or build noncongregate shelter in accordance with this section must receive priority over applications for other types of shelter.

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