
Capital Budget Committee

HB 1101

Brief Description: Creating a grant program for converting unused public buildings to housing for homeless persons.

Sponsors: Representatives Walsh, Corry, Graham, Dent, Caldier and Harris-Talley.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates a grant program for converting unused public buildings to housing for homeless persons.

Hearing Date: 1/26/21

Staff: Kelci Karl-Robinson (786-7116).

Background:

The Department of Commerce administers multiple capital programs, including the Housing Trust Fund, which provides loans and grants to projects providing affordable housing to low-income households or households with special needs.

The Department of Commerce works with multiple state agencies to create an inventory of real property that is owned or administered by each agency and is vacant for lease or sale. The inventory distinguishes which properties are suitable for affordable housing development. The state agencies included in the inventory are the Washington State Patrol, the State Parks and Recreation Commission, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Social and Health Services, the Department of Corrections, and the Department of Enterprise Services.

Summary of Bill:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Public Building Conversion Grant Program (Program) is created in the Department of Commerce (Commerce) for counties to rehabilitate, retrofit, or convert unused, publicly owned buildings into housing for homeless persons. The grants may not be used to staff or maintain the buildings. Subject to appropriation, Commerce is responsible for developing, managing, and overseeing the application process separately from the Housing Trust Fund program. In order to apply for the grants, counties must:

- have a population of 100,000 or less; and
- submit an inventory of unused public buildings to Commerce by April 1, 2021 and update the inventory on a quarterly basis.

Commerce must post the inventory provided by counties along with the inventory of state-owned property on its public website.

Commerce is responsible for protecting the state's interest upon the sale or change of use of projects financed through the Program or upon a county's failure to comply with the grant requirements. The Program expires December 31, 2022.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available.

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