
SENATE BILL 5867

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2022 Regular Session

By Senators Fortunato and Kuderer

Read first time 01/14/22. Referred to Committee on Housing & Local Government.

1 AN ACT Relating to compassionate and effective strategies to
2 address the homelessness crisis; adding a new section to chapter
3 36.01 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that it is
6 imperative that cities and counties of a certain size have the means
7 to provide shelter to the homeless population. The provision of
8 mental health and substance abuse treatment options is an essential
9 service the shelter model should provide as well as security for the
10 residents, staff, and counselors. Whereas the state has allocated
11 money for housing assistance in the housing trust fund, the
12 legislature also finds that such shelters should be funded utilizing
13 that money. By establishing such a shelter, local governments can
14 establish tools to support people experiencing homelessness in
15 confronting mental health and substance abuse problems as well as
16 providing safe secure spaces for sleeping.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 36.01
18 RCW to read as follows:

19 (1)(a) Every county and each city with a population over 50,000
20 may establish and operate an emergency overnight shelter site in its

1 respective jurisdiction. Counties and each eligible city within the
2 county's geographic boundary must coordinate to ensure that there are
3 enough cumulative shelter beds to accommodate, at a minimum, the
4 sheltered and unsheltered portions of the county's most recent point-
5 in-time homeless count.

6 (b) Counties and each eligible city must make available
7 employment, mental health, and drug counseling services at each
8 shelter location pursuant to funding made available from the housing
9 trust fund. Each shelter may prohibit the possession and use of
10 alcohol and unprescribed drugs on its premises contingent upon
11 evaluation for and compliance with treatment as recommended. Each
12 shelter must provide for security during the shelter's operating
13 hours.

14 (2) Any county or city establishing a shelter under this section
15 may utilize assistance under the housing trust fund pursuant to RCW
16 43.185.050. Any application for assistance pursuant to this act must
17 receive priority.

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