

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5807

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Housing, January 17, 2024

Title: An act relating to housing authorities.

Brief Description: Concerning housing authorities.

Sponsors: Senators Frame, Gildon, Trudeau, Rivers, Cleveland, King, Kuderer, Mullet and Nobles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Housing: 1/10/24, 1/17/24 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows a joint housing authority to be formed by two or more city governments without county legislative authority authorization.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kuderer, Chair; Frame, Vice Chair; Fortunato, Ranking Member; Braun, Cleveland, Gildon, Rivers, Saldaña, Shewmake, Trudeau and Wilson, J..

Staff: Melissa Van Gorkom (786-7491)

Background: The state's Housing Authority Law authorizes the establishment of local public housing authorities (PHA) in every city and county within the state. A PHA must be activated by a resolution of the governing body of a city or county, and a PHA's boundaries are coextensive with the creating city or county, unless established as a joint housing authority.

The legislative authorities of one or more counties and the legislative authorities of any city

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or cities within one or more counties may authorize a joint housing authority by ordinance. The ordinances creating a joint housing authority must prescribe:

- the number of commissioners, length of terms, and method for their appointment, election of officers, and removal of commissioners; and
- the allocation of all costs of the joint housing authority and other matters necessary for its operation.

The area of operation of a joint housing authority is the combined areas of the housing authorities created in each city and county authorizing the joint housing authority.

PHAs primarily serve as a conduit for federally funded housing programs, such as tenant-based vouchers and publicly owned housing. PHAs also own and operate other rental housing, such as emergency and transitional housing, senior housing, and properties funded through low-income housing tax credits. The PHAs have no taxing authority.

Summary of Bill: Legislative authorities that have created housing authorities may form a joint housing authority with two or more city governments without county legislative authority authorization. The ordinances creating a joint housing authority must provide:

- for the creation of a new public body corporate and politic; or
- that a housing authority created and previously activated by resolution of one of the legislative authorities creating the joint housing authority will be converted to and operate as a joint housing authority.

Unless a delayed date is specified in the ordinances, the creation of, or conversion to, a joint housing authority will take effect upon the latest effective date of the ordinances providing for its creation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Joint housing authorities have been around for more than 40 years. It has been more than 20 years since we updated the statute and this will allow cities to work together to serve their communities quicker. Housing authorities are the largest affordable housing providers in the state. Providing affordable housing is complex which has required collaboration among housing authorities and the creation of a joint housing authority will allow for representation of each housing authority on the board. Joint housing authorities are being used in some areas of the state but each of these joint housing authorities was originally created that way and creating a new joint housing authority using existing authorities is difficult under the existing statute. This will allow

existing housing authorities to become joint authorities by streamlining the process.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Noel Frame, Prime Sponsor; Lowel Krueger, Yakima Housing Authority; Association of WA Housing Authorities.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.