

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2152

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES,
FEBRUARY 20, 1992

Brief Description: Appointing a direct landlord pay task force.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Housing (originally sponsored by Representatives Leonard, Mitchell, Nelson, Franklin, Ogden, Ballard, Winsley, Chandler, D. Sommers, Forner, Moyer, Morton and Hochstatter).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

SENATE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chairman; L. Smith, Vice Chairman; and Stratton.

Staff: Joanne Conrad (786-7472)

Hearing Dates: April 2, 1991; April 4, 1991; February 20, 1992

BACKGROUND:

Lower-income households are faced with a variety of problems in obtaining adequate housing. The problems range from a lack of affordable housing to the household's inability to access housing due to the source of their income.

In 1988, the Legislature directed the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to develop a direct landlord pay pilot program. The purpose of the pilot program was to see if the availability of housing for households on public assistance would improve if a portion of the public assistance payment was made to a landlord for rent. The program was offered on a voluntary basis to recipients on public assistance.

DSHS was authorized to contract with up to seven local communities to implement the local pilot program sites. To date, only the city of Walla Walla and Spokane County have applied to participate in the pilot program.

SUMMARY:

An 11-member Direct Landlord Pay Task Force is appointed by DSHS to conduct a study to determine if the supply of housing for persons on public assistance would increase if rental payments were made directly to the landlord.

The membership of the task force consists of: four members of the Legislature; two members representing apartment owners; two members representing low-income tenants; one member representing public housing authorities; the Director of the Department of Community Development, or designee; and the Secretary of DSHS, or designee, who serves as chair. The chair is a non-voting member of the task force, except in the event of a tie. DSHS shall provide staff to the task force.

The task force must: review the results of the Direct Landlord Pay Pilot Program; examine the housing needs of persons on public assistance; and make recommendations on program development and administrative options for a Direct Landlord Pay Program.

A report to the Legislature is due by December 1, 1991.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SENATE AMENDMENT:

Effective dates are changed to 1992 and 1993.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

TESTIMONY FOR:

A new task force is necessary to reexamine disincentives to low-income rental, and to determine why the Direct Landlord Pay Pilot Project failed.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Rep. June Leonard; Bernice Morehead, Div. of Income Assistance, DSHS; Rick Slunaker, Yakima Valley Rental Assn. (pro)