
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5742

State of Washington 61st Legislature 2009 Regular Session

By Senate Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Hargrove, McCaslin, Hobbs, Schoesler, and Hatfield)

READ FIRST TIME 02/25/09.

1 AN ACT Relating to crime-free rental housing; adding a new section
2 to chapter 35.21 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that local
5 governments, landlords, and tenants working together to provide crime-
6 free rental housing is beneficial to the public health, safety, and
7 welfare. The intent of this act is to provide certain requirements
8 that a local government must follow in adopting a crime-free rental
9 housing program.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 35.21 RCW
11 to read as follows:

12 (1) A city, town, or county may adopt and implement a local
13 government crime-free rental housing program designed to reduce crime,
14 drugs, and gangs on rental properties in accordance with this section.

15 (2) A crime-free rental housing program must be voluntary and may
16 include:

17 (a) Landlord training to educate property owners and managers in
18 the basics of crime prevention on rental premises;

1 (b) Crime prevention through environmental design assessment to
2 identify crime hazards and ways to improve the safety of the premises;
3 or

4 (c) Commitments to implement and maintain crime-free activities,
5 such as proper screening of tenants, use of a crime-free addendum in
6 rental agreements, neighborhood education, and maintaining open
7 communication with law enforcement.

8 (3) A crime-free rental housing program may not:

9 (a) Prohibit a landlord from hiring or renting to individuals with
10 criminal backgrounds;

11 (b) Condition a business license or any other prerequisite to
12 owning or operating rental housing in the city, town, or county on
13 participation in the program; or

14 (c) Except as provided in subsection (4) of this section, charge
15 additional or separate fees to a landlord who does not participate in
16 the program, including fees for providing law enforcement services to
17 a landlord's rental property.

18 (4) A city, town, or county may waive all or part of the cost of a
19 landlord's business license or rental registration fee in exchange for
20 participation in the program so long as the fee does not exceed the
21 amount of a standard business license in the jurisdiction.

22 (5) This section does not prevent a city, town, or county from
23 charging a fee for participation in a crime-free rental housing
24 program.

25 (6) This section does not affect a city, town, or county's
26 authority to enforce existing law in regard to rental housing, except
27 in regard to a crime-free rental housing program.

28 (7) As used in this section, "rental housing" means any tenancy
29 subject to chapter 59.12, 59.18, or 59.20 RCW.

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