

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2918

As Reported by House Committee On:
Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs

Title: An act relating to providing rental assistance to mobile home park tenants.

Brief Description: Providing rental assistance to mobile home park tenants.

Sponsors: Representatives Orcutt, Johnson, Appleton and Steele.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs: 1/30/18, 2/1/18 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Creates a mobile home and manufactured housing rental assistance program within the Department of Commerce to give monetary rental assistance to eligible tenants of mobile home lots.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Ryu, Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; McCabe, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Jenkin, Reeves and Sawyer.

Staff: Travis Yonker (786-7383).

Background:

Tenants of mobile homes have been afforded certain protections and benefits to address some of the unique issues created by such a living arrangement. The Manufactured/Mobile Home Landlord-Tenant Act was enacted to provide specific rights and duties for tenants and landlords in the specific context of the rental of mobile home lots. The Mobile Home Relocation Assistance Program, administered by the Department of Commerce (Department),

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was created to assist in the moving expenses associated with relocating a tenant's mobile home from a mobile home park that is closing to a new location.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Mobile Home/Manufactured Housing Rental Assistance Program (Program) is created. The Program is administered by the Department, which may adopt rules for the administration of the Program.

A tenant of a mobile home lot may apply to the Department for monetary rental assistance under the Program based on an appropriation of up to \$2 million separate from the Mobile Home Relocation Assistance Fund (Fund). The Department may approve applicants for monetary rental assistance. The Department will consider the following factors in approving an applicant to receive assistance under the Program:

- the applicant is a low-income tenant, based on the median family income for the county where the mobile home is located;
- the applicant is over the age of 55; and
- the applicant has experienced a rent increase that outpaces inflation, based on U.S. Department of Commerce statistics.

Once an applicant is approved for the Program, the Department may give that applicant an amount of monetary rental assistance on a monthly basis, but not to exceed the lesser of either \$200 or 50 percent of the monthly rent amount for the applicant's mobile home lot. The applicant is then entitled to the monetary rental assistance for one year, after which the tenant must reapply to the Program. If there is a change in an approved applicant's circumstances that impact the Department's eligibility considerations, the applicant must notify the Department of such change, and the Department will adjust the amount of monetary rental assistance accordingly.

If no funding appropriation is made for the Program by June 30, 2018, the bill is null and void.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill clarifies that monetary rental assistance for the Program may not come from the Fund; the appropriation for the Program is capped at \$2 million; and the bill is null and void if no funding appropriation is made by June 30, 2018. The substitute bill also defines "low-income tenant" consistent with the existing definition of "low-income household."

Appropriation: The sum of up to \$2 million.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill addresses the needs of senior citizens that have experienced rental fee increases for mobile home lots, which have particularly impacted retired people on fixed incomes. These folks need some help, but mobile home park owners cannot be expected to never increase rental fees, so this bill is necessary to keep up with the costs of mobile home lot rentals and allow tenants to continue to live in their homes.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) There are concerns for how to fund the Program and that funds may be diverted from the Mobile/Manufactured Home Relocation Fund. There is also a conflicting definition of what constitutes "low-income."

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Orcutt, prime sponsor.

(Other) Leslie Wolff, Department of Commerce.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.