S-0657.2

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**SENATE BILL 5375**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2021 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Warnick, Fortunato, Rolfes, Van De Wege, and Wilson, J.

AN ACT Relating to a study of the differences in low-income housing development in urban and rural locations; and creating new sections.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that affordable housing is reaching crisis levels in urban areas and in rural areas. However, rural counties appear to be at a disadvantage to be competitive for public housing tax money. The legislature finds that in order to appropriately address affordable housing issues, it is important to have a complete understanding of the differences between rural and urban areas and the barriers to building affordable housing in rural areas. The legislature finds that the joint legislative audit and review committee is the best entity to review how affordable housing is built in rural areas, what barriers are present, and how these barriers may be overcome.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The joint legislative audit and review committee must conduct a study of the differences in low-income housing development in urban and rural locations. The review shall include identifying the amount of publicly subsidized low-income housing developed in urban and rural counties, as defined by RCW 82.14.370, between 2010 and 2020, and comparing it with the demographics and populations of these counties. To the extent practicable, the study shall review contributing factors that may impact differences in the amount of development in urban and rural counties. The study shall also determine what funding sources have been provided to low-income housing projects built in rural counties and in urban counties. This study shall be completed by December 2022.

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