

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1687

As Reported by House Committee On:
Housing

Title: An act relating to social housing public development authorities.

Brief Description: Concerning social housing public development authorities.

Sponsors: Representatives Reed, Scott, Berry, Simmons, Parshley, Gregerson, Peterson, Street, Hill and Macri.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Housing: 2/6/25, 2/11/25 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes the state or a local government to assist a social housing public development authority in the planning, construction, or operation of housing projects under the Housing Cooperation Law.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 16 members: Representatives Peterson, Chair; Hill, Vice Chair; Richards, Vice Chair; Low, Ranking Minority Member; Jacobsen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Manjarrez, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Barkis, Connors, Dufault, Entenman, Gregerson, Lekanoff, Reed, Thomas, Timmons and Zahn.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Engell.

Staff: Serena Dolly (786-7150).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Public Development Authorities.

Cities and counties may form public corporations, commonly referred to as public development authorities (PDAs), to assist in federal grant administration, enhance government efficiency and services, or improve urban living conditions. The PDAs have broad statutory authority to perform any lawful public purpose or public function but cannot undertake a function that the creating city or county could not lawfully perform. Although the PDAs may be created for a general purpose, they are often created for a specific project or undertaking. The city or county creating the PDA must oversee its operations and funds, and the PDAs are subject to general laws regulating local governments, including requirements related to state audits, open meetings, and ethics.

Housing Cooperation Law.

The Housing Cooperation Law provides procedures for the state and local governments to assist public housing authorities in the planning, construction, or operation of housing projects. Assistance may include:

- granting, leasing, or selling property or easements;
- providing services, funding, loans, or in-kind support;
- providing infrastructure or recreational facilities in connection with a housing project; and
- granting exceptions from zoning, building regulations, or ordinances.

The governing body of the state or local government is authorized to exercise the powers provided under the Housing Cooperation Law by resolution.

Summary of Bill:

Social housing PDAs are defined as a public corporation created for the purpose of developing, maintaining, and operating subsidized and cross-subsidized rental housing that is made available to households of any income level and publicly owned in perpetuity. Subsidized means the use of a financial contribution to reduce the rent for low-income households. Cross-subsidized means the rate of rents for high-income households support lower rates of rents for low-income and moderate-income households.

The state or a local government may assist a social housing PDA in the planning, construction, or operation of housing projects under the Housing Cooperation Law. The executive of the state or local government, rather than the governing body, is authorized to exercise the powers provided under the Housing Cooperation Law.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill relates to an existing law that allows cities to waive certain development regulations for housing development by housing authorities. This would give cities the authority to waive those same requirements for housing projects by social housing PDAs. Social housing is publicly owned, mixed-income housing development. Currently, the only social housing PDA is in the City of Seattle.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Julia Reed, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.