

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2008

As Reported by House Committee On:
Housing

Title: An act relating to creating a task force on housing cost driver analysis.

Brief Description: Creating a task force on housing cost driver analysis.

Sponsors: Representatives Klicker, Peterson, Leavitt, Connors, Ramel, Robertson, Low, Gregerson, Ramos, Eslick, Bateman, Bronoske, Barkis, Barnard, Graham, Callan, Timmons, Macri, Hutchins, Lekanoff, Paul, Nance, Riccelli and Santos.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Housing: 1/8/24, 1/11/24 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Creates a task force to ascertain the primary factors driving housing costs in Washington.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Peterson, Chair; Alvarado, Vice Chair; Leavitt, Vice Chair; Klicker, Ranking Minority Member; Connors, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Barkis, Bateman, Chopp, Entenman, Hutchins, Low, Reed and Taylor.

Staff: Austin Borcharding (360) 786-7094.

Background:

In 1993 the Washington Housing Policy Act was passed. At the time, no comprehensive statewide housing policy existed, and the stated purpose of the act was to provide policy

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direction to the public and private sectors seeking to meet the housing needs of state residents.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

A legislative task force is convened to assess the primary factors driving housing costs in Washington.

The members of the task force are appointed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives as follows:

- The President of the Senate must appoint one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the Senate.
- The Speaker of the House of Representatives must appoint one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the House of Representatives.
- The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives jointly must appoint the following members:
 - two economists with expertise in the economic disciplines most relevant to the issue of housing cost drivers;
 - one member representing non-profit housing developers;
 - one member representing for-profit housing developers;
 - one member representing builders;
 - one member representing labor;
 - one member representing realtors;
 - one member representing cities;
 - one member representing counties;
 - one member representing tenants;
 - one member representing landlords;
 - one member representing home mortgage lenders;
 - one member representing multifamily lenders;
 - one member representing utility providers;
 - one member representing public housing authorities;
 - one member representing the Washington State Housing Finance Commission;
 - one member from a statewide association representing business; and
 - one member from an organization representing architects.

The task force is directed to research, analyze, and determine the primary cost drivers for housing in Washington. In fulfilling its duties, the task force is to consider information specifically from the Affordable Housing Advisory Board as well other sources of relevant interest and expertise.

The task force must report its findings and recommendations to the appropriate committees of the Legislature by December 1, 2025.

Staff support for the task force must be provided by the Senate's Senate Committee Services and the House of Representatives' Office of Program Research.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

As compared to the original bill, the substitute bill:

- adds two members to the task force:
 - one member from a statewide association representing business; and
 - one member from an organization representing architects; and
- removes the Department of Commerce as the agency which must provide staff support to the task force, and places that responsibility onto the Senate Committee Services and the Office of Program Research.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on January 12, 2024.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Addressing the affordable housing issue requires us to ascertain the root of the affordable housing problem. This bill will do that by obtaining information from a large number of the facets involved in the housing industry. Housing construction is not keeping up with population growth. This bill provides an opportunity to more holistically understand why housing is so expensive to construct and what can be done to reduce those costs and drive the construction of more housing.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Mark Klicker, prime sponsor; Ben Wick, City of Spokane Valley; and Riley Benge, Washington Realtors.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.