

Weekly Legislative Update: **Housing and Homelessness**

Issue Team Chair: Cynthia Stewart

Contact: cstewart@lwvwa.org

January 22, 2023

Bills Needing Action This Week

Note that there are several housing-related bills that are described in the Growth Management weekly update [here](#).

Both of the bills listed below will have public hearings on Monday, January 23, at 10:30 am in the House Housing Committee. They would both amend the Growth Management Act to allow ADUs in residential areas but HB 1276 has greater specificity in what would be allowed. The League supports the approach in either bill. They may be amended and/or combined after the public hearing. **Please sign in PRO before Monday morning at 9:30 at the links shown below.**

HB 1276 Concerning accessory dwelling units, would modify the Growth Management Act to require cities and counties to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in urban growth areas (UGAs) and prohibit certain ADU regulations within UGAs. It would also allow cities and counties to offer incentives for the construction or development of ADUs. **Sign in [here](#).**

HB 1337 Expanding housing options by easing barriers to the construction and use of accessory dwelling units, would require fully planning cities and counties to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in urban growth areas (UGAs) and prohibit certain ADU regulations within UGAs. **Sign in [here](#).**

Both of the bills listed below will have public hearings on Tuesday, January 24, at 4:00 pm in the House Housing Committee. They both address rent increases, thereby providing tenants with greater financial protection. The League supports the approach in either bill. They may be amended and/or combined after the public hearing. **Please sign in PRO before Tuesday, January 24, at 3:00 pm, at the links shown below.**

HB 1388 Protecting tenants by prohibiting predatory residential rent practices and by applying the consumer protection act to the residential landlord-tenant act and the manufactured/ mobile home landlord-tenant act. This bill defines certain rent increases as predatory and prohibits them. It provides for the Department of commerce to calculate allowable rental increase rates annually. **Sign in [here](#).**

HB 1389 Concerning residential rent increases under the residential landlord-tenant act and the manufactured/mobile home landlord-tenant act. This bill prohibits rent increases in the first year of tenancy and puts restrictions on the amount by which rents may be increased, with certain exceptions in both cases. **Sign in [here](#).**

Bill Updates

In the first week of this legislative session, a large number of bills were introduced and many public hearings were already scheduled in both the House and Senate Housing Committees. The following bills were moved out of committee in executive session after the public hearings.

HB 1042 Concerning the use of existing buildings for residential purposes, would prohibit cities from imposing certain restrictions or requirements on new housing units constructed within an existing building that is located in a zone that permits multifamily housing. These include density, parking and other. **This bill was passed out of the House Housing Committee as a substitute with a Do Pass recommendation.**

HB 1046 Expanding housing supply by supporting the ability of public housing authorities to finance affordable housing developments by re-benchmarking area median income limits. This increases the area median income limits on a public housing authority financed, low-income housing development to 80 percent, making affordable housing accessible to a larger population that in spite of higher income levels is challenged to find housing they can afford. **This bill was passed out of the House Housing Committee with a Do Pass recommendation and has been moved to the House Rules Committee.**

HB 1054 Addressing the authority of owners' associations in common interest communities to regulate or limit occupancy by unrelated persons, would prohibit an association of unit owners in a common interest community from regulating or limiting the number of unrelated persons that may occupy a unit. **This bill was passed out of the House Housing Committee with a Do Pass recommendation and has been moved to the House Rules Committee.**

HB 1070 Exempting the sale and leaseback of property by a seller from the residential landlord-tenant act when the seller agrees to a written lease at closing. This would allow the buyer to allow the seller to remain living in the home for up to six months if there is a written agreement between the buyer and seller. **This bill was passed out of the House Housing Committee as a substitute with a Do Pass recommendation**

HB 1074 Addressing documentation and processes governing landlords' claims for damage to residential premises, increases tenant protection from landlord abuse of damage deposits and claims. It would require a landlord to substantiate the cost of any damages withheld from a tenant deposit with repair estimates, invoices, or other documentation; prohibit a landlord from withholding any portion of a tenant deposit for certain items; and establish a one-year statute of limitations for a landlord to take any action against a tenant to recover sums

exceeding the amount of the damage deposit. It would also provide the landlord with additional time to provide such documentation. **This bill had a public hearing on January 12 and is scheduled for executive session in the House Housing Committee on January 26.**

HB 1111 Concerning housing benefit districts. This bill provides local governments with more options to increase residential capacity, especially in urban areas, by authorizing cities to establish housing benefit districts. These districts would be governed by a board and would be allowed to acquire, through land banking, predevelopment contracting, selling, improving, funding, and leasing, land for the development of affordable housing for low-income and moderate-income households within an area a half-mile or less from a major transit stop and is zoned for average minimum density of 15 dwelling units per acre or more. **This bill had a public hearing in the House Housing Committee on January 19 but has not yet been scheduled for executive session.**

HB 1124 Protecting tenants from excessive rent and related fees by providing at least six months' notice for rent increases over a certain amount. This bill would require between 180- and 220-days' notice of rent increases that exceed five percent. It would address recent egregious rent increases that have forced people to move because they could not afford the increase and give tenants subject to such increases more time to plan and organize their necessary responses. **This bill had a public hearing on January 12 and is scheduled for executive session in the House Housing Committee on January 26.**

HB 1129 Concerning the sale or lease of manufactured/mobile home communities and the property on which they sit. This bill would add protection for manufactured/mobile home owners when the land they rent is sold and they are vulnerable to having to move. **This bill had a public hearing in the House Housing Committee on January 16 but has not yet been scheduled for executive session.**

SB 5045 Incentivizing rental of accessory dwelling units to low-income households, would allow counties to provide a property tax exemption for an accessory dwelling unit if certain conditions are met for as long as it is rented to a low-income household. **This bill had a public hearing in the House Housing Committee on January 11 and is scheduled for executive session on January 25.**

SB 5060 Requiring the registration of rental and vacant housing units, would require landlords to register their rental units with Department of Commerce, thereby providing a method of tracking and reporting rental rates across the state. **This bill had a public hearing in the House Housing Committee on January 11 but has not yet been scheduled for executive session.**

SB 5118 Concerning modifying the multifamily property tax exemption to promote development of long-term affordable housing. This bill would create a new 99-year property tax exemption for properties that commit to renting or selling at least 35 percent of the multifamily housing square footage as affordable housing to low- and moderate-income

households. **This bill had a public hearing in the House Housing Committee on January 13 but has not yet been scheduled for executive session.**

SB 5197 Addressing landlord-tenant relations by providing technical changes to eviction notice forms and modifying certain eviction processes. This bill would add to tenant protection in eviction proceedings. **This bill had a public hearing in the House Housing Committee on January 20 but has not yet been scheduled for executive session.**

SB 5279 Expanding a sales and use tax deferral program for affordable housing to include structures initially used as temporary employee housing for employees constructing warehouses, distribution centers, and other large facilities. The League will watch this bill. Tax benefits are typically used to encourage certain policies for statewide benefit. It is not clear that the benefit of this proposal outweighs the tax obligation. **This bill had a public hearing in the House Housing Committee on January 20 but has not yet been scheduled for executive session.**

SB 5301 Concerning housing programs administered by the department of commerce, would authorize the Housing Trust Fund administered by the Department of Commerce to support low-income residents in new ways. **This bill had a public hearing in the House Housing Committee on January 20 but has not yet been scheduled for executive session.**

How You Can Be Involved

- Respond to Action Alerts in the legislative newsletter. These will primarily appear in the section of the newsletter related to housing and homelessness.
- Join the League's Housing Affinity Group by contacting Cynthia Stewart, cstewart@lwvwa.org.
- Work with your local jurisdiction to assure that comprehensive planning will address the housing needs of your community. Contact your city or county planning department to obtain a comp plan development schedule and opportunities for engagement.