

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5759

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Financial Services, Insurance & Housing, February 27, 2003

Title: An act relating to studying low-income rent vouchers.

Brief Description: Studying low-income rent vouchers.

Sponsors: Senators Benton, Kohl-Welles and Esser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Financial Services, Insurance & Housing: 2/27/03 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES, INSURANCE & HOUSING

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5759 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Benton, Chair; Winsley, Vice Chair; Keiser and Prentice.

Staff: Alison Mendiola-Hamilton (786-7576)

Background: Not all people have access to housing that is affordable. For this reason, housing may be subsidized using federal, state, or local monies. Housing subsidy has many forms. Housing subsidy may include tax credits for housing development, or rent vouchers that subsidize all or a portion of a tenant's rent.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) studies how housing in Washington is subsidized, including but not limited to, housing development and the use of low-income rent vouchers. JLARC must evaluate how demographically similar states make use of housing subsidy funds.

The report must include information regarding (1) the use of federal, state, and local monies to subsidize housing, and (2) how the state may implement innovative programs that involve private and public entities.

The report is due to the Legislature by January 15, 2004.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill was not considered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 21, 2003.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: We support low-income housing and believe the state would save money if more vouchers were funded instead of building new buildings.

Testimony Against: There is no need for this study. Other agencies in Washington and nationwide have studied this issue. Also, there is a concern over the cost of such a study; we would support an interim study instead.

Testified: Terry Kohl, WA Apartment Assn. (pro); Eric Mewhinney, WAA (pro); Chris Pegg, Longview Housing Authority (con).