2020 Home and Hope State Legislative Agenda
Updates on Key Priorities | As of February 21, 2020

We have passed the halfway mark of our short state legislative session this year and our staff and partners have been hard at work down in Olympia talking to law makers, providing testimony, educating, and advocating on behalf of our 2020 Home & Hope State Legislative priorities. February 19th marked the cutoff date for bills to be voted out of their house of origin. Bills that don’t make that cutoff date are essentially dead for this year with a few exceptions. Read on below to see how our bills have fared so far this year:

LEAD

• **Clarify the surplus lands statute** to provide clear guidance on the expanded authority of local municipalities and jurisdictions to discount land for affordable housing. [HB 2896](#)
  - Our surplus lands bill cleared the House floor on 2/17 with 60 yeas, and 38 nays. It now heads over to the senate and will have its first public hearing in the Senate Housing Stability & Affordability Committee. The bill received two amendments on the House floor, but we still have a strong bill that is moving forward!

• **Support Community & Technical College staff and faculty housing** by making it easier for Career & Technical Colleges to build employer-owned housing via availability of surplus lands, tax exemptions, and/or addressing fair housing solutions. [HB 2382](#)
  - This year, this bill started an important conversation around the role of Community and Technical Colleges (CTC) in addressing affordable housing for their employees. Although this bill didn’t make it past the critical house of origin cutoff, we’re encouraged by the enthusiasm of the CTC’s and the legislators that championed this bill. We’ll be continuing conversations around a potential path forward in subsequent years.

• **Expand authority for cities and counties to utilize councilmanic authority to approve a 0.1% sales tax increase** for affordable housing. [HB 1590/SB 6126](#)
  - We are excited to see that Rep. Doglio’s bill from the previous year made it past the house of origin cutoff with 52 yeas and 46 nays. It is now in the Senate and will have it’s first public hearing in the Senate Committee on Local Government. The Senate companion bill by Sen. Hunt is not moving forward and we will be focusing our efforts on the House bill.

• **Provide clarity for King County to bond against the lodging tax for homeless youth facilities** and adjust the AMI for allowable lodging tax uses to 0-80% to ensure it can serve low-income households. [HB 2110](#)
  - Rep. Ryu’s bill passed the House floor with 58 yeas and 40 nays. It will now move on to the Senate where it will be heard in the Housing Stability & Affordability Committee.

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Bills on our support agenda that made it past the house of origin cutoff:

- **Fix the property tax exemption for affordable rental housing** by increasing the 50% AMI threshold to 60% AMI, allowing tenants to increase their income without causing a nonprofit to lose the exemption. **HB 2384/SB 6232**
  
  o HB 2384 passed the House floor with 96 yeas and 2 nays. It now moves to the Senate Housing Stability & Affordability Committee. SB 6232 will not advance this session.

- **Exempt Affordable Housing Acquisitions from the Real Estate Excise Tax** to address the inability of nonprofits & public agencies to compete with for-profit developers on acquisition. **HB 2634/SB 6366**
  
  o HB 2634 passed the House floor with 94 yeas and 4 nays. SB 6366 has been deemed necessary to implement the budget and is still in committee on the Senate side.

- Requires electric, water, gas, and sewer utilities, if located in a city or county in which a homelessness state of emergency has been declared, to waive certain utility charges for properties used to provide emergency shelter. **HB 2629/SB 6414**
  
  o HB 2629 passed the House floor with 70 yeas and 26 nays. It is now in the Senate where it will be heard in the Senate Committee on Local Government.

- **Extend the Working Connections Child Care Homeless Grace Period from 4 to 12 months** for families experiencing homelessness to remove barriers to accessing child care. This extension will maintain access to the high-quality early learning environments for homeless children and provide continuity of care for kids. **HB 2456/SB 6351**
  
  o HB 2456 passed the House floor with 60 yeas, and 37 nays. It is now in the Senate where it will be heard in the Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee. SB 6351 will not advance this session.

Bills on our support agenda that will not advance this session:

- **Reform the Multi-Family Tax Exemption** policy to require affordability for the 8-year exemption, increase overall affordability, and improve reporting requirements. **HB 2620/SB 6411** and **HB 2746**
  
  o A new MFTE bill has been introduced by Rep. Nicole Macri, **HB 2950**, that has been deemed necessary to implement the budget (NTIB). It allows for an extension of the 12-year exemption until 2022, in order to preserve units that are set to expire from the program while allowing time to improve the program moving forward.
• **Create a Regional Housing Finance Authority** to create equitable housing developments around high capacity transit in King County. [SB 6618]

• Ensure that tenants are **not unfairly evicted** by requiring landlords have a legitimate business reason for making someone move. [HB 2453/SB 6379]

• Implement sensible **rent stabilization** to provide protection for renters and relief to those struggling to keep up with the rising cost of rents. [HB 2779]

• **Support new state investment in early learning, including early learning facilities**, to ensure all Washington children have access to affordable, high quality child care and preschool. [HB 2661]

**Budget Asks**

• **Invest $10M in the Housing Trust Fund in the 2020 supplemental budget to preserve** affordable homes already subsidized but at risk of loss.
  - The current Senate budget proposal includes $10M in the Housing Trust Fund and the House budget proposal includes $100M.

• **Increase the reimbursement rate for Working Connections Child Care** to expand access to quality, affordable child care for Washington families and improve pay and conditions for early learning providers.
  - The House invested $56M for the current biennium.
  - There was also $7.1M in the Early Learning Facilities Fund.

• **Protect the Puget Sound Taxpayer Accountability act funds** to ensure they are preserved for their intended purpose to serve vulnerable youth.