



Washington Rental Owners Association

2017 Legislative Priorities

OPPOSE HB 1633/ SB 5407 – Making “Source of Income” a protected class

Establishes “source of income” (any federal, state, local, or nonprofit-administered benefit or subsidy programs) as a protected class under the residential landlord-tenant statute and creates a civil action for violations.

House Sponsor - Rep. Riccelli - Status: DEAD House Floor | Senate Sponsor - Sen. Frockt - Status: DEAD Financial Institutions & Insurance Committee

Industry perspective:

- Many **private landlords support and participate** in housing subsidy programs, including Section 8.
- Participation in these programs has been, and **should remain, voluntary**.
- Landlords should be incentivized to participate in such programs, not mandated.
- Legitimate concerns expressed from landlords participating in subsidized programs include: overzealous inspectors **delaying the inspection process**; reluctance of the local Housing Authority to **help when issues with the program or a subsidized tenant arise**; inability of landlord to **recoup costs of any damage** caused by tenant because tenant is often not able to pay a damage deposit or last month’s rent.
- Over the past year our coalition has been **proactively meeting** with Housing Authorities to share our concerns and **jointly identify ways to encourage more private participation in subsidized programs**. We are **concerned that if this bill passes it will remove the incentive for our groups to continue this important dialogue**.

SUPPORT HB 1305/ SB 5388 – Removal of Unlawful Occupants

Would allow a property owner to sign a sworn statement that the unlawful occupant (trespasser) does not have permission to be on the property and provide law enforcement the legal authority to remove the trespasser. A landlord using this fraudulently would be subject to civil and/or criminal penalties.

House Sponsor - Reps. Barkis, Kirby, Klippert; Status: DEAD House Rules Committee | Senate Sponsor - Sen. Zeiger; Status: House Judiciary Committee

Industry perspective:

- “Squatters” are becoming more prevalent in communities throughout our state; this legislation will provide tools to law enforcement and landlords so we can protect our neighborhoods from illicit and dangerous situations.
- This negotiated language carefully balances protection of both landlord and tenant rights.

OPPOSE w/ CONCERNS SSB 5408 – Notice of Termination of Rental Agreement

The original bill increased the notice from 20 to 30 days, and to 60 days if tenant had occupied the premises for two or more years. The bill was amended to remove reference to the 60 day notice.

Sponsor – Sen. Cleveland; Status: DEAD Senate Floor

Industry perspective:

- As currently drafted the notice periods will create inconsistencies, confusion and unintended consequences.
- Changing to a 30-day notice would put this provision of the RLTA in conflict with the notice in the general Unlawful Detainer Statute (RCW 59.12) and could also result in tenants foregoing payment of a month’s rent.
- Our coalition is willing to work with proponents to see if a solution can be reached to extend the notice period to 30 days.

SUPPORT SB 5182 – Affordable Housing Preservation Tax Exemption

Authorizes local governments to grant real estate tax exemptions to existing multifamily properties for 15 years if the property sets aside 25% of units for low-income housing.

Prime Sponsor: Senator Fain **Status:** DEAD Senate Floor

SUPPORT SB 5569 – Preemption of Protected Classes in Housing

The legislation would prevent local governments from enacting new protected classes in rental housing.

Prime Sponsor: Senators Angel **Status:** DEAD Senate Floor

SUPPORT HB 1635/SB 5013 – Disposition of Tenant Property

The landlord may dispose of an evicted tenant's property placed upon the nearest public property after **five** days.

Prime Sponsors: Representative Barkis & Senator Warnick **Status:** DEAD House Judiciary & House Judiciary Committee

SUPPORT SB 5015 – At-Will Tenancy Evictions

Currently, an occupant who does not have a lease and does not pay rent, cannot be evicted because they are not tenants. This bill would allow the owner to use the unlawful detainer process after the occupant has been given notice to vacate by the owner.

Prime Sponsor: Senators Warnick **Status:** DEAD Senate Rules Committee

SUPPORT SB 5254 – Buildable Lands

The legislation broadly reforms housing planning processes and also maintains the current document recording fee until 2027, and creates a property tax exemption program to preserve affordable housing for low-income households.

Prime Sponsor: Senator Fain **Status:** DEAD Senate Ways & Means Committee

OPPOSE HB 1570 – Auditors Filing Fee Increase

The legislation would increase the Auditor Filing Fee by \$50 to fund homelessness programs in Washington, making the new \$90 fee permanent. The bill also removes the private landlord safeguards that were originally negotiated.

Prime Sponsor: Representative Macri **Status:** DEAD House Rules Committee

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