

2022 September 17 WSDCC Meeting

1004 - PASSED – 091722 – ENV – ADOPT RESPONSIBLE AND IN-PERPETUITY (LASTING) AFFORDABLE HOUSING LAWS

WHEREAS Washington State has a clear and urgent need for affordable housing that starts and remains affordable; and

WHEREAS over the past few years numerous bills asserting to advance affordable housing including tiny houses and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) were in fact bills intended to advance for-profit development with no assurance of affordability. Bills have gone so far as to override life safety and building codes, require “ADUs” be 50% of the size of the primary residence (no size limit) and then prevented those houses from being included in housing capacity analyses (a golden ticket that allowed 2 houses on every lot regardless of zoning); shifted utility and infrastructure costs to low income and existing residents, overrode local control including storm water filtration and aquifer recharge, tree retention, and lot coverage zoning ordinances; and sidestepped or gutted numerous Growth Management Act planning elements including public process and appeals, and environmental and climate change protections.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the WSDCC advocate to break down barriers to multifamily housing options in cities and towns by adopting housing affordability measures; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the WA State Democrats call upon the Washington State legislature to adopt laws and policies that will result in increasing housing availability, including affordable housing and accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and that do not include clauses or riders intended to advance for-profit development schemes. Bills must not override state building and life safety codes; diminish elements of the Growth Management Act (GMA) including but not limited to: public engagement and appeal processes; prevention of sprawl growth into rural, farmland, forests, shorelines, and open space zoned areas; and shall not override or nullify local zoning ordinances that comply with the GMA while meeting local needs for items such as affordable housing, aquifer recharge, storm water filtration, rain gardens, tree retention, greenbelts, etc.; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washington State Democratic Central Committee urges legislators and Governor Inslee to adopt laws that assure affordable housing starts and remains affordable in perpetuity, such as setting sale and rent prices at a reduced percentage of current market prices with caps on price increases not to exceed Washington’s annual CPI in perpetuity; and

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that this resolution be distributed to the Directors of Department of the Office of Financial Management and the Department of Commerce, all Democratic Washington State Legislators, and Governor Inslee as well as to the WSDCC Advocacy Committee for appropriate action.
