



# 2022 Lead Policy Priorities

- ❖ **Housing Justice Act** (HB 2017/Davis, Simmons) - Did not go to a vote in Housing, Human Services & Veterans Committee

Racial biases, over-policing, and policies that criminalize poverty cause Washingtonians of color to be more likely to be impacted by the legal system, and then be locked out of opportunities to find dignified housing after. Discrimination based on past convictions is one of many policies that continues to make it more difficult for Black and brown Washingtonians to find safe, healthy homes.

The Housing Justice Act will prevent landlords from automatically excluding someone from rental housing because they have an arrest record or past conviction.

- ❖ **Provide Tenants More Time to Respond to Rent Increases** (HB 1904/Peterson, Morgan) - Went to Rules Committee and did not go to vote

There are currently no limits on how high landlords can raise rents in Washington. In communities across the state, tenants are experiencing exorbitant rent increases. When a tenant can't afford a major rent hike, they often have to move with as little as 60 days' notice. With high rents and limited vacancies, renters need more time to respond to significant rent increases. HB 1904 requires landlords to provide six months' notice for rent increases over 3%. (amended to 7%) This gives tenants time to decide what's best for them, and if necessary, time to find a new place to live and save money for a deposit and other moving costs. It also gives tenants more flexibility to end their lease and move before the increase takes effect, and caps late fees to 1.5% of monthly rent.

# 2022 Lead Policy Priorities (con't)

- ❖ **Enforcement of Tenant Protections** (HB 2023/Hackney, Macri) - Did not go to a vote in Housing, Human Services & Veterans Committee

Landlord-tenant laws in Washington are considered “self-help” which means it is up to individual tenants to enforce their rights, on their own. There is no entity charged with the enforcement of laws protecting tenants from unscrupulous or neglectful landlords, and tenants cannot take their landlord to court to uphold basic and critical responsibilities, like making repairs.

HB 2023 adds enforcement mechanisms to the Residential Landlord-Tenant Act, through the Attorney General’s enforcement of the Consumer Protection Act and with an expedited court process for tenants to enforce their rights. Other states have such mechanisms, and the results are better housing conditions and improved stability.

- ❖  **Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) Exemption** (HB 1643/Hackney & SB 5642/Mullet)

This will incentivize sales to affordable housing providers and give them a leg up when competing for increasingly scarce land for multifamily housing. This policy was passed in 2020 (HB 2634/Walen) but vetoed by the Governor with many other bills due to the unknown impact of the pandemic on the state budget at that time.

# Other Bills Supported or Followed



- ❖  Rental Payment Options (SB 5749/Trudeau)
- ❖  Apple Health & Homes (HB 1866/Chopp)
- ❖  Prevent Homelessness for Youth Exiting Systems of Care (HB 1905/Senn)
- ❖  DSHS Services to be Open and Accessible (HB 2075/Peterson)
- ❖  PSH Task Force at Dept. of Commerce and PSH Seat on Affordable Housing Advisory Board (HB 1724/Macri)
- ❖  Stipends for People with Lived Expertise on State Boards and Commissions (SB 5793/Wilson, C., Trudeau)
- ❖  Time Limit Extension to the Five-year Limit for TANF (HB 1755/Peterson)
- ❖  Expanding Eligibility for the Independent Youth Housing Program (SB 5566/Kuderer)

# 2022 Budget Priorities



- ❖ **Invest \$500M in Affordable Homes**
  - \$430M for Housing Trust Fund
  - \$70M for Rapid Acquisition
- ❖ **Increase Aged, Blind & Disabled Cash Grant \$197 to \$417/month**
  - 43% of people on ABD are experiencing homelessness
- ❖ **Workforce Capacity and Sustainability for Nonprofit Homelessness Providers and PSH Providers**
  - \$78M to address staffing shortages by providing hazard pay, retention and recruitment bonuses, secondary trauma resources, and other supports for the frontline workers who are so critical to ending homelessness

# 2022 Budget Priorities (con't)

- ❖ **\$2M for Pre-eviction Legal Aid and \$1.3M to Address Shortfall for Tenants' Right to Counsel**
  - Right to Counsel is available to tenants in eviction court, but pre-eviction civil legal aid is the first line of defense against eviction. It prevents cases from entering the court process and empowers tenants to utilize their rights.
- ❖ **\$4.5M in Foreclosure Prevention**
  - to ensure the state's highly effective Foreclosure Fairness Act safety net - housing counselors, foreclosure prevention hotline staff, legal aid attorneys, and the mediation program - can provide crucial wrap-around support for people navigating the daunting foreclosure process
- ❖ **State Funding and Expenditure Authority for the State Healthcare Authority to Continue the Foundational Community Supports and Medicaid Transformation Project for Another 5 Years**
  - FCS allows the use of federal Medicaid dollars to pay for the services needed to support people exiting unsheltered homelessness and the services needed to support people living in Permanent Supportive Housing.

# 2022 Final Capital Budget



- ❖  **\$413M in Affordable Homes!!!**
  - House voted \$500M, Senate voted for \$361M, Final vote \$413M
  - \$113M for Housing Trust Fund
  - \$300M for Rapid Acquisition

The rapid acquisition funds are broken into buckets (see below). This funding section also includes language that allows the funds to be used for "other low-income or special needs populations" or for gap financing of existing projects if there are not otherwise enough applications.

- \$20 million solely for rural projects
- \$10 million solely for cost overruns for projects funded by prior rapid capital acquisition funds
- \$2.372 million solely for direct project earmarks
- \$60 million solely for Apple Health and Homes
- \$200k solely for a broker

**This new funding brings the biennial total for the Housing Trust Fund and rapid acquisition to about \$708 million!!**