Joint Recommendations Committee
DRAFT 2021 State Legislative Priorities

1. INCREASE DOCUMENT RECORDING FEE TO MEET DEMAND

Increase the document recording fee by $100 to address the unmet demand for Operating, Rental Assistance and Services funds for affordable housing and support shelters.

Operating funding needs for over 3,000 current permanent supportive housing units in King County, supported primarily by document recording fee revenue, are expected to outpace revenue over the next five years. A document recording fee increase (or other dedicated revenue source), with an automatic increase for inflation, would address this imminent gap and preserve access to housing for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness.

2. MAKE EXISTING REVENUE SOURCES MORE RESPONSIVE TO LOCAL NEEDS

The King County Affordable Housing Committee estimates it will cost approximately $20 billion to construct or preserve, operate, and service 44,000 homes affordable at 0-50% Area Median Income (AMI) between 2019 and 2024 in order to make significant progress toward the region's goal to ensure that no household pays more than 30% of its income on housing by 2044.
Greater flexibility is needed in two current revenue options to ensure the King County region has a diverse stock of affordable homes and serves people experiencing homelessness and at-risk of homelessness:

- **Councilmanic 0.1% sales tax option (RCW 82.14.530)**
  - Allow the subject tax to be used for property acquisition (not just construction) to support a speedy response to chronic homelessness and affordable housing needs;
  - Update the allowable populations to more effectively meet local housing needs:
    - Clarify that funding can support housing for homeless single adults;
    - Allow funding to support existing units of affordable housing, not just new ones.

- **Lodging taxes and affordable housing/behavioral health sales taxes:**
  - Update the allowable populations to more effectively meet local housing needs:
    - Remove the 30% AMI floor on housing related lodging tax revenue expenditures; and
    - Permit lodging tax funds to support capital for youth service space.

3. INVEST $250 MILLION IN THE HOUSING TRUST FUND (HTF)

The HTF is the state's primary source of financial equity for developing affordable housing across Washington State. It is a critical source of leverage for housing programs in King County. When the HTF is increased, the region gains additional permanent supportive homeless housing and other affordable homes.

4. MAINTAIN FUNDING FOR ABD/HEN PARTICIPANTS

The Housing & Essential Needs (HEN) and Aged, Blind, and Disabled (ABD) programs help provide housing stability for people with disabilities and those experiencing homelessness. A much-needed increase to HEN occurred in 2020. For 2021-22, the Commerce Department proposed cutting back HEN funding to 2017-19

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levels. This proposal would reduce funding in King County by an estimated $8 million and eliminate services for approximately 640 residents. Washington State must maintain these critical supports at 2020 levels.

5. ADOPT STATEWIDE TENANT PROTECTIONS

Pass statewide protections against discriminatory and arbitrary evictions, increase resources for rental assistance and foreclosure prevention, and support housing stability in response to the COVID economic recession.

- Currently, only Seattle, Auburn, Burien, and Federal Way have just cause policies in place that prohibit landlords from evicting tenants for "no cause." Landlords in the rest of Washington State can terminate a renter's tenancy for "no cause" as long as they follow the terms of the lease and provide 20 days' notice. This creates uncertainty for renters, who are at risk of homelessness when they are unable to find a suitable, affordable home they can afford within 20 days. Just Cause eviction protections would require that landlords show cause (from an enumerated list) in order to terminate tenancy before the end of a lease.

- Respond to increased housing instability caused by the COVID-19 pandemic through resources for rental assistance and foreclosure prevention.

- Existing manufactured home (mobile home) relocation reimbursements and notice requirements are outdated and do not adequately meet current market conditions. Make it easier for manufactured home park tenants to maintain housing stability by increasing both the amount of relocation assistance and tenant notice protections, particularly for park closures, to better reflect market realities.

- Pass the Housing Justice Act to ban discrimination against renters impacted by the criminal justice system (SB 6490/HB 2878 from 2020).

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