

## Enabling Localities to Manage Their Own Housing Crisis

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3 **WHEREAS** existing Washington State law unduly restrains local government from fully  
4 determining how to handle housing policies within their jurisdiction, and cities that have  
5 attempted creative solutions are already facing costly legal battles;

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7 **WHEREAS** homelessness is overwhelmingly caused by growing rent, 31% in Skagit County  
8 alone in the past five years, with school districts statewide facing the alarming burden of  
9 numerous homeless children in 2015;

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11 **WHEREAS** senior and low-income owners of manufactured/mobile homes, are guaranteed at  
12 least a one-year lease on land, nothing in RCW 5920 limits the size of their annual rent increase;

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14 **WHEREAS** we are deeply concerned by the number of families on short term leases who may  
15 be evicted on short notice and without cause;

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17 **WHEREAS** many vulnerable individuals and families face discrimination by landlords  
18 unwilling to rent to those with Section 8, senior, veteran, or disability vouchers;

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20 **WHEREAS** employment opportunities are limited for those who must live where they can  
21 afford rent;

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23 **WHEREAS** income increases for middle and lower income families have not kept pace with  
24 rent, exacerbated by the lack of affordable housing in the dominant for-profit housing market;  
25 and

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27 **WHEREAS** 53% of Skagit County renters pay more than 30% of their income for rent, reducing  
28 disposable income to support local business;

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30 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats call for the 1991 laws  
31 RCW 35.21.830 and 36.01.130 to be rescinded allowing local authorities to regulate rent, while  
32 respecting the right of landlords to earn a profit and maintain their properties; and

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34 **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats believe  
35 while California and New York with similar financial issues have instituted some form of rent  
36 control, that Washington, a progressive State, should lead the rest of the nation in establishing  
37 public policy that provides all residents the opportunity for safe, healthy affordable homes in  
38 thriving communities.

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41 Submitted by the Skagit County Democrats.

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43 The Platform Committee recommended that this resolution be passed at their June 15, 2018  
44 meeting.

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46 The 2018 Washington State Democratic Convention passed this resolution on June 16, 2018.