

More than Just Money – Comprehensive Solutions for Washington’s Homelessness and Housing Crisis.

Sen. Phil Fortunato is proposing a holistic approach that deals with immediate manifestations of homelessness and long-term solutions that increase housing supply.

Washington’s homelessness and housing crisis is not new. It has been a growing problem in our state’s largest city and now evident in every community across the state. It is more than just housing affordability, which in many instances has been made worse by growing regulations and costs to build.

Over the past six years, the number of unsheltered homeless has almost doubled, and as of 2018 Seattle alone had more homeless people than that of the entire state of New York. Despite billions being spent, the problem persists and the only solutions from the other side are more money on failed programs.

Criminal Enforcement related to Homelessness

Things like public intoxication, open drug use and graffiti are signs of social decay. We need to enforce the law and remove homelessness individuals from the streets that are engaging in criminal activity, hold them accountable and provide treatment.

- I. [SB 6460 - Keep Communities Graffiti Free Act](#)
- II. [SB 6458 – Blue-Flag law \(Manifesting Self-neglect\)](#)
- III. [SB 6502 – Prosecutorial Discretion](#)

Immediate Response to Homelessness – [SB 6459 – SHELTER Act](#)

Government must do everything it can to provide immediate shelter or a safe environment for homeless people to live with the considerable resources we already have. The Supreme Court has ruled that you cannot remove people from the sidewalks or parks if they don’t have a place to go. Camping in parks or on the streets is not safe, sustainable or compassionate. Jurisdictions must provide space for unsheltered homeless to camp and provide services such as employment, mental health and drug counseling funded from the Housing Trust Fund.

Building Long-Term Affordability

The housing and homelessness problem is a continuum. Much of the state’s resources have been focused on creating costly rental units that trap people. At the same time, we’ve placed unnecessary and costly barriers to build housing, making it more expensive for everyone. We need to move people through the system toward stable and permanent housing. We must remove costly regulations and taxes on housing and allow the free market to meet the demand.

- I. [SB 6470 – Reducing Unnecessary Paperwork to Promote Development](#)
- II. [SB 6457 – American Dream Homes](#)