



2019 State Legislative Priorities

The Housing Development Consortium Seattle-King County (HDC) is a nonprofit membership organization of 165 private businesses, nonprofit organizations, and public partners dedicated to the vision that all people live with dignity in safe, healthy, affordable homes in communities of opportunity. HDC supports the following state advocacy priorities* for 2019:

Fund the State Housing Trust Fund & Expand Funding for Housing & Homelessness Services

- **Invest in the Housing Trust Fund at historic levels in the 2019-20 biennium to address the growing need for homes affordable to low-income families and individuals**
- **Ensure adequate funding for Housing & Essential Needs Program**

It should be possible for working families and people with low incomes to afford housing and still have enough money for basic expenses like groceries, transportation, and childcare. The Housing Trust Fund is Washington's mechanism for ensuring access to housing for all and in a time of historic need, it should be funded at historic levels. Similarly, adequate funding for programs that help people keep themselves housed is imperative. Dedicated, sustainable revenue streams should be identified.

Since 1989, the Housing Trust Fund has invested more than \$1 billion in new and improved housing, leveraged more than \$4 billion in private and public sector support, and increased the stock of affordable housing by more than 47,000 homes in every county across the state. Investments in the Housing Trust Fund create thousands of jobs and stimulate Washington's local economies--creating healthy, vibrant, and affordable communities.

Empower Local Governments to Address Their Constituent's Affordable Housing Needs

- **Provide counties with a state revenue stream for affordable and permanent supportive housing**
- **Give local governments councilmanic authority to pursue revenue options suited for their local housing needs**

King County's many moderate and low-wage workers should be able to live affordably near their jobs, transit, and other resources rather than endure long, expensive and polluting commutes that place them far from family and community for too much of the working day. In locations with skyrocketing rents, like Seattle, Bellevue, and Vancouver, public resources for affordable housing have not kept up with growing need.

Expand Homeownership Opportunities

- **Support legislation that fosters development of more condominiums, an affordable option for many stages of life**

Homeownership is a driver of both personal and community wellbeing. Owning a home offers stability and enables a household to build wealth, yet this opportunity has been increasingly difficult for many as median home sale prices around Washington State have increased more than 60% since 2012, and by even greater amounts in areas of concentrated growth like King County.

Adopted September 14th, 2018 | This is not a comprehensive list of all policies HDC intends to advocate for or support throughout 2019. For more information, contact Patience Malaba, Advocacy Mobilization Manager, patience@housingconsortium.org 206-682-9541 | www.housingconsortium.org | @HDC_SeaKC

Condominiums are a promising tool for increasing homeownership, and creating neighborhoods with a variety of housing types and reducing sprawl, both goals of the Growth Management Act. Condominium development by affordable housing organizations offers further promise for increasing homeownership opportunities for low-income communities, preventing displacement in gentrifying neighborhoods, and leveraging the value of surplus properties made available for affordable housing. HDC supports changes to the Condominium Act that remove disincentives to condominium development so that first-time homebuyers and households looking to downsize have more options at more affordable prices.

Progressively Increase Revenue to Fund Essential Services

- **Adopt an equitable and responsible budget that increases revenue progressively and expands vital human services**

Everyone deserves a top-notch education and quality mental health care, but they also need to have stable housing, healthy foods, and other basic needs to help them succeed. Additional revenues are needed to ensure Washington State can meet its paramount duty to fund education while maintaining our commitment to health, safety, and opportunity for all our residents. HDC believes that the state is best positioned to address the needs of people with modest incomes when revenues are sourced equitably.

It is essential that we utilize new, progressive revenue sources and equitably align current and future sources, not only to build the affordable homes our region needs, but ensure adequate education, mental health, and other services are available when they are needed. In times of uneven economic growth, robust public funding is especially critical.

Enact Strong Tenant Protections

- **Ensure that tenants are not unfairly evicted**
- **Ensure that people exiting the criminal justice system are not unfairly denied housing**

A safe, healthy, and affordable home is fundamental for everyone to achieve their full potential, but rising rents coupled with weak or absent tenant protections make it harder for people to access and keep housing. The eviction process presents substantial obstacles even for tenants who are willing and able to pay rent, or need time to access rent assistance in order to stay housed. Ensuring tenants have adequate protections from unfair evictions and time to access needed housing resources is critical to combatting homelessness in our state.

People exiting the criminal justice system should be able to reenter society without entering homelessness. Fair Chance Housing addresses bias against people who have served their time, are seeking to provide for themselves and their families, and yet face barriers to housing.