

LAWMAKER REVIEW



More Regulations = Affordable Housing?

FEBRUARY 8, 2019

The legislature has proclaimed that they are focusing on affordable housing this session - however, we are seeing in hearing after hearing a focus on subsidized housing instead of real market solutions. Streamlining planning and development regulations would enable market and subsidized housing to reach occupancy more quickly. Nearly all bills that start this important conversation also have mandatory inclusionary zoning requirements or a massive income restriction.

Subsidized housing, as well as market-rate housing, must abide by the same land use and local development regulations. Subsidized housing advocates cannot see that making processes shorter helps both types of housing – a rising tide raises all ships. Jurisdictions that claim to plan for growth and then adopt restrictive local development regulations and zoning, need to be held accountable.

We believe jurisdictions who actually plan for growth and encourage it by eliminating nonsense development regulations should be rewarded and allowed to continue on. Builders who have a project that meets growth targets, zoning, comprehensive plans, and development regulations should not be subject to endless appeals by anti-growth organizations. BIAW will continue the conversation in hopes of refining some of these ideas to help all types of housing and to give Washington residents more opportunity for home ownership.

What Can You Do?

With the legislature only 25 percent of the way through the regular session and seeing nearly 2,000 bill introductions, we will need your help in the coming weeks to break through the noise. From calls and emails to your legislator, to office visits and offering testimony, telling our industry's story is critical to killing bad legislation, advancing good legislation and bringing balance where we have input.

Be on the lookout for alerts from our Government Affairs team with instructions on ways that you can take action to help educate legislators on issues facing our industry.