

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-01

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PASSAGE OF RENT STABILIZATION LEGISLATION BY THE WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, the most recent US Census and American Community Survey data show that over half of Bellingham residents are renters, with nearly a third of that total severely cost-burdened, spending more than half their monthly income on rent; and

WHEREAS, recent analysis by City Planning and Housing Services staff shows that rents within the City of Bellingham have risen by over 40% since 2019, and continue to exceed local wage growth and the rate of inflation; and

WHEREAS, the Whatcom County Point In Time homeless count increased by 27% from 2022 to 2023; and

WHEREAS, throughout Bellingham's 2023-2027 Consolidated Plan, stable and affordable rental housing is identified as a priority need for workforce development and local economic growth; and

WHEREAS, Bellingham City Council declared a "housing affordability and homelessness crisis" on July 24, 2023; and

WHEREAS, on August 8, 2023, the Whatcom County Council, acting as the Health Board, approved a resolution affirming that affordable housing and homelessness are a public health crisis and requesting updates on county actions; and

WHEREAS, renters throughout Washington State need rent stabilization; and

WHEREAS, both Washington State House Bill 2114 and Senate Bill 5961 provide for statewide rent stabilization; and

WHEREAS, on January 8, 2024, the Bellingham City Council authorized Council Member Lilliquist to sign in support of HB 2114, which occurred the following day via the Washington State Legislature's web portal; and

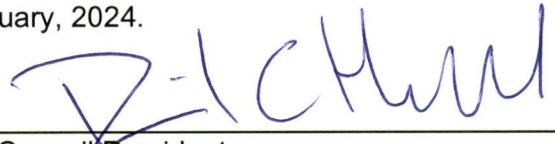
WHEREAS, on January 9, 2024, Whatcom County Council voted to add Washington State House Bill 2114 and Senate Bill 5961 to Whatcom County's 2024 State Legislative Priorities

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM:

Section 1. The City of Bellingham supports the passage of legislation that provides rent stabilization across Washington State.


Section 2. A copy of this resolution shall be sent to Bellingham's Washington State Legislative Delegation.

PASSED by the Council this 29th day of January, 2024.



Council President


APPROVED by me this 9th day of February, 2024.



Mayor

ATTEST: 

Finance Director

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Office of the City Attorney