

OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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sSB-194

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A RIGHT TO HOUSING.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 22 \$	FY 23 \$
Department of Housing	GF - Cost	128,000 - 248,000	164,000 - 328,000
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	47,000 - 97,000	64,000 - 132,000

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill establishes the Housing Advocate in the Department of Housing (DOH) and results in a cost to the General Fund of \$175,000 to \$345,000 in FY 22 and \$228,000 to \$460,000 in FY 23 for two to four new staff beginning on October 1, 2021. DOH does not have the capacity to perform the duties of the Housing Advocate with existing staff. Depending on the volume of new complaints that the agency must review and attempt to resolve, DOH will need to hire one to three ombudsmen, each with salary and fringe benefit costs of approximately \$85,000 in FY 22 and \$116,000 in FY 23.² Additionally,

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 41.3% of payroll in FY 22 and FY 23.

² It is unclear if only those recipients of DOH services (at least 80,000 people just for rental assistance and homelessness services) or all state residents would be eligible to be assisted by the Housing Advocate. It is assumed that the ombudsman would primarily assist residents by directing them to the appropriate state or municipal

DOH will need to hire one research analyst with expertise in housing policy with salary and fringe benefit costs of approximately \$75,000 in FY 22 and \$102,000 in FY 23. Other expenses associated with new agency staff are estimated to total \$15,000 in FY 22 and \$10,000 in FY 23.

The bill does not result in a fiscal impact with respect to the goal to progressively fulfill a "right to housing," as established and defined by the bill. It does not mandate or require the state to spend additional funds on programs or services related to the components of this "right" as enumerated. The bill does, however, require state agencies and local governments to take such goals into consideration when adopting or revising policies, regulations, or grant criteria that are related to housing, and to prioritize specific groups in doing so.

The bill also establishes a seventeen member right to housing committee to review existing and proposed housing policies and to report on it annually, which will have no fiscal impact.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

Sources: Department of Housing

departments that currently handle such housing complaints or to other state resources.