



General Assembly

February Session, 2022

***Raised Bill No. 168***

LCO No. 1614



Referred to Committee on HOUSING

Introduced by:  
(HSG)

***AN ACT ESTABLISHING A RIGHT TO HOUSING.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2022*) (a) It shall be the goal of  
2 this state to implement policies that will respect, protect and fulfill a  
3 right to affordable, decent, safe and stable housing for every resident of  
4 this state.

5 (b) Each state agency, as defined in section 1-79 of the general  
6 statutes, and each political subdivision of the state, in implementing the  
7 provisions of this section, shall:

8 (1) Consider the right to housing under subsection (a) of this section  
9 and the components of such right set forth in subsection (c) of this  
10 section when adopting or revising policies, regulations or grant criteria  
11 that implicate, impact or affect such right;

12 (2) When implementing such policies, regulations or grant criteria,  
13 give priority to assisting families of low and moderate income, as  
14 defined in section 8-39 of the general statutes, in the state; and

15 (3) To the extent practicable, attempt to serve households currently  
16 experiencing homelessness or at risk of housing loss and those in the  
17 lower range of the income group to which the agency's or political  
18 subdivision's programs are directed.

19 (c) The right to housing includes, but is not limited to, the following  
20 components:

21 (1) The right to protection from housing loss: This right implicates  
22 governmental programs that ensure the legal security of persons and  
23 households at risk of losing housing or experiencing homelessness,  
24 including eviction prevention programs, legal assistance in evictions,  
25 financial assistance, support services and problem-solving counseling;

26 (2) The right to safe housing that meets all basic needs: This right  
27 implicates the internal habitability of the home as well as the necessary  
28 services and infrastructure to support a healthy and dignified standard  
29 of living;

30 (3) The right to housing and affordability: This right implicates  
31 governmental programs that provide rental assistance, encourage the  
32 maintenance, repair and rehabilitation of existing housing and enlarge  
33 the stock of new low-cost housing, all of which ensure the ability to  
34 secure and maintain housing without risking access to other essential  
35 needs;

36 (4) The right to rehousing assistance for persons and households that  
37 have become homeless: This right implicates governmental programs  
38 that support the transition of persons experiencing homelessness to  
39 long-term permanent housing that is affordable; and

40 (5) The right to recognition of special circumstances: This right  
41 implicates the adaptation of governmental programs to ensure  
42 accessibility to households facing particular obstacles to finding  
43 affordable, decent, safe and stable housing, whether because of race,  
44 religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability,  
45 unemployment, criminal record, eviction history, family status, source

46 of income, immigration status, cultural traditions, having been victims  
47 of fraud and financial manipulation or other obstacles.

48 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a right to  
49 housing committee to review existing and proposed housing policies  
50 and advise on (1) the state's implementation of a right to housing; and  
51 (2) gaps and needs of vulnerable populations with regard to access to  
52 permanent housing, including, but not limited to, (A) individuals  
53 experiencing homelessness, including homeless youth, individuals with  
54 disabilities, including physical disabilities and disabilities related to  
55 mental health, substance abuse and developmental conditions; (B)  
56 individuals with past or current criminal justice system involvement;  
57 (C) individuals from historically marginalized racial and ethnic groups;  
58 (D) individuals from historically marginalized groups based on sexual  
59 orientation, gender identity or gender expression; (E) survivors of  
60 sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking and sexual  
61 trafficking; (F) refugees and immigrants; and (G) veterans.

62 (b) The committee shall consist of the following members:

63 (1) Three appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,  
64 one with expertise in homelessness policies and programs, one with  
65 expertise in low-income housing policies and programs and one with  
66 expertise in matters relating to evictions and housing court;

67 (2) Three appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one  
68 with expertise in fair housing protections, one with expertise in the  
69 development of low-income housing and one with expertise in, or  
70 personal experience with, disability and housing insecurity;

71 (3) Three appointed by the majority leader of the House of  
72 Representatives, one with expertise in, or personal experience with, the  
73 criminal justice impact on housing insecurity, one with expertise in, or  
74 personal experience with, the impact of race or ethnicity on housing  
75 insecurity and one with expertise in, or personal experience with, the  
76 impact of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression on  
77 housing insecurity;

78 (4) Three appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one with  
79 expertise in, or personal experience with, the impact of sexual violence,  
80 domestic violence, dating violence or stalking on housing insecurity,  
81 one with experience in, or personal experience with, the impact of sex  
82 trafficking and housing insecurity and one with expertise in, or personal  
83 experience with, the impact of refugee or immigrant status on housing  
84 insecurity;

85 (5) Two appointed by the minority leader of the House of  
86 Representatives, one with expertise in, or personal experience with, the  
87 impact on veteran status on housing insecurity and one of whom is a  
88 current or recent recipient of homeless assistance, low-income housing  
89 assistance or assistance in an eviction or housing summary process  
90 matter;

91 (6) Two appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, both of whom  
92 are current or recent recipients of homeless assistance, low-income  
93 housing assistance or assistance in an eviction or housing summary  
94 process matter; and

95 (7) The Commissioner of Housing, or the commissioner's designee.

96 (c) Any member of the committee appointed under subdivision (1),  
97 (2), (3), (4), (5) or (6) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member  
98 of the General Assembly.

99 (d) All initial appointments to the committee shall be made not later  
100 than sixty days after the effective date of this section. Appointed  
101 members of the committee shall serve for three-year terms which shall  
102 commence on the date of appointment and may serve until a successor  
103 is appointed. Any vacancy shall be filled by the respective appointing  
104 authority pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

105 (e) The chairperson of the committee shall be jointly appointed by the  
106 speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore  
107 of the Senate. Upon appointment of such chairperson, the work of the  
108 committee may begin even if all other appointments have not yet been

109 made. The chairperson shall schedule the first meeting of the committee,  
110 which shall be held not later than ninety days after the effective date of  
111 this section. If appointments under subsection (b) of this section are not  
112 made within the sixty-day period required under subsection (d) of this  
113 section, the chairperson may designate individuals with the required  
114 expertise to serve on the committee until appointments are made  
115 pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

116 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the  
117 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to housing  
118 shall serve as the administrative staff of the committee.

119 (g) The committee shall meet not less than twice per fiscal year.

120 (h) The Department of Housing shall provide presentations and data  
121 regarding its implementation of the right to housing at the request of  
122 the committee.

123 (i) Not later than July 1, 2023, and annually thereafter, the committee  
124 shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the joint  
125 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
126 matters relating to housing, in accordance with the provisions of section  
127 11-4a of the general statutes.

128 (j) During any regular or special session of the General Assembly, the  
129 committee shall identify and review any proposed legislation impacting  
130 the right to housing and may provide testimony on any such proposals  
131 given a public hearing before any relevant committees of the General  
132 Assembly, providing analysis on the potential impact of the legislation  
133 on the right to housing and the vulnerable populations described in  
134 subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of this section to preserve such right.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
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Section 1	<i>October 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section

**Statement of Purpose:**

To establish a right to housing for all residents of the state and a right to housing committee.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*