

Fatal Flaws Associated with the "Home Opportunity Fund" to be Funded IF the Prop 1 Levy on the 2017 Ballot is Approved by the Voters.

The Real Problem

Placing a property tax levy on the November ballot to fund "affordable" housing, without fixing the causes of this problem, is sheer folly. Declaring a housing emergency so the one percent limit on property taxes can be exceeded to "solve" **problems caused by the County** is totally unacceptable. **Subsidizing housing does not make it affordable. It just shifts the bill to the taxpayers.**

The zoning, infrastructure, building codes, regulations and permit processes that Jefferson County has imposed on our business operations, company facilities and housing, are among the most restrictive and costly in Washington State. They must be fixed.

Affordability is a balance between cost and ability to pay. So it is clear that jobs are a major part of the equation. **Without well paying jobs, housing will never be affordable.**

Other Fatal Flaws in this Plan

The seven-year limit on the life of this levy is illusionary. Without fixing the underlying problems, housing will never be affordable and some people will be addicted to this handout forever.

An unintended consequence of this tax is to make existing housing less affordable. This will cause elderly people on limited budgets to have to sell their homes. It will also cause renters to face increased rents, as property owners have to pass on the increased tax burden to renters. Further, businesses will have to pass on the increase cost of operations driving up all living costs.

The list of allowed grant recipients includes private profit making companies. Why not fix the underlying problems so the private sector can handle housing without using taxpayers' money?

Other funds likely to be leveraged by these funds are more taxpayer dollars filtered through state and federal agencies. Every bureaucracy and organization these funds pass through will take a percentage off the top.

No drug testing or programs to help subsidy recipients' progress to becoming self-sufficient is included in or required by this plan.

The board administering the fund is to be totally composed of nine unelected political appointees and the very loose constrains on this fund make it ripe for kickbacks, graft, waste, fraud, abuse, corruption and political payoffs.

Almost all of those arguing in favor of passing this levy are either potential grant recipients or subsidy beneficiaries. The letters to the County Commissioners ran 4 to 1 against and three different real time counts of the oral testimony had similar counts.

An evaluation provided by:
Gene Farr
Port Townsend