



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 2009-0436, **Version:** 1

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A MOTION supporting a multicounty work force housing down payment assistance initiative to assist in restoring the economic vitality of western Washington

WHEREAS, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was passed by the United States Congress with the goal of stimulating the economy and providing jobs for Americans, and

WHEREAS, one of the principle drivers in the current economic crisis is the decline of the housing industry, resulting in increasing foreclosures, loss of jobs and reductions in public and private revenues, and

WHEREAS, this decline has led to thousands of homes being on the market, often at depressed prices, which further depressed the real estate market and increases unemployment, and

WHEREAS, an active housing industry is a major creator of jobs and wealth; construction of one hundred single family units has been shown to create one hundred jobs, \$18.1 million in local income and \$2.8 million in taxes and fees; and

WHEREAS, the Puget Sound region has been concerned for a number of years over the issue of "workforce housing," which refers to the difficulty of working families in this region who have moderate means of affording homes in the communities where they work, and

WHEREAS, in the current depressed market, many of these families could afford to purchase homes, having the necessary credit and the ability to make payments, but lack the necessary down payment, and

WHEREAS, assisting these families in the purchase of a home would have multiple benefits including increasing the availability of housing to middle income families, reducing the existing over-supply of housing on the market, creating jobs, increasing family incomes and providing local revenues for local, state and federal

governments, and

WHEREAS, the Puget Sound region seeks to apply principles of equity and social justice through an economic strategy that will create communities of opportunity, where individuals have access to livable wages, affordable housing, quality education, quality health care and safe and vibrant neighborhoods, and

WHEREAS, providing first time homebuyers with down payment assistance will promote many of these economic goals, and

WHEREAS, King County, Pierce county, Thurston county, Clark county and Snohomish county have worked together with representatives of the non-profit and for-profit housing industry to develop the outline of the Work Force Housing Down Payment Assistance Initiative, and

WHEREAS, King County, Pierce county, Thurston county, Clark county and Snohomish county intend to request \$50 million in Neighborhood Stabilization Fund dollars for the Work Force Housing Down Payment Assistance Initiative, and

WHEREAS, the proposal will be written and submitted to the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development by the state Department of Commerce, who would also administer the program, and

WHEREAS, the Work Force Housing Down Payment Assistance Initiative is designed to create a region-wide pool to provide down payment assistance to first time homebuyers according to the rules set forth by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, and

WHEREAS, targeted down payment assistance under the Work Force Housing Down Payment Assistance Initiative would be in the form of a loan, payable upon the refinancing or sale of the home, and

WHEREAS, targeted down payment assistance is available for six hundred affordable foreclosed properties, for up to twenty percent of their value, and

WHEREAS, all funds must be used for those earning one hundred twenty percent or less than the median income, with twenty-five percent of funds allocated for those earning fifty percent or less than the median income, and

WHEREAS, these loans, as repaid, would establish a revolving fund to continue assistance into the future which will provide ongoing opportunities, and

WHEREAS, this stimulus measure will spur economic growth with job stabilization and new jobs for those involved in real estate transaction, banking industry and housing trades, and

WHEREAS, the creation of jobs in these industries will then create additional jobs in other industries due to the multiplier effect;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A multicounty work force housing down payment assistance initiative to assist in restoring the economic vitality of western Washington is hereby supported by King County.