

## **2025 Recap of Proposed and Enacted Housing Legislation**

*[Revised as of March 14, 2025]*

### *Housing Needs in NM*

Ensuring affordable housing options for people of all income levels is crucial for a well-functioning economy. That said New Mexico is facing an unprecedented housing shortage and related affordability crisis. Since 2017 New Mexico has seen homelessness increase 87%, 47% faster than the national average. Median rents in New Mexico have increased 60% in that same time, as compared to 27% nationally. Advocating for more housing units to be built or rehabbed in New Mexico (whether multi family or single family ) will ultimately place more housing units in the market, ease the housing shortage and bring down rents for low to moderate income households.

### *Advocacy at the 2025 Legislative Session*

Each Legislative Session the LWVNM establishes priority areas to track legislation and concentrate its lobbying efforts on. For the 2025 Session, Housing was designated as one of the four Legislative Priority groups – the other priority areas were: Environment, Health Care Priority and Voting, Elections & Ethics. Each priority group formed a subcommittee that tracked legislation. The members of the Housing Priority group were Starlyn Brown, Janie McGuigan, Karen Wentworth (all with LWVCNM) and Elizabeth Bardwell (LWVSNM).

### *Overview of Proposed Housing Legislation*

This session saw a significant increase in housing legislation introduced. Over 200 bills sought to address a wide variety of housing needs and issues including: funds for the development of new and/or rehabilitated housing (SB145 Housing Trust Fund); legislation to create a new State Office of Housing Planning and Production (SB205/HB448); and, incentives for municipalities to implement land use and zoning strategies that increase housing affordability and accessibility (HB571 Building Communities Act ). Most notable was the extent of legislation introduced to address the landlord – tenant contractual relationship. There were bills introduced to address the terms of rental applications, screening of tenants, allowable income streams, background and screening processes as well as adequate notices of fee and rent increases, e.g. SB267 (Housing Application Fees and Tenant Protections), HB43 (Housing Income to Rent Screening Calculations), HB98 (Automatic Expungement of Eviction Records), HB462 (Nonpayment of Rent Notice Period), HB253 (Sealing of Certain Court Records), HB339 (Preventing Housing Discrimination based on a Housing Applicant's Source of Income), and HB462 (Nonpayment of Rent Notice Period).

### *Advocating for Changes in LWVNM Housing Position*

Noting these changes in the landscape of housing needs to ensure access to affordable rental housing, the Housing Priority group researched other LWV Housing positions across the U.S. and advocated for the adoption of this statement in the LWVNM Housing position: *‘Protection of the rights of both tenants and landlords’* from the LWV State of California, Housing Position. This change and other amendments to the State position include: encouraging energy efficient building electrification; promoting developments that provide a mix of market rate and affordable housing units; and, supporting homeless programs that provide both shelter and services for targeted populations -- were submitted and accepted by concurrence by the LWVNM Board midway through the Session. These changes allowed housing advocacy work during the later part of the 2025 Session to include a broader array of housing needs in its advocacy portfolio.

### *The Final Outcome*

In the final analysis, two housing related bills passed the House and Senate and were sent to the Governor’s office for signature. **SB267**, Housing Application Fees and Tenant Protections, which caps late fees and application fees and requires adequate notice of any changes in fee structure, was signed by the Governor on April 8; and, **HB571**, Building Communities Act, which creates incentives for municipalities that reform their zoning codes to promote the construction of affordable housing, was pocket vetoed. The rest of the housing bills died in either the Senate Judiciary Committee or the House Judiciary Committee, respectively.

Creating more affordable housing to ease the impact on the housing market and remove barriers for unhoused persons is a daunting challenge. It is important that we continue to advocate for the development of; and, equal access to affordable housing.