

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1000
By: Watson
Urban Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been suggested that legislation is needed to ensure that religious organizations are able to use their property for housing the homeless, if they desire to do so as part of their overall mission, in order to bring state law in line with federal law. S.B. 1000 provides this legislation by setting out provisions relating to the municipal regulation of housing for homeless individuals provided by a religious organization.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 1000 amends the Local Government Code to prohibit a municipal zoning or land use ordinance from prohibiting a religious organization from using the religious organization's facility as housing for homeless individuals or having housing units on the organization's property for homeless individuals. The bill specifies that the term "homeless individual" includes any individual in need of housing assistance and provides for the meaning of "religious organization" by reference to its definition under provisions relating to faith-based chemical dependency treatment programs.

S.B. 1000 authorizes a municipality to adopt or enforce an ordinance that imposes reasonable health and safety regulations on housing for homeless individuals provided on a religious organization's property. The bill authorizes a municipality to require a religious organization that provides housing for homeless individuals on the organization's property to provide the following:

- electricity and heat for each housing unit; and
- at least one kitchen and bathroom on the property that may be used by the individuals.

S.B. 1000 establishes that, for purposes of the bill's provisions, the term "housing" does not include temporary housing provided during a life-threatening emergency or for natural disaster relief.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.