



News Release

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY APPROVES COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING PLANNING ACT

SPRINGFIELD, IL – The Illinois General Assembly has approved legislation requiring the development of an annual housing plan and yearly assessment of the state’s progress toward meeting housing goals.

Senate Bill 2290, which the Senate passed Thursday by a vote of 41 to 16, would create a permanent task force of housing leaders and the directors of state agencies with housing assistance programs.

Gov. Rod Blagojevich created a State Housing Task Force by executive order in 2003, and the task force issued the state’s first comprehensive and coordinated plan to better distribute more than \$600 million in annual state spending on housing programs. The executive order expires in 2008.

“The state has made significant progress in coordinating planning for more affordable housing, and enacting the Comprehensive Housing Planning Act can build on that progress by government leaders far into the future,” said King Harris, Senior Executive of Chicago Metropolis 2020.

“By passing this legislation, the General Assembly has recognized that the availability of decent and affordable housing is important to the state’s economic health and that state government housing policies should be guided by goals to help low-income families, seniors with disabilities and others in need of new and rehabilitated housing,” Harris said.

Chicago Metropolis 2020, a business-based civic organization promoting long-term planning and smart investment in the Chicago region, led a coalition of groups in support of the legislation. The supporters included the Illinois Association of Realtors, the Illinois Housing Council, the Metropolitan Planning Council and more than two dozen other groups from throughout Illinois.

Harris applauded the leadership of Sen. Iris Martinez of Chicago and State Rep. Julie Hamos of Evanston, who were the chief sponsors of SB 2290. He also noted the active help of the leaders of the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IDHA) in drafting the legislation.

“As the Chicago region grows, it is becoming much harder for workers to find housing close to their jobs, and the jobs/housing mismatch is detrimental to families, businesses and our economy,” Harris said. “This legislation can help the state make wise decisions on how best to direct housing assistance and develop a better mix of housing to meet the needs of Illinoisans today and in the future.”

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