Affordable Housing

Arizona SB 1343 was introduced on January 29 by Sen. Juan Mendez, D-Tempe, and referred to the Senate Finance Committee. This bill would alter the existing formula for determining the appraised valuation of affordable housing.

California AB 725 passed the Assembly on January 30 and was transmitted to the Senate, where it was referred to the Rules Committee. This bill would require at least 50 percent of a suburban or metropolitan jurisdiction’s share of the regional housing need for above moderate-income housing from being allocated to sites that allow at least two, but no more than 20, units of housing.

California AB 953 passed the Assembly on January 30 and was transmitted to the Senate, where it was referred to the Rules Committee. This bill would automatically approve permits for the creation of an accessory dwelling unit if a local agency does not act on the permit within 60 days.

Hawaii SB 2037 passed the Senate Housing Committee on January 30. This bill would prohibit counties from disapproving of or imposing additional requirements on affordable housing developments unless the county meets certain specified conditions.

Indiana SB 123 passed the Senate on February 4 and was referred to the House, where it is awaiting committee referral. This bill would provide an affordable and workforce housing state tax credit against state tax liability to a taxpayer for each taxable year in the state tax credit period of a qualified project in an aggregate amount that does not exceed the product of a percentage between 40 percent and 100 percent and the amount of the taxpayer’s aggregate federal tax credit for the qualified project.

Iowa HSB 599 passed the House Economic Growth Subcommittee on February 4. This bill would establish a first-time homebuyer grant fund that would award up to $2,500 to qualified individuals for the purchase of a primary residence.

New Jersey SB 1055 was introduced on January 30 by Sen. Brian Stack, D-Jersey City, and referred to the Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee. This bill would authorize qualified municipalities to prohibit the conversion of affordable rental housing units to forms of ownership housing.

Vermont SB 237 is scheduled for a February 7 hearing in the Senate Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs Committee. This bill would make numerous changes to state law regarding affordable housing, including promoting inclusionary growth, prohibiting certain restrictive covenants and creating specified permit exemptions for affordable housing projects.

Virginia HB 854 passed the Studies Subcommittee of the House Rules Committee on February 3. This bill would direct the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Virginia Housing and
Development Authority to perform a study on ways to incentivize the development of affordable housing in the state.

**Washington** [HB 2497](#) is scheduled for a February 10 hearing in the House Finance Committee. This bill would add the development of permanently affordable housing to the allowable uses of community revitalization financing, the local infrastructure financing tool, and local revitalization financing.

### Growth Management

**New Hampshire** [SB 475](#) passed the Senate Ways and Means Committee on February 5. This bill would authorize municipalities to adopt a property tax credit for the construction of densely-built workforce housing.

**Virginia** [HB 1101](#) passed the House Counties, Cities and Towns Committee on January 30 and was engrossed; it is now awaiting a third reading in that chamber. This bill would allow municipalities to create an affordable housing dwelling unit program. The programs would be aimed at addressing housing needs, promote a full range of housing choices, and encourage the construction and continued existence of housing affordable to low-and-moderate-income citizens.

### Home Buying Programs

**First-Time Home Buyer Savings Account**

**New Jersey** [AB 2627](#) was introduced on February 5 by Asm. Carol Murphy, D-Cinnaminson, and is awaiting committee referral. The bill would establish the New Jersey First-Time Home Buyer Savings Account Program and would provide gross income tax benefits for certain contributions to and earnings on assets maintained in accounts established by the program.

**Pennsylvania** [SB 309](#) passed the Senate on February 5 and is awaiting transmission to the House. This bill would authorize the creation of first-time homebuyers’ savings accounts in the state. Money deposited into this account would be able to be deducted from state income tax.

### NAR Miscellaneous

**Florida** [HB 459](#) was heard in the House Commerce Committee on February 6; however, no action was taken on the bill and it remains pending. This bill would specify that zoning and development regulations relating to building design elements do not apply to one or two family dwellings unless a building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or the regulations are adopted pursuant to the National Flood Insurance Program. A similar bill, [SB 954](#), is pending in the Senate Community Affairs Committee.

### Emotional Support Animals

**Florida** [SB 1084](#) is scheduled for a February 10 hearing in the Senate Innovation, Industry and Technology Committee. This bill would prohibit discrimination in housing rental to persons who use an emotional support animal. Such persons must be required to keep an emotional support animal in a
dwelling upon request and without being required to pay extra compensation. Under this bill, landlords would be authorized to request written documentation relating to an emotional support animal. The bill would also establish penalties for misrepresentation of an emotional support animal.

**Real Estate License Law**

**California AB 687** passed the Assembly on January 30 and was transmitted to the Senate, where it was referred to the Rules Committee. This bill would authorize limited liability companies to become licensed as real estate brokers.

**Indiana HB 1008** passed the House on January 31 and was referred to the Senate, where it is awaiting committee referral. This bill would require a board that issues licenses for regulated professions to issue a license to an individual who is licensed in another state, has established residency, has passed a substantially equivalent examination, has been in good standing, pays a fee and completes the licensure application form.

**Rent Control**

**California AB 36** was reintroduced on February 3 and is awaiting committee referral. This bill would limit the ability of local jurisdictions to apply rent control to units built after 1995 or when local rent ordinances were put into place, whichever is earlier. It would also prohibit local governments from applying rent control to single-family homes.

**Georgia HB 523** passed the House Regulated Industries Subcommittee on February 5. This bill would prohibit local governments from regulating the use of real estate as short-term rentals.

**Illinois HB 255** was referred to the House Judiciary – Civil Committee on February 4. This bill would repeal the state’s Rent Control Preemption Act, which prohibits municipalities from enacting or enforcing rent control measures.

**Local Short-Term Rental**

**New Hampshire SB 458** was heard on February 5 in the Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee on February 5; however, the committee took no action on the bill and it remains pending. This bill would prohibit municipalities from prohibiting short-term rentals.

**Vermont HB 567** is scheduled for a February 7 hearing in the House General, Housing and Military Affairs Committee. This bill would give municipalities the authority to license or regulate the operation of short-term rentals within the municipality.

**Vermont HB 891** is scheduled for a February 7 hearing in the House General, Housing and Military Affairs Committee. This bill would impose rental requirements on short-term rentals in the state, prohibiting individuals from offering all or part of a dwelling as a short-term rental unless it has been occupied by the owner as a primary resident for 270 days of the preceding year.
Electronic and Remote Notarization

**California** [AB 199](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextShow.xhtml?billId=20192020bh%20199) was reintroduced on February 3 and is awaiting committee referral. This bill would create the “California Online Notary Act of 2019.” It would allow notaries public to register as online notaries public, and to perform notarial acts and online notarizations by means of audio-video communication. It would also create recordkeeping provisions relating to online notarizations.

**Wisconsin** [SB 317](https://www.legis.wisconsin.gov/bills/) passed the Senate Agricultural, Revenue & Financial Institutions Committee on January 30. This bill would authorize notaries public to obtain licensure as an online notary public and perform notarial acts for persons who are not in the same physical location as the notary. It would authorize online notaries to use an electronic seal in addition to an electronic signature. The bill would also create a remote notary council to examine the issue of remote notarizations. Finally, the bill would require registration of online notarization system providers.

**Session Overview**

Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington and West Virginia are in regular session. The District of Columbia Council, Puerto Rico and U.S. Congress is also in regular session.

North Carolina convened on January 14 and adjourned later that day; with the Senate failing to override Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper’s veto of a teacher pay raise bill, reports *The News & Observer*. The legislature is in recess until April 28.

The following states are expected to convene their 2020 sessions on the dates provided: Wyoming (February 10), Minnesota (February 11), Louisiana (March 9) and Arkansas (April 8).

Wisconsin convened for a special session on January 28 after Democratic Gov. Tony Evers used his State of the State address to bring attention to the state’s farm crisis, reports *The Daily Cardinal*. Governor Evers stated that the special session will be part of a three-pronged plan on rural and agriculture revitalization.

Following her State of the State address on February 4, Alabama Republican Gov. Kay Ivey has urged the legislature to consider a special session to address growing concerns regarding the state’s prison overcrowding problem. However, there has not yet been a definitive date set for the session. The governor reportedly plans on endorsing a privatized approach to the problem of overcrowding and underfunding of prisons in the state.

North Carolina Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper has 10 days from presentment to act on legislation or it becomes law without signature.

The following states are currently holding 2020 interim committee hearings: Louisiana, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Texas House and Wyoming.
The following states are currently posting 2020 bill drafts, prefiles and interim studies: Arkansas and Louisiana.