

## Final Language

### Ballot Title

City of Bellingham  
Initiative 2023-02  
Rental Relocation Assistance Program for Tenants

City of Bellingham Initiative 2023-02 concerns the adoption of a rental relocation assistance program for tenants. This measure would require landlords to provide written notice 120 days before increasing rent by more than 8% in a rolling 12-month period; require landlords to pay relocation assistance equal to three times the current fair market monthly rent for Bellingham or three times the tenant's existing monthly rate, whichever is higher, when increasing rent more than 8%, with limited exceptions; provide tenants receiving assistance a relocation period of 5 months; and authorize private actions and city enforcement.

Should this measure be enacted into law?

Yes  
No

### Explanatory Statement

This measure would create an economic displacement assistance mandate. Residential landlords who increase rent by more than 8% in a rolling 12-month period would be required to pay relocation assistance to their tenants equal to three times the current fair market monthly rent for a similarly sized apartment in Bellingham or three times the tenant's existing monthly rent, whichever is larger. The tenant would have 5 months from the date they receive the assistance to relocate. The measure creates a private cause of action, establishes an affirmative defense to eviction, and violations would constitute civil infractions enforced by the City.