

Dems say work requirements bill would contribute to homelessness

Posted on Wednesday, May 10, 2017

The state Assembly today approved 61-35 a bill that would set up a pilot program adding work requirements for those who get federal housing vouchers.

The bill would only affect able-bodied adults whose housing vouchers are managed by the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority. WHEDA manages about 2,800 of the roughly 30,000 federally-funded vouchers in the state, as Madison and Milwaukee manage their own.

Dems said the bill would push people out of their homes, noting that it comes after the chamber passed a package aimed at helping homeless people.

“Here we are a week later about to vote on a bill that would risk making more people homeless,” said Rep. Mark Spreitzer, D-Beloit.

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

But Rep. Amy Loudenbeck, R-Clinton, noted the bill would include job training to help people find well-paying jobs. The bill, she said, would “open up a new spot” for those on waiting lists for the vouchers if those who refuse job training programs lose their eligibility.

The bill’s author, Rep. Terry Katsma, R-Oostburg, said at a news conference ahead of today’s session that it comes at a time of low unemployment and as companies across the state are looking to add workers.

“This is the time to do it,” he said.