

KENTUCKY HOUSING TASK FORCE 2025

Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the 2025 Interim

November 24, 2025

Call to Order and Roll Call

The fifth meeting of the Kentucky Housing Task Force 2025 was held on November 24, 2025, at 1:00 PM in Room 171 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Robby Mills, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Representative Susan Witten, Co-Chair; Senator Robby Mills, Co-Chair; Senators Matthew Deneen, Jimmy Higdon, and Brandon Smith; and Representatives Mike Clines, Jennifer Decker, Kim Holloway, Shawn McPherson, and Joshua Watkins.

LRC Staff: Mark Mitchell, Christopher Jacovitch, and Faithe Wheatley.

Approval of Minutes from the September and October Meetings

A motion was made by Representative McPherson and seconded by Senator Deneen to approve the minutes of the September 22, 2025, and October 21, 2025, meetings. Minutes were approved by voice vote without objection.

Discussion of Final Report

Chair Mills explained the purpose of the meeting was to hear from members in regards to the work of the task force and the final report. This is the end of the second year of the task force and the report will help guide the general assembly in the area of housing.

Representative McPherson stated the report was well written and concise. He asked for consideration to add language concerning the right to rebuild if current codes are met. Senator Mills made the motion, seconded by Representative Clines, to amend the report to read, "Simply put, a developer should be able to build or rebuild housing in an area that conforms to that area's actual character, and any requirement to the contrary should be disallowed."

Representative Watkins commented that the task force was exceptional work to be part of as a freshman from an urban district currently suffering from housing issues. He stated it was good to see the uniform approach from the General Assembly regarding

housing issues not just in urban districts, but across the Commonwealth. He complimented the work of the co-chairs, stated the task force has been bi-partisan in nature, and appreciated the expert testimony from varied sources and the technical expertise heard. He would like to see stronger language on interventions, specifically referring to state support on page 7 of the final report. He cautioned moratoriums on building code reforms, and stated the General Assembly should fund programs for down payment assistance.

Representative Clines thanked the co-chairs for their efforts. He stated the challenge for legislators is to write legislation to make some real changes to help Kentucky's housing problems.

Senator Deneen thanked the co-chairs for their work. He was encouraged by suggestions in the final report to allow local governments the flexibility to adopt their own pro-housing policies, and by the task force's recommendations in dealing with past legislation. Regarding item 14 in the summary of recommendations, he was encouraged to see the support for developers.

Senator Smith stated it was an honor to be on the task force. He mentioned manufactured homes from Louisville coming to Perry County to help rebuild the community. Kentucky has many different housing needs. He stated an increase in the affordable housing credits and work on zoning/permits are two of the items on which the General Assembly should focus.

Senator Higdon thanked the task force for their work. He mentioned 2025 RS SB 59, which would have allowed churches to build structures that meet the building code and local requirements on church property, as a piece in the puzzle to solving some of Kentucky's housing issues.

Representative Decker thanked the co-chairs for their work and for all the expert testimony. She stated the final report was encouraging and was impressed by the task force's focus on regulatory reform, zoning issues, and building codes.

Co-Chair Witten stated it was a pleasure to co-chair the task force for the second year. She stated Kentucky's housing issues are not simple and will require complex solutions. She was proud of the task force's recommendations because they help both rural and urban housing issues and feels this will lead to helpful legislation.

Chair Mills stated housing problems are complex. Regulations and incentivization are the two main categories for housing issues. He stated tough decisions will need to be

made to advocate for whatever level of government involvement needs to happen to help with Kentucky's housing challenges. He commented surrounding states incentivize housing. Chair Mills was proud of the task force's work and feels the final report is a good document. He thanked members for their input and involvement.

Representative Clines motioned, seconded by Senator Deneen, for the approval of the final report as amended by Representative McPherson. The motion passed by voice vote.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:24 PM.