

# SENATOR BRAD HAWKINS

12TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT - WASHINGTON STATE SENATE  
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## Leavenworth Affordable Rental Project funded in Senate budget



OLYMPIA ... Sen. Brad Hawkins' request to complete funding for a key Leavenworth Affordable Rental Project was allocated \$1.3 million in the Senate's capital budget proposal released today.

Thanks to the Marson Family, Upper Valley MEND has a unique opportunity to preserve 31 apartment units in Leavenworth for affordable workforce housing. The organization has already received \$600,000 from Leavenworth, \$860,000 from Chelan County, and \$1 million from the state. The proposed \$1.3 million would close the final funding gap to secure the acquisition of the properties.

**Senator Hawkins**, who sponsored the budget request, said, "I'm excited the Senate's budget recognizes our need for more affordable housing in Leavenworth. This is a unique opportunity thanks to the Marson Family, so I am excited to work with the partners to support the Leavenworth workforce."

**Hawkins** added, "The capital budget this year is especially tight, but when I learned that we might have flexibility in the budget for affordable housing, my first calls were to Mayor Florea and the Upper Valley MEND who quickly helped me submit a very compelling request. They, along with Chelan County, have

been exceptional partners on affordable housing. I hope this funding can be preserved in the final budget, which will likely be approved in early March.”

In 2022, Hawkins partnered with the City of Leavenworth, Chelan County, and Upper Valley MEND to secure passage of his [Senate Bill 5868](#), which allows counties to utilize their existing .09 sales tax dollars for affordable housing infrastructure or facilities. Chelan County has been utilizing this new authority to support project funding as part of its [Cascade Public Infrastructure Fund](#).

**Mayor Carl Florea, City of Leavenworth** *(from letter dated Jan. 24, 2024)*

“This is critical because, while Leavenworth has grown its tourism workforce by over 500 workers in the past 10 years, we have not provided more than a handful of housing units for these same workers over that period of time. We are fast becoming a community that is affordable only to wealthy second home buyers. This is not sustainable and not healthy for our community, our environment, or our businesses.”

**Kaylin Bettinger, Upper Valley Mend** *(from budget request submitted Jan. 23, 2024)*

“The rural Upper Wenatchee Valley region – home to Leavenworth – is facing a crisis of affordable housing for local employees. Without housing for employees, local businesses are reducing their open hours, and services like the local hospital and school district struggle to hire and retain staff. Our expensive housing market has driven local workers out, which negatively impacts community vibrancy as well as our local economy.”

