

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2884

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, February 25, 2010

Title: An act relating to limited expansions of urban growth areas into one hundred year floodplains in areas adjacent to a freeway interchange or interstate in counties wholly or partially bordering salt waters with more than one hundred thousand but fewer than one hundred fifty thousand residents.

Brief Description: Authorizing limited expansions of urban growth areas into one hundred year floodplains in areas adjacent to a freeway interchange or interstate in counties wholly or partially bordering salt waters with more than one hundred thousand but fewer than one hundred fifty thousand residents.

Sponsors: House Committee on Local Government & Housing (originally sponsored by Representatives Quall and Morris).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/15/10, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/25/10 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Oemig, Vice Chair; Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Pridemore and Swecker.

Staff: Karen Epps (786-7424)

Background: The Growth Management Act (GMA) is the comprehensive land use planning framework for county and city governments in Washington. Enacted in 1990 and 1991, the GMA establishes numerous planning requirements for counties and cities obligated by mandate or choice to fully plan under the GMA and a reduced number of directives for all other counties and cities.

The GMA includes numerous requirements relating to the use or development of land in urban and rural areas. Among other requirements, counties that fully plan under the GMA (planning counties) must designate urban growth areas (UGAs) or areas within which urban growth must be encouraged and outside of which growth can occur only if it is not urban in nature. Planning counties and the cities within these counties must include within their

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UGAs areas and densities that are sufficient to permit the urban growth projected to occur in the county or city for the succeeding 20-year period.

In 2009 the Legislature adopted Engrossed House Bill 1967 that established limited prohibitions on the expansions of UGAs into the 100-year floodplain of any western Washington river or river segment that has a mean annual flow of 1,000 or more cubic feet per second, as determined by the Department of Ecology.

Summary of Bill: A county with more than 100,000 but fewer than 150,000 residents that is wholly or partially bordered by salt waters may authorize the expansion of a UGA into the 100-year floodplain of any western Washington river or river segment meeting specified water flow criteria if the expansion area is:

- a single parcel or contiguous parcel;
- not exceeding seven acres;
- adjacent to a UGA; and
- entirely surrounded by a freeway interchange right-of-way.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: There is unfarmable farmland in Skagit County that is next to land that is zoned commercial. Skagit County would like to include the unfarmable land with the commercial land, so that the land becomes viable for commercial uses. This bill is drafted very narrowly in order to allow this farmland to be included in the UGA. The affected property is adjacent to an interchange. The sponsor of the bill worked with environmental organizations in order to make sure that the bill is narrowly tailored.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Quall, prime sponsor.