
Local Government Committee

HB 1094

Brief Description: Providing a process for county legislative authorities to withdraw from voluntary planning under the growth management act.

Sponsors: Representatives Kretz, Blake, Taylor, Shea, Short, Haler and McCune.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes a county that has elected to plan under the GMA to adopt a resolution removing the county from specific, on-going requirements to adopt land use plans and development regulations.
- Bars a county that has adopted a removal resolution from re-electing to plan under the GMA for at least 10 years from the date of adoption of the removal resolution.

Hearing Date: 1/19/11, 1/21/11

Staff: Heather Emery (786-7136).

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 requirements for local governments obligated by mandate or choice to fully plan under the GMA and a reduced number of directives for all other counties and cities.

A county obligated by mandate to fully plan under the GMA is one that either:

- has a population of 50,000 or more and has experienced a population increase of more than 17 percent in the previous 10 years; or
- has experienced a population increase of more than 20 percent over the previous 10 years, regardless of population.

A county obligated by choice to fully plan under the GMA is one that, not meeting the population requirements described above, has adopted a resolution subjecting itself, and cities located in the

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county, to the full requirements of the GMA (resolution of intention). Once a resolution of intention is adopted, the county and its cities remain subject to all GMA planning requirements. The following counties have adopted resolutions of intention: Columbia, Douglas, Ferry, Garfield, Kittitas, Pacific, Pend Oreille, Stevens, and Walla Walla.

Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.040, in addition to complying with the more broadly applicable requirements of the GMA, a county obligated by choice to fully plan under the GMA must:

- adopt a countywide planning policy;
- adopt development regulations to conserve designated agricultural lands, forest lands, and mineral resource lands within one year of adopting a resolution of intention;
- designate and take other actions related to urban growth areas; and
- adopt a comprehensive plan and development regulations to implement that plan within four years of adopting a resolution of intention.

Mandatory requirements for the comprehensive plan are described in RCW 36.70A.070 (pertaining to Comprehensive plans - Mandatory elements).

Summary of Bill:

The provision permanently binding a county mandated by choice to fully plan under the GMA is modified to allow the county to adopt a resolution removing it from requirements to adopt a land use plan and development regulations under RCW 36.70A.070.

A county may only adopt such a removal resolution if the county does not meet the population requirements that would obligate it to plan by mandate. A county that adopts a removal resolution is barred from re-adopting a resolution of intention for at least 10 years from the date of the adoption of the removal resolution.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.