
SENATE BILL 5243

State of Washington

62nd Legislature

2011 Regular Session

By Senators Tom, Prentice, Shin, Nelson, Chase, and Kline

Read first time 01/19/11. Referred to Committee on Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections.

1 AN ACT Relating to the establishment of a process to support local
2 jurisdictions for outstanding progress in implementing the growth
3 management act; adding new sections to chapter 36.70A RCW; and creating
4 new sections.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds and declares as
7 follows:

8 (1) In its first twenty years of existence, the growth management
9 act established under chapter 36.70A RCW has helped local jurisdictions
10 to better coordinate, plan, and shape the growth within their
11 communities. The result of comprehensive land-use planning, capital
12 facilities planning, blueprints for achieving the thirteen goals of the
13 growth management act, and regular updates to how those goals are being
14 met, is that jurisdictions around the state have been able to balance
15 their land-use visions within the financial realities and impacts of
16 what is occurring in their communities, and to take thoughtful,
17 balanced approaches to juggling the demands of growth with the need to
18 sustain and preserve the state's natural environment;

1 (2) However, as is true with many implementation projects, the
2 level of effort, level of commitment, and level of progress made by
3 jurisdictions in carrying out the objectives of the growth management
4 act, in recognizing that infrastructure investment is needed to spur
5 market recognition and growth potential and in preparing their
6 communities for the demands of growth while also protecting and
7 sustaining natural resources, has differed from place to place;

8 (3) The legislature recognizes the fact that the promise of the
9 growth management act has always been limited by the fact that the
10 state's investments in infrastructure have failed to keep pace with the
11 growth that has occurred on the ground, making it more difficult for
12 jurisdictions to achieve the potential of the plans and blueprints laid
13 out for their communities;

14 (4) Despite the legislature's best intentions, the economic
15 realities facing the state make it extremely unlikely that
16 infrastructure investment at all levels will ever be able to fully keep
17 up with the population and employment growth experiencing by
18 communities throughout Washington;

19 (5) In an era where resources are limited and will continue to be,
20 the legislature thus needs to find new ways to better focus and
21 coordinate the infrastructure investments it is able to make through
22 grant and loan programs made available to local communities.

23 Therefore the legislature intends to direct the establishment of a
24 process that will support communities that have demonstrated
25 outstanding progress in achieving the goals of the growth management
26 act. The legislature also intends to ensure that in creating such a
27 process and thereby creating an incentive for local jurisdictions,
28 nothing shall be developed that in any way penalizes other
29 jurisdictions which may not be as far along in attaining those goals of
30 the growth management act.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 36.70A RCW
32 to read as follows:

33 The department is directed to establish a process and criteria by
34 which entities that consistently achieve outstanding progress in
35 implementing the growth management act may qualify for additional
36 points in competitive scoring of grants and loan programs that are used
37 to help local communities carry out their obligations under the act.

1 (1) The grant and loan programs include, but are not limited to,
2 the public works assistance account, safe drinking water revolving loan
3 fund, centennial clean water account, stormwater grants administered by
4 the department of ecology, economic development grants, Washington
5 wildlife and recreation program, and housing trust fund.

6 (2) The process and criteria must be developed in a manner, and on
7 a timeline, that takes into consideration state grant and loan funding
8 cycles.

9 (3) In establishing the process and criteria under this section,
10 the department shall work with, and regularly consult, a broad array of
11 stakeholders representing cities, counties, and special purpose
12 districts. The department may also include in its outreach and
13 consultation representatives of organizations with special expertise
14 in, and understanding of, specific grant and loan programs.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 36.70A RCW
16 to read as follows:

17 In developing the process and criteria directed under section 2 of
18 this act, the department shall utilize performance tools that can serve
19 as a measuring stick for evaluating the progress of local jurisdictions
20 in carrying out and implementing the goals of the growth management
21 act. These goals include, but are not limited to, the following:

22 (1) Land-use elements that maximize a jurisdiction's ability to
23 accommodate density and more intense growth, particularly in downtown
24 areas;

25 (2) Housing elements that afford a rich and diverse range of
26 housing stock and ensure a certain percentage of affordable housing
27 stock;

28 (3) Transportation elements that are accommodating of all modes of
29 transportation, including not only vehicles but pedestrians,
30 bicyclists, trail users, and transit, including high-capacity and
31 rapid-frequency transit;

32 (4) Utilities elements that maximize available lands and resources
33 by creating regional conveyance and detention facilities, rather than
34 forcing property owners to make parcel-by-parcel investments in
35 infrastructure;

36 (5) Parks elements that ensure the accommodation of open space and
37 trail space in high-density areas;

- 1 (6) Maximizing the value of public investments;
- 2 (7) Supporting the sustainable economic growth of the state;
- 3 (8) Redeveloping existing lands prior to the development of new
- 4 land;
- 5 (9) Supporting achievement of improved jobs-housing balances within
- 6 a jurisdiction;
- 7 (10) Consistency with countywide planning policies; and
- 8 (11) Enhancing the natural environment and using sustainable
- 9 resources.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The department shall complete the
11 development of the process and criteria by December 31, 2010, and shall
12 report to the governor and appropriate legislative committees on the
13 established criteria. The department shall begin utilizing this
14 process beginning with spring 2012 grant and loan cycles, if feasible.

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