S-0152.1

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**SENATE BILL 5242**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2019 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Short and Wilson, L.

AN ACT Relating to the economic development of rural counties; amending RCW 36.70A.040; and creating a new section.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that the growth management act was designed to manage growth in the fastest growing cities and counties in Washington state. The office of financial management shows that there are several counties in Washington state that opted in to the growth management act planning that are experiencing minimal growth. Planning is an expensive process and in order for counties to be able to devote more funds to equal access to governmental services for citizens, it is important that the counties who were allowed to opt in to the growth management act be given the opportunity to opt out upon review if that opportunity is supported by metrics which indicate the county is struggling to meet projections for economic viability, affordable housing, and economic growth.

**Sec.**  RCW 36.70A.040 and 2014 c 147 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Each county that has both a population of fifty thousand or more and, until May 16, 1995, has had its population increase by more than ten percent in the previous ten years or, on or after May 16, 1995, has had its population increase by more than seventeen percent in the previous ten years, and the cities located within such county, and any other county regardless of its population that has had its population increase by more than twenty percent in the previous ten years, and the cities located within such county, shall conform with all of the requirements of this chapter. However, the county legislative authority of such a county with a population of less than fifty thousand population may adopt a resolution removing the county, and the cities located within the county, from the requirements of adopting comprehensive land use plans and development regulations under this chapter if this resolution is adopted and filed with the department by December 31, 1990, for counties initially meeting this set of criteria, or within sixty days of the date the office of financial management certifies that a county meets this set of criteria under subsection (5) of this section. For the purposes of this subsection, a county not currently planning under this chapter is not required to include in its population count those persons confined in a correctional facility under the jurisdiction of the department of corrections that is located in the county.

Once a county meets either of these sets of criteria, the requirement to conform with all of the requirements of this chapter remains in effect, even if the county no longer meets one of these sets of criteria.

(2)(a) The county legislative authority of any county that does not meet either of the sets of criteria established under subsection (1) of this section may adopt a resolution indicating its intention to have subsection (1) of this section apply to the county. Each city, located in a county that chooses to plan under this subsection, shall conform with all of the requirements of this chapter. Once such a resolution has been adopted, the county and the cities located within the county remain subject to all of the requirements of this chapter, unless the county subsequently adopts a withdrawal resolution for partial planning pursuant to (b)(i) of this subsection.

(b)(i) ((~~Until December 31, 2015,~~)) The legislative authority of a county may adopt a resolution removing the county and the cities located within the county from the requirements to plan under this section if:

(A) The county ((~~has a population, as estimated by the office of financial management, of twenty thousand or fewer inhabitants at any time between April 1, 2010, and April 1, 2015~~)):

(I) Meets the definition of "rural county" under RCW 82.14.370 at the time of periodic review;

(II) Is a county that has an unemployment rate at least twenty percent above the state average for the immediately previous three years; or

(III) Is a county that has a median household income that is less than seventy-five percent of the state median household income for the previous three years;

(B) The county has previously adopted a resolution indicating its intention to have subsection (1) of this section apply to the county;

(C) At least sixty days prior to adopting a resolution for partial planning, the county provides written notification to the legislative body of each city within the county of its intent to consider adopting the resolution; ((~~and~~)) or

(D) The legislative bodies of at least sixty percent of those cities having an aggregate population of at least seventy-five percent of the incorporated county population have not: Adopted resolutions opposing the action by the county; and provided written notification of the resolutions to the county.

(ii) Upon adoption of a resolution for partial planning under (b)(i) of this subsection:

(A) The county and the cities within the county are, except as provided otherwise, no longer obligated to plan under this section; and

(B) The county may not, for a minimum of ten years from the date of adoption of the resolution, adopt another resolution indicating its intention to have subsection (1) of this section apply to the county.

(c) The adoption of a resolution for partial planning under (b)(i) of this subsection does not nullify or otherwise modify the requirements for counties and cities established in RCW 36.70A.060, 36.70A.070(5) and associated development regulations, 36.70A.170, and 36.70A.172.

(3) Any county or city that is initially required to conform with all of the requirements of this chapter under subsection (1) of this section shall take actions under this chapter as follows: (a) The county legislative authority shall adopt a countywide planning policy under RCW 36.70A.210; (b) the county and each city located within the county shall designate critical areas, agricultural lands, forestlands, and mineral resource lands, and adopt development regulations conserving these designated agricultural lands, forestlands, and mineral resource lands and protecting these designated critical areas, under RCW 36.70A.170 and 36.70A.060; (c) the county shall designate and take other actions related to urban growth areas under RCW 36.70A.110; ((~~[and]~~)) and (d) if the county has a population of fifty thousand or more, the county and each city located within the county shall adopt a comprehensive plan under this chapter and development regulations that are consistent with and implement the comprehensive plan on or before July 1, 1994, and if the county has a population of less than fifty thousand, the county and each city located within the county shall adopt a comprehensive plan under this chapter and development regulations that are consistent with and implement the comprehensive plan by January 1, 1995, but if the governor makes written findings that a county with a population of less than fifty thousand or a city located within such a county is not making reasonable progress toward adopting a comprehensive plan and development regulations the governor may reduce this deadline for such actions to be taken by no more than one hundred eighty days. Any county or city subject to this subsection may obtain an additional six months before it is required to have adopted its development regulations by submitting a letter notifying the department of its need prior to the deadline for adopting both a comprehensive plan and development regulations.

(4) Any county or city that is required to conform with all the requirements of this chapter, as a result of the county legislative authority adopting its resolution of intention under subsection (2) of this section, shall take actions under this chapter as follows: (a) The county legislative authority shall adopt a county-wide planning policy under RCW 36.70A.210; (b) the county and each city that is located within the county shall adopt development regulations conserving agricultural lands, forestlands, and mineral resource lands it designated under RCW 36.70A.060 within one year of the date the county legislative authority adopts its resolution of intention; (c) the county shall designate and take other actions related to urban growth areas under RCW 36.70A.110; and (d) the county and each city that is located within the county shall adopt a comprehensive plan and development regulations that are consistent with and implement the comprehensive plan not later than four years from the date the county legislative authority adopts its resolution of intention, but a county or city may obtain an additional six months before it is required to have adopted its development regulations by submitting a letter notifying the department of its need prior to the deadline for adopting both a comprehensive plan and development regulations.

(5) If the office of financial management certifies that the population of a county that previously had not been required to plan under subsection (1) or (2) of this section has changed sufficiently to meet either of the sets of criteria specified under subsection (1) of this section, and where applicable, the county legislative authority has not adopted a resolution removing the county from these requirements as provided in subsection (1) of this section, the county and each city within such county shall take actions under this chapter as follows: (a) The county legislative authority shall adopt a countywide planning policy under RCW 36.70A.210; (b) the county and each city located within the county shall adopt development regulations under RCW 36.70A.060 conserving agricultural lands, forestlands, and mineral resource lands it designated within one year of the certification by the office of financial management; (c) the county shall designate and take other actions related to urban growth areas under RCW 36.70A.110; and (d) the county and each city located within the county shall adopt a comprehensive land use plan and development regulations that are consistent with and implement the comprehensive plan within four years of the certification by the office of financial management, but a county or city may obtain an additional six months before it is required to have adopted its development regulations by submitting a letter notifying the department of its need prior to the deadline for adopting both a comprehensive plan and development regulations.

(6) A copy of each document that is required under this section shall be submitted to the department at the time of its adoption.

(7) Cities and counties planning under this chapter must amend the transportation element of the comprehensive plan to be in compliance with this chapter and chapter 47.80 RCW no later than December 31, 2000.

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