

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2403

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations, February 23, 1996

Title: An act relating to economic impact analysis of proposed actions by government.

Brief Description: Analyzing the economic impact of government actions.

Sponsors: House Committee on Government Operations (originally sponsored by Representatives Reams, Cairnes, Elliot, Thompson, Mulliken and McMahan).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 2/21/96, 2/23/96 [DP-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.
Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Goings, Hale, Heavey and Winsley.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Background: State Environmental Policy Act. The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) was enacted in 1971. SEPA requires local governments and state agencies to prepare a detailed statement, or environmental impact statement (EIS), if proposed legislation or other major action may have a probable significant, adverse impact on the environment. The determination whether a detailed statement must be prepared involves a threshold determination and use of an environmental checklist. Some matters are categorically exempt from a threshold determination, as provided in rules adopted by the Department of Ecology.

If it appears that a probable significant adverse environmental impact may result, the proposal may be altered, or its probable significant adverse impact mitigated, to remove the probable significant adverse impact. If the probable significant adverse environmental impact remains, then an environmental impact statement is prepared. The environmental impact statement is limited, or scoped, to address only the matter or matters that are determined under the threshold determination process to have a probable significant adverse environmental impact.

Growth Management Act. The Growth Management Act (GMA) was enacted in 1990 and 1991 and established some requirements for all counties and cities and a larger number of requirements for counties and cities planning under all GMA requirements. Among other requirements, counties and cities planning under all GMA requirements must adopt (1) comprehensive plans, addressing a number of elements and consistent with statutorily established goals; and (2) development regulations implementing their comprehensive plans.

Legislation was enacted in 1995, as a part of the recommendations from the Governor's Task Force on Regulatory Reform, to establish a number of additional requirements for counties

and cities planning under the GMA. Such counties and cities are encouraged to adopt broad detailed statements, or enhanced environmental impact statements, on comprehensive plans and development regulations adopted under the GMA that have environmental impact. Such statements should be consistent with the comprehensive plan on development regulations.

Summary of Bill: Whenever a county or city prepares a detailed statement or environmental impact statement of a comprehensive plan or subarea plan adopted under the GMA, it must also analyze the potential economic effects arising from the proposal, including economic effects on property owners.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 8, 1996.

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

Testimony For: The analysis is owed to all citizens. It lets people know where they stand.

Testimony Against: This requirement is vague, expensive, and leaves cities and counties open to endless lawsuits.

Testified: Mike Ryherd, APA (con); Sophia Byrd, WSAC (con).