

# HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

## HB 1852

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**Title:** An act Relating to designating and zoning lands for agricultural purposes apart from those lands designated as having long-term significance for the commercial production of food or other agricultural products under the growth management act.

**Brief Description:** Creates a new class of agricultural lands that may be designated under the growth management act.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Lambert, Mulliken, Backlund, Chandler and Dunn

**Hearing Date:** February 24, 1997

### **Background:**

Under the Growth Management Act (GMA), each county and each city in counties that meet the GMA's requirements adopts a comprehensive plan that includes a list of elements and subjects set forth in the statute. Counties and cities must include the following elements and subjects in a comprehensive plan: land use, housing, capital facilities plan, utilities, transportation, provisions designating the five types of critical areas, provisions designating the three types of natural resource lands, the goals and policies of the county's or city's shoreline master program adopted under the Shoreline Management Act, urban growth area designation, and rural element designation. A comprehensive plan also may include other elements and matters.

Counties and cities must also adopt *development regulations* consistent with their comprehensive plan and must designate and protect critical areas, designate and conserve certain natural resource lands, and designate urban growth areas. Among other requirements, each urban growth area must permit urban densities and must include greenbelt and open space areas. An urban growth area may include territory that is located outside of a city only if that territory is already characterized by or is adjacent to an area characterized by urban growth or is designated as a new fully contained community.

Each county and each city, regardless of whether it plans under the GMA, must designate agricultural lands that are not already characterized by urban growth and that have long-term significance for the commercial production of food or other agricultural products. Counties and cities must also adopt development regulations conserving these designated agricultural lands and

in the process must consider the guidelines developed by the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development.

**Summary of Bill:**

In addition to the agricultural lands that a county or city is required to designate and conserve under the Growth Management Act (GMA), other lands within the county or city's jurisdiction may be designated and zoned as agricultural lands. These agricultural lands are separate and apart from the agricultural lands that *must* be designated and conserved under the GMA. If this other class of agricultural lands is located within an urban growth area, none of the urban growth area requirements set forth in the GMA are altered.

Counties and cities may designate and zone this new class of agricultural lands that existed prior to the enactment of the GMA.

**Fiscal Note:**           None requested.