

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5518

---

---

As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Natural Resources, Energy & Water, February 27, 2003

**Title:** An act relating to limiting the purchase of land by state agencies and departments for habitat or ecosystem preservation.

**Brief Description:** Limiting the purchase of land for habitat or ecosystem preservation by state agencies.

**Sponsors:** Senators Hargrove, Morton, Doumit, Honeyford, Hale and Mulliken.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources, Energy & Water: 2/20/03, 2/27/03 [DPS].

---

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, ENERGY & WATER

---

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5518 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Morton, Chair; Hewitt, Vice Chair; Doumit, Hale, Hargrove, Honeyford, Oke and Regala.

**Staff:** Victor Moon (786-7469)

**Background:** When state agencies purchase private property, it has an effect on both the planning and the tax income for counties. In order to alert county elected officials of proposals so that they can consider them prior to the purchase, the counties have requested the ability to review proposals in advance.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** A state agency or department may not purchase in fee simple privately owned parcels in excess of five contiguous acres for habitat conservation, ecosystem preservation, wetland mitigation, or endangered species protection unless the agency has allowed the appropriate county legislative authority the opportunity to hold a public hearing on the transaction and following this hearing, the Legislature takes specific action directing the agency to make the purchase.

When land is purchased by a state agency or department, the agency or department must post a bond or otherwise financially guarantee that the land will be managed for noxious weed protection.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The original bill was not considered.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** Counties need a chance to have input when state agencies take private lands off the rolls through purchase. The Legislature needs to carefully consider all land purchase by state agencies and should ensure the lands are maintained.

**Testimony Against:** The bill is too broad and addresses a nonexistent problem. Wildlife habitat must continue to be protected through careful purchase of land.

**Testified:** PRO: Phillip Ketchel, Olympic Resources; Heather Hanson, Washington Wheat Growers; Hertha Lund, Washington State Farm Bureau; Paul Parker, Association of Counties; Beull Hawkins, Chelan County Commissioner; CON: Bill Robinson, Nature Conservancy (concerns); Mike Ryherd, WWRC.