

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6433

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Ecology & Parks, February 2, 1996

Title: An act relating to the integration of water resources and growth management.

Brief Description: Integrating water resources and growth management.

Sponsors: Senators Fraser, Winsley, Spanel, Haugen, Johnson, Snyder and Sutherland.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ecology & Parks: 1/23/96, 1/26/96, 2/2/96 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6433 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Fraser, Chair; Fairley, Vice Chair; McAuliffe and Spanel.

Staff: Kari Guy (786-7437)

Background: The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires certain counties, and the cities within those counties, to conduct comprehensive planning for future growth. Planning goals adopted by the Legislature guide the development and adoption of local comprehensive plans and development regulations. With input from cities located within its boundaries, each county planning under the GMA must adopt county-wide planning policies guiding the development of the comprehensive plans. Counties also must adopt urban growth areas in which the urban growth projected for the next 20 years is to be located. The comprehensive plan has six mandatory elements, including a land use element and a capital facilities plan element.

Population forecasts for each city and county are made by the Office of Financial Management based on demographic information. It has been suggested that the population projections should consider water supply availability and projected demand, and that urban growth areas should be adjusted to relate to future water availability.

Summary of Substitute Bill: A planning goal is added to the GMA to ensure that new land uses are served by adequate water supplies, and that growth does not effect existing instream and out-of-stream water uses. The Office of Financial Management is directed to consider existing water supply availability in developing population forecasts.

The land use element of the comprehensive plan may address the proposed source of water supply for projected land uses. The capital facilities plan element may include an inventory of existing capital facilities for water supply owned by private entities.

County planning policies must include policies to achieve water resource management, and to provide coordinated policies among local jurisdictions.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The water supply portions of the local comprehensive land use plan may be adopted at the discretion of the local jurisdiction.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Water demand forecasting has been a missing element in the Growth Management Act. The Office of Financial Management does not consider the water availability or carrying capacity of the area when preparing population projections. Thus communities may be required to plan for more new growth than the community will be able to provide water for. This bill will help to ensure coordinated planning between water districts, cities and counties.

Testimony Against: Water supply information is not readily available. The current state of the science is inadequate to address the questions raised in the bill about water availability. The requirements in the bill will delay implementation of the Growth Management Act, and cause more land use plan appeals to the Growth Management Hearings Boards. Local jurisdictions do not have the funding needed to carry out the requirements of the bill.

Testified: Dave Clark, DOH (pro); Conrad Hermsted (pro); Bruce Wishart, Sierra Club (pro); Mike Grady, DCTED (pro); Walt Canter, Cedar River Water/Sewer District; Scott Hazelgrove, Realtors (con); David Williams, Paul Parker, WA State Assn. of Cities; Ron Shultz, National Audubon Society (pro); Dick Ducharme, Building Industry Assn. of WA (con); Dick Dorsett, Pierce Co. (con).