

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2846

As Reported by House Committee On:
Local Government & Housing

Title: An act relating to requiring specific funding to implement the buildable lands review and evaluation program.

Brief Description: Requiring specific funding to implement the buildable lands review and evaluation program.

Sponsors: Representatives Romero, Dunshee and Mulliken.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government & Housing: 2/5/02, 2/7/02 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires funding of at least \$2.5 million per biennium for the Buildable Lands Program requirements to apply.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT & HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Dunshee, Chair; Edwards, Vice Chair; Berkey, Hatfield, Kirby and Sullivan.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Mulliken, Ranking Minority Member; Crouse, DeBolt, Dunn and Mielke.

Staff: Scott MacColl (786-7106).

Background:

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires a county and its cities to plan if the county meets specified population and growth criteria. Counties not meeting these criteria may choose to plan under the GMA. Currently, 29 of 39 Washington counties are required or have chosen to plan under the major GMA requirements (GMA jurisdictions).

The GMA jurisdictions must designate urban growth areas (UGAs), within which urban

growth is encouraged and outside of which urban growth is prohibited. "Urban growth" is defined in the GMA to mean growth making intensive use of land to an extent creating incompatibility with natural resource use. The GMA jurisdiction must also adopt a comprehensive plan containing certain required elements and implementing development regulations.

By September 1, 2002, and every five years thereafter, the GMA jurisdictions must review their comprehensive plans and development regulations for consistency with the GMA requirements and must revise their plans and regulations if necessary.

Buildable Lands Evaluation

The GMA requires six western Washington counties (Clark, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, and Thurston) and their cities to establish a monitoring and evaluation program to determine whether their county-wide planning policies are meeting planned residential densities and uses. If the evaluation shows that the densities are not being met, the county and its cities must take measures to increase consistency between what was envisioned and what has occurred. The first evaluation must be completed no later than September 1, 2002, and every five years thereafter.

Summary of Bill:

Requires the Legislature to appropriate at least \$2.5 million per biennium to implement the Buildable Lands Program and distribute the money by July 1 of the first year of the biennium, or the requirements of the program do not apply.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: The land use study commission in 1997 recommended the buildable lands program to the Legislature. The original fiscal note was \$6 million, but the actual cost is \$2.5 million per year. We can't have unfunded mandates for cities and counties in the current financial situation.

Testimony Against: Buildable lands should be implemented, but the most expensive piece should already be completed, so why the funding is necessary is unclear.

Testified: (In support) Representative Romero, prime sponsor; and Doug Levy, cities of Everett, Kent, and Federal Way for the Association of Washington Cities.

(Opposed) Larry Stout, Realtors Association; and Jodi Slavik, Building Industry Association of Washington.