
Local Government Committee

HB 2584

Brief Description: Establishing a blue ribbon growth management needs and priorities task force.

Sponsors: Representatives Jarrett, Dunshee, Shabro, Clibborn, Anderson, B. Sullivan, Tom, Linville, Nixon, Lantz, Rodne, Upthegrove, P. Sullivan, Morrell, Moeller, Kilmer and Springer.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes a blue ribbon growth management needs and priorities task force to conduct a comprehensive analysis of growth management issues and practices.
- Requires that the task force be composed of specified legislative members as well as eleven additional members to be appointed by the Governor in accordance with specified criteria.
- Authorizes the task force to establish one or more advisory committees and to consult with individuals from the public and private sectors.
- Requires that the task force report final findings and recommendations to the Governor and appropriate legislative committees by June 30, 2008, and to make quarterly progress reports.

Hearing Date: 1/18/06

Staff: Thamas Osborn (786-7129).

Background:

Overview of the Growth Management Act.

The Growth Management Act (GMA) establishes a comprehensive land use planning framework for county and city governments in Washington. The GMA requires all local governments to comply with specific provisions for natural resource lands and critical areas, and establishes additional substantive and procedural compliance requirements for counties and cities meeting population and growth criteria. Counties not meeting these criteria may choose to adopt a resolution requiring the county and the cities within to comply with all major GMA requirements. Currently, 29 of 39 counties, and the cities within those 29 counties (GMA jurisdictions), are required to or have chosen to plan under the major requirements of the GMA .

The GMA establishes a list of planning goals to be used exclusively for guiding the development and adoption of comprehensive plans and development regulations by GMA jurisdictions.

GMA planning requirements.

GMA jurisdictions must satisfy numerous planning requirements. A principal compliance requirement is the adoption of internally consistent comprehensive land use plans (comprehensive plans), which are generalized, coordinated land use policy statements of the governing body. Each comprehensive plan must include planning provisions for specific mandatory "elements" such as land use, housing, utilities, and transportation.

Planning policies must be adopted by GMA jurisdictions. These policies are used solely for establishing a county-wide framework from which county and city comprehensive plans are developed and adopted. County-wide planning policies must include, in part, policies addressing urban growth areas, orderly development, transportation facilities and strategies, and joint county and city planning within urban growth areas.

Each county planning under the major requirements of the GMA must designate urban growth areas (UGAs) within which urban growth must be encouraged and outside of which urban growth is prohibited.

GMA jurisdictions must adopt development regulations that control development or land use activities. Locally adopted, these development regulations must be consistent with and implement the comprehensive plan of the adopting jurisdiction.

The GMA also requires six western Washington counties (i.e., Clark, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, and Thurston counties) and the cities within those counties to establish a review and evaluation ("buildable lands") program. The purpose of the program is to determine whether a county and its cities are achieving urban densities, and identify reasonable measures, other than adjusting UGAs, that will be taken to comply with the requirements of the GMA.

The Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED) adopts guidelines to assist local governments in classifying natural resource lands (i.e., agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands) and critical areas. CTED also receives copies of adopted and amended comprehensive plans and development regulations. CTED does not have the authority to approve local GMA plans and regulations.

Appeals to Growth Management Hearings Boards.

Except as provided, comprehensive plans and development regulations are presumed valid upon adoption. Plans and regulations, however, may be appealed to one of three regional Growth Management Hearings Boards (Boards). If all applicable parties agree, the superior court may directly review a petition filed with a Board.

The Boards have limited jurisdiction and may only hear petitions alleging: (1) noncompliance with GMA requirements, specific Shoreline Management Act requirements, and specific State Environmental Protection Act requirements; or that (2) the 20-year planning populations adopted by the Office of Financial Management should be adjusted. Final decisions of the Boards may be appealed to the superior court.

Summary of Bill:

Overview of the blue ribbon task force.

A blue ribbon growth management needs and priorities task force (task force) is established. The task force must conduct a comprehensive analysis of:

- statewide growth management needs and priorities;
- existing and potential funding mechanisms; and
- the policies and practices of governmental entities, private businesses, and the general public that affect the development and implementation of growth management goals and requirements.

The Governor must convene the initial meeting of the task force. The task force must choose two co-chairs from among its legislative membership. It must provide quarterly progress reports to the Governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature, and is required to report its final findings and recommendations to these same recipients by June 30, 2008, the date the task force authorization expires.

Membership of the task force.

The task force membership is as follows:

- The President of the Senate must appoint two members from each of the two largest caucuses of the Senate;
- The Speaker of the House of Representatives must appoint two members from each of the two largest caucuses of the House; and
- The Governor must appoint 11 members representing, at a minimum, the following entities: (1) state agencies whose policies, practices, and procedures have a direct impact on the development and implementation of growth management goals and requirements; (2) cities; (3) counties; (4) regional transportation planning organizations; (5) major employers; (6) academia; (7) developers; (8) agricultural business; (9) environmental conservation; (10) planning associations; and (11) the general public.

In appointing members of academia to the task force, preference must be given to scholars from the following fields:

- urban planning;
- economics;
- taxation;
- business administration;
- public administration;
- environmental and natural resources sciences; or
- other relevant disciplines.

Additionally, the director of the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (DCTED), or the director's designee, must serve the task force as a non-voting liaison representative.

Miscellaneous provisions regarding task force operations.

The task force, when appropriate, may consult with individuals from the public and private sectors or ask those individuals to establish committees. The task force also may contract with persons who have specific technical expertise when certain criteria are met.

Staff support for the task force must be provided by the Senate Committee Services, the House Office of Program Research, the DCTED, and the Office of Financial Management.

Travel reimbursement provisions are specified. Excepting qualifying contractual costs, the expenses of the task force must be paid jointly by the Senate and the House of Representatives. Provisions for the approval of task force expenditures by qualifying Senate and House committees are included.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 18, 2005.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.