

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSB 5151

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### C 452 L 19

Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Requiring the growth management hearings board to topically index the rulings, decisions, and orders it publishes.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Senators Wilson, L., Becker, Honeyford, Zeiger and Short).

**Senate Committee on Local Government**  
**House Committee on Environment & Energy**  
**House Committee on Appropriations**

**Background:** Growth Management Act. The Growth Management Act (GMA) is the comprehensive land use planning framework for counties and cities in Washington. The GMA sets forth three broad planning obligations for those counties and cities who plan fully under the GMA:

- the county legislative authority must adopt a countywide planning policy;
- the county, and the cities within the county, must designate critical areas, agricultural lands, forestlands, and mineral resource lands, and adopt development regulations accordingly; and
- the county must designate and take other actions related to urban growth areas.

Growth Management Hearings Board. The Growth Management Hearings Board (GMHB) is housed under the Environmental and Land Use Hearings Office. A seven-member board established under the GMA is charged with hearing and determining petitions alleging noncompliance with the GMA by state agencies, counties, or cities. Petitions that relate to whether an adopted comprehensive plan or development regulation complies with the GMA must be filed within 60 days after publication of the action. For counties, the date of publication is the date the county publishes a notice that it has adopted the comprehensive plan or development regulations. For cities, the date of publication is the date the city publishes the ordinance adopting the comprehensive plan or development regulations.

The GMHB must issue its final decision and order within 180 days, with limited exceptions. In the final order, the GMHB must either find the agency, county, or city in compliance or not in compliance. If found not in compliance, the matter is remanded back to the agency, county, or city and it has 180 days to come into compliance.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Summary:** The Environmental and Land Use Hearings Office (ELUHO) must ensure that timely and accurate GMHB rulings, decisions, and orders are made available to the public through searchable databases accessible through the its website. To ensure uniformity and usability of searchable databases and websites, ELUHO must coordinate with GMHB, the Department of Commerce, and other interested stakeholders to develop and maintain a rational system of categorizing rulings, decisions, and orders. The website must allow a user to search GMHB decisions and orders by topic, party, and geographic location or by natural language. All rulings, decisions, and orders issued before January 1, 2019, must be published by June 30, 2021.

This act contains a null and void clause.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	47	0	
House	98	0	(House amended)
Senate	48	0	(Senate concurred)

**Effective:** July 28, 2019