
HOUSE BILL 1552

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2023 Regular Session

By Representatives Reeves, Ramel, Springer, Gregerson, Fosse, and Doglio

Read first time 01/24/23. Referred to Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to directing the state conservation commission to
2 conduct a study of urban agricultural opportunities and barriers in
3 the state; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) Urban agriculture provides critical
6 economic development, food access, and educational opportunities in
7 local communities. Community gardens give people access to grow their
8 own food and urban farms create jobs, provide fresh food, and expose
9 future farmers to career development. Innovative farming techniques
10 are being developed to grow more food on less space. However,
11 challenges including access to land, water, and expertise limit urban
12 agriculture's potential. Encouraging urban agriculture requires an
13 understanding of the barriers to success.

14 (2) The Washington state food policy forum found in its December
15 2022 report, "*Land Use Policy Solutions to Stem Agricultural Land*
16 *Loss*," that just as cities establish parks and open space to maintain
17 livable communities, opportunities to grow food also enhance the
18 livability of urban places. A review of the opportunities and
19 barriers to urban agriculture will support local governments as they
20 plan for the future of their communities.

1 (3) In the December 2022 report, the Washington state food policy
2 forum reached the following consensus recommendation: Increase access
3 to fresh food by supporting urban, peri-urban, indoor, and other
4 emerging agricultural production, directing the office of farmland
5 preservation to conduct a stakeholder review of the opportunities and
6 barriers.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The state conservation commission
8 shall conduct a study of urban agricultural opportunities and
9 barriers in the state.

10 (2) The study must examine, at a minimum:

11 (a) How urban agriculture can provide critical economic
12 development, food access, and education opportunities in local
13 communities;

14 (b) Opportunities within urban agriculture, such as community
15 gardens and urban farms, to give people access to grow their own food
16 and create jobs, provide fresh food, and expose future farmers to
17 career development;

18 (c) How urban agriculture can also support local objectives
19 relating to green infrastructure, low-impact development, and climate
20 resilience;

21 (d) Challenges, including access to land, water, and expertise,
22 that limit the potential of urban agriculture;

23 (e) Successes and lessons learned from program and policy
24 implementation by local governments and conservation districts; and

25 (f) Identification of potential pilot programs and requisite
26 funding needs.

27 (3) In conducting the study, the state conservation commission
28 shall collaborate with the following:

29 (a) The department of agriculture;

30 (b) The University of Washington;

31 (c) Washington State University;

32 (d) The food policy forum; and

33 (e) Other stakeholders as deemed appropriate by the state
34 conservation commission.

35 (4) The state conservation commission must submit the results of
36 the study to the committees of the legislature with jurisdiction over
37 agricultural issues by June 30, 2024.

1 (5) This section expires December 31, 2024.

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