

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1940

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government & Tribal Affairs

Title: An act relating to requiring state agencies to notify local governments of proposed land dispositions.

Brief Description: Requiring state agencies to notify local governments of proposed land dispositions.

Sponsors: Representatives Schindler, Simpson, Crouse, McCune, Dunn, Moeller and Ormsby.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Affairs: 2/21/07, 2/23/07 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires state agencies to notify local governments of proposed dispositions of state-owned land.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Appleton, Vice Chair; Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Green, Kretz, McDermott, Miloscia and Ormsby.

Staff: Colleen Kerr (786-7168).

Background:

State agencies dispose of state-owned land when the agency no longer has use for the land or when disposition is in the public interest. Absent a specific requirement, these agencies are not obligated to notify relevant local governments of proposed land dispositions.

Summary of Bill:

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.

The Department of Natural Resources, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Washington State Department of Transportation, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the Department of General Administration are required to provide written notice of proposed land dispositions to legislative authorities of the counties, cities, and towns in which the land is located. Written notification must occur at least 60 days prior to the agency entering into a disposition agreement. These requirements are in addition to other statutory requirements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill arose out of specific sales of state-owned land in the Spokane area. In both instances the Department of Natural Resources had land that was eligible for development, but did not notify the city of proposed disposition because there was no requirement to do so. Liberty Lake has had similar problems. The current practice is to provide notice in the local paper. This is not sufficient. Local government authorities would have to have one full-time employee on staff just to scour the relevant local papers for this type of information. This bill allows a little special notice for local government authorities who could use the land for economic development or conservation purposes. The type of notice just has to be in writing, there are no other specified requirements. The idea is that the notice is more substantial than a phone call. The Department of Natural Resources manages three million acres of land in the state and is frequently in the process of selling or trading this land. Current procedures require that notice first go to local school districts and then public utilities. This new addition improves this policy and is in the best interest of the state. The terms of the bill are very doable and would compliment existing requirements.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Schindler, prime sponsor; and Bonnie Bunning, Department of Natural Resources.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.