

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1749

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As Reported By House Committee On:  
Trade, Economic Development & Housing

**Title:** An act relating to permit processing.

**Brief Description:** Concerning state and local permit processing.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Forner, Wineberry, Wood, Zellinsky, Brough, Long, Foreman, Reams and Cooke.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Trade, Economic Development & Housing, March 3, 1993,  
DPS.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRADE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Wineberry, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Forner, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Campbell; Casada; Conway; Quall; Schoesler; Sheldon; and Wood.

**Staff:** Charlie Gavigan (786-7340).

**Background:** Most residential development activity must be reviewed by a local government to ensure the development activity conforms to local, state, or federal law. The primary purposes of these laws generally are public health and safety or environmental protection.

For most residential development on single lots, a building permit is required. For subdivisions, a more extensive application process is required. When these permits are requested, several laws may apply depending on the location and type of development. These include: (1) subdivision approvals; (2) the state Environmental Policy Act; (3) the Shorelines Management Act; (4) the Growth Management Act; and (5) the federal Clean Water Act.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** Cities with a population over 50,000 and all counties must review their permit processing procedures for building or remodeling one to four single family residences. The goal of this review is to develop

more efficient procedures. The review must consider: (1) conducting pre-application conferences; (2) identifying a lead staff person for the permit; (3) establishing a one-stop permit processing system; (4) providing the applicant a checklist of requirements and procedures; and (5) establishing timeframes for the process. Counties and cities may conduct a similar review for their subdivision application procedures.

The Department of Community Development must provide technical assistance to counties and cities in reviewing their local permit processing procedures. The department may develop model ordinances. The department must report to the Legislature on local efforts to improve permit processing by January 1, 1995.

The governor must convene a task force of agency directors to recommend or implement changes to the processing of regulatory permits by state agencies. The goal is to make the process more efficient, more timely, more coordinated, and more service-oriented. The governor must report to the Legislature by December 1, 1993, on the changes recommended and implemented.

If specific funding for this act is not included in the operating budget, this act is null and void.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** A null and void clause is added by the substitute bill.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately. However, the bill is null and void if not funded in the budget.

**Testimony For:** Problems in the processing of permits causes delays and increases the cost of housing. It is important for the state and local governments to more efficiently coordinate and process permits. This is a good first step.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** Representative Forner, prime sponsor (supports); Glen Hudson, Washington Association of Realtors (supports); Enid Layes, Association of Washington Business (supports); and Mike Doubleday, city of Seattle (supports).