

VETO MESSAGE ON HB 2871-S

April 3, 1998

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,

The House of Representatives of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to sections 1 through 6 and 10 through 13, Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 2871 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to current use valuation;"

Sections 1 through 6 and 10 through 13 of Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 2871 would create a new current use property tax valuation program for "agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance." County assessors would automatically classify or reclassify land meeting the requirements of the bill. Removing land from this classification would trigger a penalty equal to seven years of back-taxes, reduced by one year for every year the land remains in the classification.

I believe that the program would set a bad precedent by allowing certain property owners to avoid paying several years of taxes, and pay no back-taxes if the land is later developed for non-agricultural purposes. The vetoed sections of this bill could also make planning under the Growth Management Act more contentious.

For these reasons, I have vetoed sections 1 through 6 and 10 through 13 of Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 2871.

With the exception of sections 1 through 6 and 10 through 13, Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 2871 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor