

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1395

C 212 L 02

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Encouraging retention and enhancement of the job base in rural counties.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Local Government & Housing (originally sponsored by Representatives Eickmeyer, Buck, Sump, Doumit, Kessler, Jackley, Van Luven, Haigh, Dunn, Murray, Edwards, Veloria, Romero, Hatfield, Pennington, Hunt, Ruderman, Linville, O'Brien, Conway and Santos).

House Committee on Local Government & Housing
Senate Committee on Economic Development & Telecommunications

Background:

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires a county and its cities to plan under the GMA's major requirements if the county meets certain population and growth criteria. The GMA allows counties not meeting those criteria to choose to plan. Currently, 29 of 39 Washington counties plan under the major GMA requirements (GMA jurisdictions).

The GMA requires GMA jurisdictions to adopt comprehensive plans with certain required elements. Those elements include land use, housing, a capital facilities plan, utilities, transportation, and a rural element.

The GMA comprehensive plan's rural element is to include lands that are not designated for urban growth, agriculture, forest, or mining resources. Legislation enacted in 1997 made numerous changes to rural element provisions including: (1) defining rural character to focus on predominance of natural landscape, fostering of traditional rural lifestyles, provision of rural landscapes, and compatibility with habitat and prevention of sprawl; (2) defining rural development to include a variety of uses and densities, other than agriculture and forestry, that are consistent with rural character; (3) amending the definition of urban growth to provide that a pattern of more intensive rural development is not urban growth; (4) including small-scale businesses (not defined) in rural development and describing small-scale businesses and cottage industries as those not required to serve the rural population; (5) adding rural development provisions, including allowing infill, development, or redevelopment of existing commercial, industrial, residential, or mixed-use areas, subject to the requirement to minimize and contain the existing areas so as not to extend beyond their logical outer boundaries; and (6) adding intensification provisions for rural nonresidential uses or new development of isolated cottage industries and small scale businesses not principally designed to serve the rural

population but that provide job opportunities for rural residents.

Summary:

Rural counties that are GMA jurisdictions may allow the expansion of small-scale businesses and the siting of new small-scale businesses on existing business sites if these businesses are compatible in size and scale with land use and development patterns in the rural element of the comprehensive plan.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 97 0

Senate 46 0

Effective: June 13, 2002