

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6057

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Economic Development & Telecommunications, February 8, 2002

Title: An act relating to incorporating effective economic development planning into growth management planning.

Brief Description: Incorporating effective economic development planning into growth management planning.

Sponsors: Senators T. Sheldon and Roach.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Economic Development & Telecommunications: 2/5/02,
2/8/02[DPS-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6057 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators T. Sheldon, Chair; Finkbeiner, McCaslin, Rossi and Stevens.

Staff: Kim Johnson (786-7486)

Background: The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires a county and its cities to plan in accordance with the act if the county meets certain population and growth criteria. A county which does not meet those criteria may choose to follow and plan under the GMA. Currently, 29 of the 39 counties in Washington, either by choice or mandate, are planning under the GMA.

The GMA requires each county to develop a countywide planning policy which provides a framework from which the city and county comprehensive plans are developed.

Thirteen goals are provided for the purpose of guiding the development of city and county comprehensive plans and development regulations. Comprehensive plans consist of a map or maps, and descriptive text covering objectives, principles, and standards. The comprehensive plans must include: (1) a land use element; (2) a housing element; (3) a capital facilities plan element; (4) a utilities element; (5) for counties a rural element; and (6) a transportation element. Each of the elements in the comprehensive plan have specific information that must be incorporated into the plan by the city or county.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Countywide planning policies must include: (1) policies that consider the population and employment growth and the number of residential units necessary to accommodate the growth in both rural and urban areas; (2) policies which determine the appropriate densities for urban and rural areas; (3) performance measures to review the

annual progress of accommodating the 20-year population and employment growth projections; and (4) policies that plan for and balance the growth in jobs and housing.

City and county comprehensive plans must also include an economic development element which establishes a plan for economic growth and promoting economic development opportunities.

The planning goal concerning economic development is amended to reflect the new goals of both promoting the retention and/or expansion of existing businesses and recognizing regional differences which impact economic development opportunities.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill adds an economic development element to the comprehensive plan. The substitute changes that element to make it less stringent and possibly less costly for the cities and counties to implement. The effective date is changed to require that the new elements in section 3 (concerning the comprehensive plan) be adopted concurrent with the scheduled updates for the cities and counties. The original null and void clause applied to the entire act. The proposed substitute's null and void clause only applies to section 3.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on September 1, 2002.

Testimony For: Communities who promote economic vitality remain economically sound. While it is true that some cities and counties have included an economic development, there is no uniformity in the information included in this element. This bill makes the plans truly comprehensive. The economic slowdown makes this kind of economic planning vital to communities' future economic success. The information necessary to meet all of the requirements of this bill are available from local resources such as the Local Economic Development Councils and Chambers of Commerce.

Testimony Against: This bill is unnecessary because many of the cities and counties have chosen on their own to include an economic development element. The provisions in this bill are very expensive to the cities and counties. Changing the county-wide planning policies will be costly and difficult.

Testified: Dave Williams, Assoc. of WA Cities (con); Greg Wright (pro); Mark Johnson, NFIB (pro); Mike Flynn, Realtors (pro); Steve Stuart, 1000 Friends of WA (pro); Jodi Slavik, BIAW (pro); Bryan Wahl, WA Assoc. of Realtors (pro); Ron Newbry, WA Economic Development Assoc. (pro); Paul Parker, WA State Association of Counties (pro and con).