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HOUSE BILL 2049

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State of Washington                      59th Legislature                      2005 Regular Session

By Representatives Kilmer, Haler, Wallace, Walsh, Sells, Springer, Upthegrove, Simpson, Chase and Linville

Read first time 02/15/2005. Referred to Committee on Local Government.

1            AN ACT Relating to enhanced permit assistance pilot programs;  
2 amending RCW 43.42.010; adding a new section to chapter 43.42 RCW; and  
3 making an appropriation.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 43.42 RCW  
6 to read as follows:

7            (1) The legislature finds that land use and environmental  
8 permitting programs have been created to protect public health and  
9 environmental quality. The legislature believes that such permitting  
10 processes should be fair, transparent, and understandable. The  
11 legislature also finds that permit applicants seek predictability,  
12 efficiency, and collaboration in permitting decisions.

13            (2) At the local permitting level, the legislature finds that  
14 accurate information, permit coordination, and problem solving are  
15 critical for applicants. The legislature finds that local permitting  
16 centers must respond to a wide variety of permit applicants, from the  
17 individual citizen seeking a building permit to international  
18 corporations requiring multiple federal, state, and local permits. The

1 legislature recognizes that local permitting departments may not be  
2 sufficiently funded or organized to the extent necessary to provide  
3 enhanced technical assistance for different types of applicants.

4 (3) Therefore, the legislature intends to provide financial  
5 assistance to local permitting departments to assist them in enhancing  
6 service, improving process efficiency, and increasing predictable  
7 permitting outcomes.

8 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.42.010 and 2003 c 71 s 2 are each amended to read  
9 as follows:

10 (1) The office of regulatory assistance is created in the office of  
11 financial management and shall be administered by the office of the  
12 governor to assist citizens, businesses, and project applicants.

13 (2) The office shall:

14 (a) Maintain and furnish information as provided in RCW 43.42.040;

15 (b) Furnish facilitation as provided in RCW 43.42.050;

16 (c) Furnish coordination as provided in RCW 43.42.060;

17 (d) Coordinate cost reimbursement as provided in RCW 43.42.070;

18 (e) Work with state agencies and local governments to continue to  
19 develop a range of permit assistance options for project applicants;

20 (f) Review initiatives developed by the transportation permit  
21 efficiency and accountability committee established in chapter 47.06C  
22 RCW and determine if any would be beneficial if implemented for other  
23 types of projects;

24 (g) Work to develop informal processes for dispute resolution  
25 between agencies and permit applicants;

26 (h) Conduct customer surveys to evaluate its effectiveness; ~~((and))~~

27 (i) Provide the following biennial reports to the governor and the  
28 appropriate committees of the legislature:

29 (i) A performance report, based on the customer surveys required in  
30 (h) of this subsection;

31 (ii) A report on any statutory or regulatory conflicts identified  
32 by the office in the course of its duties that arise from differing  
33 legal authorities and roles of agencies and how these were resolved.  
34 The report may include recommendations to the legislature and to  
35 agencies; and

36 (iii) A report regarding use of outside independent consultants

1 under RCW 43.42.070, including the nature and amount of work performed  
2 and implementation of requirements relating to costs;

3 (j) Disseminate information about best permitting practices to  
4 local government permitting departments; and

5 (k) Select two local government permitting offices to participate  
6 in an enhanced permit assistance pilot program. Such enhancements may  
7 include, but are not limited to:

8 (i) Creation of local and state interagency permit review teams;

9 (ii) Use of advanced online permit applications;

10 (iii) Streamlining permit processes;

11 (iv) Using loaned executives; and

12 (v) Additional technical assistance and guidance for permit  
13 applicants.

14 (3) (~~A director of the office shall be hired no later than June 1,~~  
15 ~~2003.~~

16 (+4)) The office shall give priority to furnishing assistance to  
17 small projects when expending general fund moneys allocated to it.

18 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. This sum of two hundred thousand dollars, or  
19 as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal  
20 year ending June 30, 2006, from the general fund to the office of  
21 regulatory assistance for the purposes of this act.

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