
Local Government Committee

HB 1222

Brief Description: Authorizing limited expansions of urban growth areas into one hundred year floodplains in areas adjacent to a freeway interchange or interstate in counties wholly or partially bordering salt waters with more than one hundred thousand but fewer than one hundred fifty thousand residents.

Sponsors: Representatives Morris and Lytton.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates an exception to provisions prohibiting the expansion of urban growth areas into the 100-year floodplain of any qualifying western Washington river or river segment.
- Specifies that the exception may only be authorized by a county meeting specific geographic and population requirements, and that exception must be limited to areas of seven or fewer acres that are adjacent to an urban growth area and entirely surrounded by a freeway interchange right-of-way.

Hearing Date: 1/20/12

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

The Growth Management Act (GMA) is the comprehensive land use planning framework for county and city governments in Washington. Enacted in 1990 and 1991, the GMA establishes numerous planning requirements for counties and cities obligated by mandate or choice to fully plan under the GMA (planning jurisdictions) and a reduced number of directives for all other counties and cities.

The GMA includes numerous requirements relating to the use or development of land in urban and rural areas. Among other requirements, counties that fully plan under the GMA (planning counties) must designate urban growth areas (UGAs) or areas within which urban growth must

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be encouraged and outside of which growth can occur only if it is not urban in nature. Planning counties and the cities within these counties must include within their UGAs areas and densities that are sufficient to permit the urban growth projected to occur in the county or city for the succeeding 20-year period.

In 2009, the Legislature adopted Engrossed House Bill 1967 (enacted as ch. 342, Laws of 2009 and codified at RCW 36.70A.110 (8)). This legislation established limited prohibitions on the expansions of UGAs into the 100-year floodplain of any western Washington river or river segment meeting specified water flow criteria.

Summary of Bill:

Provisions prohibiting the expansions of UGAs into the 100-year floodplain of any qualifying western Washington river or river segment are modified. A county with more than 100,000 but fewer than 150,000 residents that is wholly or partially bordered by salt waters may authorize the expansion of a UGA into the 100-year floodplain of any western Washington river or river segment meeting specified water flow criteria if the expansion area is: (1) adjacent to a UGA; (2) entirely surrounded by a freeway interchange right-of-way; and (3) a single parcel or contiguous parcels with a total land area of seven acres or less.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.