

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2834

As of Second Reading

Title: An act relating to providing cost savings for local governments by reducing a limited number of reporting requirements.

Brief Description: Providing cost savings for local governments by reducing a limited number of reporting requirements.

Sponsors: Representatives Alexander, Springer and Angel.

Brief History: Passed House: 4/10/12, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS

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Background: Counties and cities (including towns) are the two general purpose local governments in Washington. Counties and cities are the governmental units that perform broad functions, including the delivery of a wide variety of public services.

Washington's 39 counties are legal subdivisions of the state and have fixed boundaries. Washington's 281 cities and towns, which have boundaries that may be modified through annexation, are generally center-oriented governmental units that are established by incorporation to provide public services and an economic identity to large and small population concentrations.

Counties and cities are required by statute to fulfill numerous reporting requirements related to the conduct of their official duties, including the following reporting requirements:

City Public Works Budgets. Most public entities are required to use a competitive bid process for public works projects and purchases estimated to cost above a certain dollar figure. Public works projects estimated to cost below an established dollar limit may be performed by in-house staff or contracted without a competitive bid. First class cities are required to report the total public works construction budgets and supplemental budgets, the total construction costs of public works performed by public employees for that year,

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and the amount of public works that is performed by public employees above or below 10 percent of the total construction budget to the state auditor.

County Prosecutors. County prosecutors are required to annually report to the Governor regarding the amount and nature of business transacted by the prosecuting attorney that year. Additionally, county prosecutors must send a written report of all prosecutions brought under state liquor laws in the county during the preceding year to the Liquor Control Board.

Growth Management Act. The Growth Management Act (GMA), the comprehensive land use planning framework for county and city governments in Washington, establishes numerous planning requirements for counties and cities obligated by mandate or choice to fully plan under GMA. Jurisdictions that fully plan under the GMA must submit reports to the Department of Commerce (Commerce) every five years regarding the progress made in implementing the GMA.

Affordable Housing. Commerce is required to administer a program for the statewide identification and cataloging of underutilized, state-owned real property that is suitable for the development of affordable housing for very low-income, low-income, and moderate-income households. As part of Commerce's inventory program, participating state agencies and local governments must identify and catalog real property that is suitable for the development of affordable housing for very low-income, low-income, and moderate-income households and provide that information to Commerce by November 1 of each year. The inventory must include pertinent information regarding the location, approximate size, and current zoning classification of the property. In addition, by November 1 of each year, the governmental entities must purge their real property inventories of sites that are no longer available for the development of affordable housing. Commerce must then update its master inventory to reflect the inventory changes reported by the governmental entities.

Summary of Bill: The following county and city reporting requirements are eliminated:

City Public Works Budgets. The requirement obligating first class cities to report the total public works construction budgets and supplemental budgets, the total construction costs of public works performed by public employees for that year, and the amount of public works that is performed by public employees above or below 10 percent of the total construction budget to the state auditor is changed from mandatory to discretionary.

County Prosecutors. The requirement obligating county prosecutors to annually report to the Governor regarding the amount and nature of business transacted is eliminated, as is the requirement obligating prosecutors to annually report liquor law prosecutions to the Liquor Control Board.

Growth Management Act. The requirement obligating jurisdictions that fully plan under the GMA to submit reports to Commerce every five years regarding the progress made by that jurisdiction in implementing the GMA is eliminated.

Affordable Housing. Provisions requiring local governments to identify and catalog real property that is suitable for the development of affordable housing for very low-income, low-income, and moderate-income households and then annually update Commerce on the inventory of real estate available for developing affordable housing is repealed. Additionally, the requirement that local governments purge their real property inventories of sites that are no longer available for the development of affordable housing is eliminated.

A reporting requirement for the Office of Financial Management (OFM) is established. The OFM, with statewide organizations representing cities and counties, must develop a process and criteria to conduct a review of reports, mandates, and programs that create additional expenses for state and local government. Based upon this process and criteria, the OFM must submit recommendations to the Legislature every odd-numbered year regarding which reports, mandates, and programs should be terminated or consolidated. The OFM must also submit executive request legislation each odd-numbered year to implement the recommendations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.