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## Local Government Committee

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### HB 1224

**Brief Description:** Providing a process for county legislative authorities to withdraw from voluntary planning under the growth management act.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Kretz, Takko and Short.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows a county that elected to fully plan under the Growth Management Act (GMA), to remove itself and its cities from the obligation to fully plan under the GMA if the county has 20,000 or fewer inhabitants and other requirements are satisfied.
- Expires the removal authority on December 31, 2014.
- Bars a county that has adopted a removal resolution from re-electing to plan under the GMA for at least 10 years from the date of adoption of the removal resolution.
- Requires a county that has adopted a removal resolution to adopt development regulations to assure the conservation of designated agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands.

**Hearing Date:** 2/8/13

**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 requirements for local governments obligated by mandate or choice to fully plan under the GMA and a reduced number of directives for all other counties and cities.

A county obligated by mandate to fully plan under the GMA is one that either:

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- has a population of 50,000 or more and has experienced a population increase of more than 17 percent in the previous 10 years; or
- has experienced a population increase of more than 20 percent over the previous 10 years, regardless of population.

A county obligated by choice to fully plan under the GMA is one that, not meeting the population requirements described above, has adopted a resolution subjecting itself, and cities located in the county, to the full requirements of the GMA (resolution of intention). Once a resolution of intention is adopted, the county and its cities become subject to all GMA planning requirements. The following is a list of counties that adopted resolutions of intention and the year in which the resolution was adopted: Benton (1990), Columbia (1991), Douglas (1990), Ferry (1990), Franklin (1990), Garfield (1991), Kittitas (1990), Pacific (1990), Pend Oreille (1990), Stevens (1993), and Walla Walla (1990).

According to the 2010 Census and April 1, 2012 population estimates of the Office of Financial Management (OFM) that are used for the allocation of selected state revenues, the following counties that adopted resolutions of intention have had populations of 20,000 or fewer residents between April 1, 2010 and April 1, 2012

<i>County</i>	<i>Census (April 1) 2010 Population</i>	<i>April 1, 2012 OFM Estimate</i>
Columbia	4,078	4,100
Ferry	7,551	7,650
Garfield	2,266	2,250
Pend Oreille	13,001	13,100

In addition to complying with the more broadly applicable requirements of the GMA, a county obligated by choice to fully plan under the GMA must:

- adopt a countywide planning policy;
- adopt development regulations to conserve designated agricultural lands, forest lands, and mineral resource lands within one year of adopting a resolution of intention;
- designate and take other actions related to urban growth areas; and
- adopt a comprehensive plan and development regulations to implement that plan within four years of adopting a resolution of intention.

### **Summary of Bill:**

Until December 31, 2014, the legislative authority of a county that is obligated by choice to fully plan under the GMA may adopt a resolution removing the county, and the cities located within its boundaries, from the requirements to fully plan if:

- the county has a population of 20,000 or fewer inhabitants at any time between January 1, 2010, and December 31, 2014;
- at least 60 days prior to adopting a removal resolution, the county provides written notification to each city located within its boundaries of the county's intent to consider adopting such a resolution; and

- the legislative bodies of at least 60 percent of those cities having an aggregate population of at least 75 percent of the incorporated county population have not adopted resolutions opposing the removal action by the county.

Once an eligible county adopts a removal resolution, the county is barred for at least 10 years from adopting another resolution to fully plan under the GMA. Additionally, while the county and its cities are no longer bound to fully plan under the GMA, they are required, within one year of the adoption of the removal resolution, to adopt development regulations to assure the conservation of designated agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 6, 2013.

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