
SENATE BILL 5732

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senators Braun and Dozier

Read first time 02/12/25. Referred to Committee on Housing.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating greater accountability for increasing
2 the supply of housing consistent with growth management; amending RCW
3 36.70A.011, 36.70A.020, 36.70A.115, 36.70A.210, and 36.70A.345; and
4 creating a new section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that Washington
7 continues to struggle with a housing availability crisis. In 2023,
8 the department of commerce estimated that Washington will need more
9 than a million new homes over the next 20 years to keep pace with
10 expected population growth. Other analyses, such as the William D.
11 Ruckelshaus Center's "Pathways to Housing Security" final report,
12 recommend that Washington should improve coordination in the various
13 sectors of the housing system to carry out long-term strategies that
14 will confront the daunting housing challenge.

15 (2) The legislature further finds that the growth management act
16 provides for enforceable accountability measures, growth management
17 hearings board review, and other sanctions that may be used to ensure
18 the goals of the act are accomplished. By adapting these
19 accountability mechanisms to include a greater emphasis on housing
20 supply, the legislature concludes that the growth management act can

1 become a better tool for encouraging counties and cities to plan for
2 more housing to be built.

3 (3) The legislature therefore determines that the following
4 specific policies will increase the likelihood that Washington will
5 make progress toward meeting the housing goals of the growth
6 management act and enhance the ability of Washington residents of all
7 income levels to secure housing that meets their needs:

8 (a) Direct counties to foster land use patterns that will provide
9 an abundant supply of housing in rural areas;

10 (b) Specify that the housing and permit goals of the growth
11 management act require closing the housing availability gap while
12 continuously tracking progress toward increasing housing supply,
13 including by monitoring and tracking permit applications to ensure
14 that the housing goal is being measured and will be achieved;

15 (c) Clarify that counties and cities planning under the growth
16 management act must ensure that their comprehensive plans and
17 development regulations provide sufficient land to accommodate new
18 housing developments;

19 (d) Require countywide planning policies to monitor and track
20 progress toward permitting new housing to address housing crises at a
21 regional level; and

22 (e) Provide for sanctions when a county or city fails to track or
23 make progress on increasing housing supply pursuant to the housing
24 goal of the growth management act.

25 **Sec. 2.** RCW 36.70A.011 and 2002 c 212 s 1 are each amended to
26 read as follows:

27 The legislature finds that this chapter is intended to recognize
28 the importance of rural lands and rural character to Washington's
29 economy, its people, and its environment, while respecting regional
30 differences. Rural lands and rural-based economies enhance the
31 economic desirability of the state, help to preserve traditional
32 economic activities, and contribute to the state's overall quality of
33 life.

34 The legislature finds that to retain and enhance the job base in
35 rural areas, rural counties must have flexibility to create
36 opportunities for business development and housing. Further, the
37 legislature finds that rural counties must have the flexibility to
38 retain existing businesses and allow them to expand. The legislature
39 recognizes that not all business developments in rural counties

1 require an urban level of services; and that many businesses in rural
2 areas fit within the definition of rural character identified by the
3 local planning unit.

4 Finally, the legislature finds that in defining its rural element
5 under RCW 36.70A.070(5), a county should foster land use patterns and
6 develop a local vision of rural character that will: Help preserve
7 rural-based economies and traditional rural lifestyles; encourage the
8 economic prosperity of rural residents; foster opportunities for
9 small-scale, rural-based employment and self-employment; permit the
10 operation of rural-based agricultural, commercial, recreational, and
11 tourist businesses that are consistent with existing and planned land
12 use patterns; be compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and
13 for fish and wildlife habitat; foster the private stewardship of the
14 land and preservation of open space; provide an abundant supply of
15 housing for residents of rural areas; and enhance the rural sense of
16 community and quality of life.

17 **Sec. 3.** RCW 36.70A.020 and 2023 c 228 s 1 are each amended to
18 read as follows:

19 The following goals are adopted to guide the development and
20 adoption of comprehensive plans and development regulations of those
21 counties and cities that are required or choose to plan under RCW
22 36.70A.040 and, where specified, also guide the development of
23 regional policies, plans, and strategies adopted under RCW 36.70A.210
24 and chapter 47.80 RCW. The following goals are not listed in order of
25 priority and shall be used exclusively for the purpose of guiding the
26 development of comprehensive plans, development regulations, and,
27 where specified, regional plans, policies, and strategies:

28 (1) Urban growth. Encourage development in urban areas where
29 adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in
30 an efficient manner.

31 (2) Reduce sprawl. Reduce the inappropriate conversion of
32 undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.

33 (3) Transportation. Encourage efficient multimodal transportation
34 systems that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and per capita
35 vehicle miles traveled, and are based on regional priorities and
36 coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.

37 (4) Housing. Plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all
38 economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety
39 of residential densities and housing types, close the housing

1 availability gap while continuously tracking progress toward
2 increasing housing supply, and encourage preservation of existing
3 housing stock.

4 (5) Economic development. Encourage economic development
5 throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive
6 plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state,
7 especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, promote the
8 retention and expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of new
9 businesses, recognize regional differences impacting economic
10 development opportunities, and encourage growth in areas experiencing
11 insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the
12 state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.

13 (6) Property rights. Private property shall not be taken for
14 public use without just compensation having been made. The property
15 rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and
16 discriminatory actions.

17 (7) Permits. Applications for both state and local government
18 permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure
19 predictability. Applications must be monitored and tracked to
20 demonstrate measurable progress toward accomplishing the housing
21 goals of this section.

22 (8) Natural resource industries. Maintain and enhance natural
23 resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural,
24 and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive
25 forestlands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage
26 incompatible uses.

27 (9) Open space and recreation. Retain open space and green space,
28 enhance recreational opportunities, enhance fish and wildlife
29 habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and
30 develop parks and recreation facilities.

31 (10) Environment. Protect and enhance the environment and enhance
32 the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality,
33 and the availability of water.

34 (11) Citizen participation and coordination. Encourage the
35 involvement of citizens in the planning process, including the
36 participation of vulnerable populations and overburdened communities,
37 and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to
38 reconcile conflicts.

39 (12) Public facilities and services. Ensure that those public
40 facilities and services necessary to support development shall be

1 adequate to serve the development at the time the development is
2 available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service
3 levels below locally established minimum standards.

4 (13) Historic preservation. Identify and encourage the
5 preservation of lands, sites, and structures, that have historical or
6 archaeological significance.

7 (14) Climate change and resiliency. Ensure that comprehensive
8 plans, development regulations, and regional policies, plans, and
9 strategies under RCW 36.70A.210 and chapter 47.80 RCW adapt to and
10 mitigate the effects of a changing climate; support reductions in
11 greenhouse gas emissions and per capita vehicle miles traveled;
12 prepare for climate impact scenarios; foster resiliency to climate
13 impacts and natural hazards; protect and enhance environmental,
14 economic, and human health and safety; and advance environmental
15 justice.

16 (15) Shorelines of the state. For shorelines of the state, the
17 goals and policies of the shoreline management act as set forth in
18 RCW 90.58.020 shall be considered an element of the county's or
19 city's comprehensive plan.

20 **Sec. 4.** RCW 36.70A.115 and 2017 3rd sp.s. c 16 s 1 are each
21 amended to read as follows:

22 (1) Counties and cities that are required or choose to plan under
23 RCW 36.70A.040 shall ensure that, taken collectively, adoption of and
24 amendments to their comprehensive plans and/or development
25 regulations provide sufficient capacity of land suitable for
26 development within their jurisdictions to accommodate their allocated
27 housing and employment growth, including the accommodation of, as
28 appropriate, new housing developments and the medical, governmental,
29 educational, institutional, commercial, and industrial facilities
30 related to such growth, as adopted in the applicable countywide
31 planning policies and consistent with the twenty-year population
32 forecast from the office of financial management.

33 (2) This analysis shall include the reasonable measures findings
34 developed under RCW 36.70A.215, if applicable to such counties and
35 cities.

36 **Sec. 5.** RCW 36.70A.210 and 2022 c 252 s 6 are each amended to
37 read as follows:

1 (1) The legislature recognizes that counties are regional
2 governments within their boundaries, and cities are primary providers
3 of urban governmental services within urban growth areas. For the
4 purposes of this section, a "countywide planning policy" is a written
5 policy statement or statements used solely for establishing a
6 countywide framework from which county and city comprehensive plans
7 are developed and adopted pursuant to this chapter. This framework
8 shall ensure that city and county comprehensive plans are consistent
9 as required in RCW 36.70A.100. Nothing in this section shall be
10 construed to alter the land-use powers of cities.

11 (2) The legislative authority of a county that plans under RCW
12 36.70A.040 shall adopt a countywide planning policy in cooperation
13 with the cities located in whole or in part within the county as
14 follows:

15 (a) No later than sixty calendar days from July 16, 1991, the
16 legislative authority of each county that as of June 1, 1991, was
17 required or chose to plan under RCW 36.70A.040 shall convene a
18 meeting with representatives of each city located within the county
19 for the purpose of establishing a collaborative process that will
20 provide a framework for the adoption of a countywide planning policy.
21 In other counties that are required or choose to plan under RCW
22 36.70A.040, this meeting shall be convened no later than sixty days
23 after the date the county adopts its resolution of intention or was
24 certified by the office of financial management.

25 (b) The process and framework for adoption of a countywide
26 planning policy specified in (a) of this subsection shall determine
27 the manner in which the county and the cities agree to all procedures
28 and provisions including but not limited to desired planning
29 policies, deadlines, ratification of final agreements and
30 demonstration thereof, and financing, if any, of all activities
31 associated therewith.

32 (c) If a county fails for any reason to convene a meeting with
33 representatives of cities as required in (a) of this subsection, the
34 governor may immediately impose any appropriate sanction or sanctions
35 on the county from those specified under RCW 36.70A.340.

36 (d) If there is no agreement by October 1, 1991, in a county that
37 was required or chose to plan under RCW 36.70A.040 as of June 1,
38 1991, or if there is no agreement within one hundred twenty days of
39 the date the county adopted its resolution of intention or was
40 certified by the office of financial management in any other county

1 that is required or chooses to plan under RCW 36.70A.040, the
2 governor shall first inquire of the jurisdictions as to the reason or
3 reasons for failure to reach an agreement. If the governor deems it
4 appropriate, the governor may immediately request the assistance of
5 the department of commerce to mediate any disputes that preclude
6 agreement. If mediation is unsuccessful in resolving all disputes
7 that will lead to agreement, the governor may impose appropriate
8 sanctions from those specified under RCW 36.70A.340 on the county,
9 city, or cities for failure to reach an agreement as provided in this
10 section. The governor shall specify the reason or reasons for the
11 imposition of any sanction.

12 (e) No later than July 1, 1992, the legislative authority of each
13 county that was required or chose to plan under RCW 36.70A.040 as of
14 June 1, 1991, or no later than fourteen months after the date the
15 county adopted its resolution of intention or was certified by the
16 office of financial management the county legislative authority of
17 any other county that is required or chooses to plan under RCW
18 36.70A.040, shall adopt a countywide planning policy according to the
19 process provided under this section and that is consistent with the
20 agreement pursuant to (b) of this subsection, and after holding a
21 public hearing or hearings on the proposed countywide planning
22 policy.

23 (3) A countywide planning policy shall at a minimum, address the
24 following:

25 (a) Policies to implement RCW 36.70A.110;

26 (b) Policies for promotion of contiguous and orderly development
27 and provision of urban services to such development;

28 (c) Policies for siting public capital facilities of a countywide
29 or statewide nature, including transportation facilities of statewide
30 significance as defined in RCW 47.06.140;

31 (d) Policies for countywide transportation facilities and
32 strategies;

33 (e) Policies that consider the need for affordable housing, such
34 as housing for all economic segments of the population and parameters
35 for its distribution;

36 (f) Policies for joint county and city planning within urban
37 growth areas;

38 (g) Policies for countywide economic development and employment,
39 which must include consideration of the future development of
40 commercial and industrial facilities;

1 (h) An analysis of the fiscal impact; (~~and~~)

2 (i) Policies that address the protection of tribal cultural
3 resources in collaboration with federally recognized Indian tribes
4 that are invited pursuant to subsection (4) of this section, provided
5 that a tribe, or more than one tribe, chooses to participate in the
6 process; and

7 (j) Policies to monitor and track progress toward permitting new
8 housing to address regional housing supply crises.

9 (4) Federal agencies and federally recognized Indian tribes whose
10 reservation or ceded lands lie within the county shall be invited to
11 participate in and cooperate with the countywide planning policy
12 adoption process. Adopted countywide planning policies shall be
13 adhered to by state agencies.

14 (5) Failure to adopt a countywide planning policy that meets the
15 requirements of this section may result in the imposition of a
16 sanction or sanctions on a county or city within the county, as
17 specified in RCW 36.70A.340. In imposing a sanction or sanctions, the
18 governor shall specify the reasons for failure to adopt a countywide
19 planning policy in order that any imposed sanction or sanctions are
20 fairly and equitably related to the failure to adopt a countywide
21 planning policy.

22 (6) Cities and the governor may appeal an adopted countywide
23 planning policy to the growth management hearings board within sixty
24 days of the adoption of the countywide planning policy.

25 (7) Multicounty planning policies shall be adopted by two or more
26 counties, each with a population of four hundred fifty thousand or
27 more, with contiguous urban areas and may be adopted by other
28 counties, according to the process established under this section or
29 other processes agreed to among the counties and cities within the
30 affected counties throughout the multicounty region.

31 **Sec. 6.** RCW 36.70A.345 and 2010 c 211 s 13 are each amended to
32 read as follows:

33 The governor may impose a sanction or sanctions specified under
34 RCW 36.70A.340 on: (1) A county or city that fails to designate
35 critical areas, agricultural lands, forestlands, or mineral resource
36 lands under RCW 36.70A.170 by the date such action was required to
37 have been taken; (2) a county or city that fails to adopt development
38 regulations under RCW 36.70A.060 protecting critical areas or
39 conserving agricultural lands, forestlands, or mineral resource lands

1 by the date such action was required to have been taken; (3) a county
2 that fails to designate urban growth areas under RCW 36.70A.110 by
3 the date such action was required to have been taken; (4) a county or
4 city that fails to track and make progress on increasing housing
5 supply pursuant to the goals set forth in RCW 36.70A.020; and ~~((4))~~
6 (5) a county or city that fails to adopt its comprehensive plan or
7 development regulations when such actions are required to be taken.

8 Imposition of a sanction or sanctions under this section shall be
9 preceded by written findings by the governor, that either the county
10 or city is not proceeding in good faith to meet the requirements of
11 ~~((the act))~~ this chapter; or that the county or city has unreasonably
12 delayed taking the required action. The governor shall consult with
13 and communicate his or her findings to the growth management hearings
14 board prior to imposing the sanction or sanctions. For those counties
15 or cities that are not required to plan or have not opted in, the
16 governor in imposing sanctions shall consider the size of the
17 jurisdiction relative to the requirements of this chapter and the
18 degree of technical and financial assistance provided.

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