

Weekly Legislative Update: **Growth Management**

Issue Team Chair: Cynthia Stewart

Contact: cstewart@lwwwa.org

March 20, 2022 – Session Summary

Background

The Growth Management Act (GMA), RCW Chapter 36.70A, was adopted in 1990, and the League of Women Voters was an advocate for it then and remains so. As time has passed and circumstances have evolved, a number of amendments to the GMA have been necessary. The League monitors and supports or opposes those bills based on positions found in Program in Action on pages 31 and 32.

In 2021, the housing element was expanded via HB 1220 to assure that the planning includes housing for all of the population, including low-income, severely low-income and those expected to need shelter. In 2022, a variety of bills were introduced to assure additional housing via ADUs. Also in 2022 a high priority of League was to get HB 1099 passed, which would have added a goal of environmental resiliency to the listed goals of the Growth Management Act (GMA) and to the requirements of local comprehensive plans.

Session Actions

There were several successes during the 2022 legislative session, including enactment of four bills the League supported that achieved technical changes in the GMA. However, none of the bills associated with housing passed nor did any of the environmental and climate change bills.

In some cases, the bills made it to the second to last step but didn't get to the floor for a vote. An example of that is HB 1099, which was ultimately listed for both House and Senate votes on the conference committee recommendation and was on the order of consideration list for the House on the last day but never got a vote before the session ended. In some cases, the bills did not pass out of the policy committees. In the category related to housing, most of the bills did not get pulled from the Rules Committee for a floor vote before session ended. However, technical assistance to local jurisdictions to implement HB 1220 (2021) was funded.

The following is a list of GMA bills and their outcomes.

Technical changes – Passed (5):

- [SB 5042](#), Concerning the effective date of certain actions taken under the GMA (relates to vesting)
- [SB 5593](#), Concerning urban growth area boundaries (allows shifting UGA boundaries)

- [HB 1241](#), Relating to planning under the GMA (increasing the timeline for plan revisions; progress reports; consultation with tribes; Commerce to resolve disputes)
- [HB 1717](#), Concerning tribal participation in planning under the GMA (recognizes independent nation status of tribes and establishes dispute resolution process if needed during comp planning)
- [HB 1769](#), Concerning community municipal corporations (eliminates the special consideration of two very old community councils that held veto power within cities)

Housing – Did Not Pass (8)

Most of these bills had overlapping provisions or handled the same issue slightly differently. League advocated strongly for GMA amendments that would strengthen the ability of local governments to permit greater density in spite of NIMBY neighborhood reactions. The bills that did not die in committee just never made it to the floor for final votes because of the volume of legislation that had to be passed in a very short time.

- [SB 5312](#), Facilitating transit-oriented development and increasing housing inventory
- [SB 5428](#), Increasing housing supply through the GMA
- [SB 5390](#), Increasing housing supply through the GMA (would establish REET density incentive zones within UGAs) (died in committee)
- [SB 5670](#), Creating additional middle housing near transit and in areas traditionally dedicated to single-family detached housing (died in committee); companion bill HB 1782 (28 sponsors) in Rules
- [HB 1157](#), Increasing housing support through the GMA
- [HB 1337](#), Concerning accessory dwelling units
- [HB 1660](#), Concerning accessory dwelling units
- [HB 1711](#), Concerning accessory dwelling units

Environmental Protection & Climate Change – Did Not Pass (5)

The biggest disappointment in this category was failure to pass HB 1099. This bill went through multiple revisions which were not fully accepted by the bill advocates, and then after conference committee, the Senate passed that recommendation but it never got to the floor for a final vote in the House as a result of filibustering budget bills and other issues into the evening of the last night of session.

- [HB 1099](#), Improving the state’s climate response through updates to the state’s comprehensive planning framework
- [HB 1117](#), Promoting salmon recovery through revisions to the State’s comprehensive planning network
- [HB 1856](#), Adding counties to the voluntary stewardship program
- [HB 2066](#), Relating to exemptions for infill development under the state environmental policy act.
- [HB 1627](#), Making it possible for more properties to have access to water, storm drains, and sanitary sewage systems.

Next Steps

League members are encouraged to identify the schedules for their respective jurisdictions' comprehensive plan revisions and get involved to be sure that the housing element comports with HB 1220 requirements (a full range of housing for the entire population, including low-income, severely low-income and homeless shelters) and that even though HB 1099 did not pass, the jurisdictions do include climate mitigation planning.

How You Can Be Involved

- During the legislative session we will send Action Alerts in the [Legislative Newsletter](#). Please respond to these, which will direct you to an application to facilitate communicating with your legislators on an important vote in committees or on the chamber floor.
- Local Leagues in Washington have action chairs who coordinate action teams. Some local Leagues have education teams to take action locally. Contact your local League action chair to find out and join.
- You may also express your opinion on legislation with the LWVWA issue chairs. We will take your perspectives under considerations as we determine our support for legislation and prepare testimony. Cynthia Stewart, Growth Management Issue Chair, cstewart@lwvwa.org.