

LAWMAKER REVIEW



BUILDING INDUSTRY
ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON
CHAMPIONS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

GMA AND SEPA REFORMS

January 18, 2019

BIAW is supporting Growth Management Act (GMA) and State Environment Policy Act (SEPA) reforms that help land use and environmental policies work together instead of against each other. A number of BIAW supported bills have been heard and more are scheduled.

Yesterday, BIAW testified in favor of SB 5008 which expands the short plat thresholds from 4 to 9, and allows a local option of increasing short plats to 30 inside an Urban Growth Area (UGA).

On Thursday, BIAW will be supporting SB 5194 which adds a balance of housing types at a variety of economic price points to the housing element of UGA considerations.

Also on Thursday, BIAW will be supporting SB 5243 which reforms standing requirements for appeals before the Growth Management Hearings Board making standing requirements mirror the Administrative Procedures Act standards. A person or organization can challenge only when they own property in the area, will be or will likely be prejudiced by the action and will suffer harm.

Currently standing for a GMA challenge includes those who meet these standards or who have participated in the public process. So, an organization in Seattle could challenge the action of Spokane County, even though they have not and will not be materially harmed merely by commenting on something during the planning process.

BIAW is also working on a bill that would require jurisdictions to increase housing capacity when they are not meeting housing needs and a SEPA review at the comprehensive plan stage—clarifying what mitigation would be necessary for anytime of development. BIAW will continue to update on these issues.