



CORE ISSUES

Support Workforce Development

SB 5183

Having a skilled and capable workforce that can meet the demand for new housing and home improvements is vital to our home builders and remodelers. Furthermore, the housing industry is such an important part of our region's economy in terms of local income, jobs and revenue. Having enough workers in the construction trades is critical not only to the industry's continued success, but also our region's quality of life.

MBA believes the Legislature should increase resources and funding for workforce training with the purpose of providing trade skills for residential building careers. This includes enhancing career tech education for all middle and high schools, as well as funding for technical institutions and workforce development organizations, and any other steps we can take to help strengthen the pipeline of new workers entering the construction trades.

SB 5183 would increase funding for career and technical education (CTE) and skill centers.

Restore Vested Development Rights

SB 5212

Washington's vested rights doctrine gives property owners/developers the right to develop properties according to the land use laws and ordinances in place when they submit a complete permit application. In recent years, there have been several court rulings related to vested rights that have created a climate of uncertainty and confusion, thereby limiting the effectiveness of the vested rights doctrine.

The MBA would like to work with the Legislature to clarify and codify certain vesting periods for land use and building permits to ensure a clearer and more consistent application of the common law doctrine. We seek support from the Legislature to either adopt language to codify the common law vested rights doctrine, or codify that vesting on specific land use and building permits takes place at time of completed permit application.

SB 5212 would clarify that a valid and fully complete building permit application for a structure vests to the zoning and other land use control ordinances in effect on the date of the application, including land use control ordinances enacted for the purpose of complying with state law. The same applies to applications for preliminary plat approval of a subdivision or short plat approval of the short subdivision.

Find a Path Forward for Permit-Exempt Wells

The State Supreme Court's Oct. 2016 Hirst ruling effectively halted development in areas that depend on well water. Legislation has been introduced to remove unnecessary burdens on property owners seeking to use permit-exempt wells.

SB 5239

Amends the GMA to allow local jurisdictions to rely on Department of Ecology's water resources rules when approving a building permit, subdivision, dedication, or short subdivision to determine if there is available potable water.

Provides that a permit-exempt groundwater withdrawal may not be deemed or considered to be causing impairment or injury to a minimum flow or other similar policy established by Ecology, regardless of the policy's priority date.

Amends the building permit statute and the subdivision statute to say reliance on adopted instream flow rules is evidence of proof for water availability.

Improve Process for Measuring Buildable Land Supply and Promote Housing Affordability

SENATE BILL 5254

Lack of buildable land, low housing inventory, and skyrocketing prices continue to impact families in many parts of Washington State. To address this, SB 5254 would:

- Improve the process in the Growth Management Act used to analyze the availability of land for housing in Buildable Lands Reports.
- Streamline permitting and environmental review for multi-family or high-density housing developments.
- Ensure that housing market metrics such as affordability and inventory are reviewed in areas where housing issues like price & supply are most problematic.
- Reinforce that the GMA's population projections assigned to cities are not maximum growth levels, but minimums that cities may choose to exceed.
- Ensure that local GMA Comprehensive Plans can be adopted using the most up-to-date data on population projections from the Office of Financial Management.
- Enact a 10-year extension of the \$40 document recording surcharge that funds local homelessness programs to 2027, to match proposed revisions to the state's homelessness prevention plan requirements.
- Allow local Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) revenue to be used for capital costs of homelessness housing until 2019, as a source of funding until cities have authority to seek an additional .1% sales tax for low-income housing and homelessness programs.
- Modify the existing property tax exemption for construction of new affordable housing units to apply to the preservation of existing housing units made available to low-income tenants.

Administrative Approval of Final Plats

SENATE BILL 5674/HOUSE BILL 1862

Reduce local jurisdiction's legislative workload and increase predictability for homebuyers by amending the RCW to allow Final Subdivision Plat Approvals to be conducted administratively. The final plat process should be handled like the short plat process, which is done administratively. There is no need for a legislative body to approve. The preliminary plat application provides an opportunity to appeal, so removing the final plat approval process would not change the existing opportunity for public input or appeal. Eliminating this step would also save staff the time associated with preparing the final plat package for council.

Condo Liability (bill being drafted)

Create new affordable home ownership opportunities and stimulate the market for condominium construction by reforming condominium liability laws based on the University of Washington Runstad Center Report recommendations.