



American Planning Association  
**Washington Chapter**

*Making Great Communities Happen*

January 22, 2008

The Honorable Geoff Simpson, Chair  
House Local Government Committee  
426 John L. O'Brien Building  
Olympia, WA 98504-060

RE: HB 2797 and SB 6580

Dear Representative Simpson:

The Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) supports the proposed substitute to HB 2797 and SB 6580. The proposed substitute would add “climate change” among the Planning Goals of the Growth Management Act at RCW 36.70A.020. This is an important first step in giving direction to local governments to mitigate climate change impacts by reducing emission of greenhouse gases. Such a goal is consistent with Washington APA’s mission of promoting sustainable communities and we urge your support.

The GMA requires jurisdictions to plan for their physical framework every 10 years through a comprehensive planning process. This process presently does not include consideration of how the physical layouts of cities, buildings and infrastructure impact the demand for energy, or the release of greenhouse gases. Existing research and data show how these phenomena are inter-related and can be measured; identify policies, tools and technologies for reducing the demand, and lowering and mitigating greenhouse gas emissions; and illustrate incentives for doing so.

Many counties and cities wish to minimize their communities’ greenhouse gas emissions, but lack the required expertise. Section 8 of the proposed substitute requires the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development to provide counties and cities advisory methodologies and estimates to help them inventory, estimate and project greenhouse gas emissions. Section 8 would give local governments some tools that may allow those jurisdictions to move forward.

Washington APA applauds the Legislature for addressing climate change. We advocated legislation during the 2007 legislative session addressing this problem (SB 5871), and are gratified that the 2008 Legislature is entertaining these new proposals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Tovar', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Joseph W. Tovar, FAICP, President  
American Planning Association  
Washington Chapter