



January 10, 2010

The Honorable Geoff Simpson  
Chair, House Local Government and Housing Committee  
426 John L. O'Brien Building  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

RE: HB 2412: Relating to fully contained communities authorized under the Growth Management Act

Dear Representative Simpson:

The Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association strongly supports the passage of HB 2412, which would amend RCW 36.70A.350 to limit future "Fully Contained Communities" (FCCs) to eastern Washington.

The only FCCs that have been built under GMA authority are in western Washington: Redmond Ridge and Snoqualmie Ridge in King County, and Cascadia in Pierce County. None of the existing FCCs have ever achieved any common sense meaning of the phrase "fully contained," nor have they achieved a balance between housing and employment. These FCCs have worsened traffic congestion on the surrounding rural road network and added pressures for conversion of surrounding resource and rural lands to urban uses.

We note that most counties west of the Cascades have rural areas that are relatively small compared to counties east of the Cascades. The rural parts of western counties are much closer to major transportation arteries and existing incorporated urban growth areas, such that new FCCs in this part of the state have no practical hope of ever being "fully contained." For example, the Redmond Ridge FCC is less than three miles from the Redmond city limits and the regional highway grid at the terminus of State Route 520.

In practice, FCCs that are not far enough from existing employment centers to be truly remote become bedroom communities, stressing the intervening road network, and further increasing vehicle miles traveled and associated greenhouse gas emissions. We frankly cannot see how



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circumstances supporting a truly “fully contained community” could exist in the western part of the state. For this reason, we support HB 2412 to limit the authorization of future FCCs to the counties east of the crest of the Cascades where sufficient land area exists to potentially achieve truly free-standing, fully-contained settlements.

APA Washington urges the Committee to recommend approval of HB 2412. Please contact me at your convenience if I can answer questions in this matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Scott Greenberg'.

Scott Greenberg, AICP  
Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association  
President

cc Members of the House Local Government and Housing Committee