



March 21, 2017

Representative Joe Fitzgibbon, Chair; Representative Strom Peterson, Vice Chair; Representative David Taylor; Representative Jacquelin Maycumber; Representative Vincent Buys; Representative Mary Dye; Representative Jake Fey; Representative Ruth Kagi; and Representative Joan McBride

House Environment Committee, Washington State Legislature

The Washington State Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA Washington) respectfully submits comments on **Engrossed Senate Bill SB 5517 relating to industrial development on rail-adjacent farmland, forests, and mineral resource lands.**

APA Washington is a 1,400 member association of public and private sector professional planners, planning commissioners and elected officials, among others. We believe among the strengths of Washington's planning and community design approach over the past 25 years is its adherence to the policies in the Growth Management Act (GMA) that designated agricultural, forest and mineral resources lands remain protected in order for the resources that depend on these lands to continue to serve not only currently but into the future. We oppose ESB 5517 and offer the following comments:

- This bill creates a definition of "freight rail dependent uses" that includes buildings and infrastructure that are used in the fabrication, processing, storage and transport of goods where the use is dependent on an adjacent short line railroad, and amends the GMA to allow GMA planning jurisdictions to assure agricultural, forest and mineral resources lands adjacent to short line railroads may be developed for freight rail dependent uses.
- This bill threatens already scarce resource lands because it allows for what could be extensive development of rail dependent uses near short line railroads on lands designated as agricultural, forest or mineral without a de-designation process.
- This bill lacks clarity on the ability to appropriately limit rail dependent development in rural lands. It appears that these uses can be allowed if they do not require urban services. Allowing these uses in rural lands that are not resource lands might be acceptable if it is clear that these uses are limited and conformed to the guidelines for type iii LAMIRDs under RCW 36.70A.5(d)iii) or major industrial developments under RCW 36.70A.367, and do not require the extension of urban services.

For these reasons, **APA Washington opposes ESB 5517 as written.**
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Paula Reeves, AICP CTP
President, Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association