



March 16, 2021

Senator Kuderer, Chair, Senate Housing and Local Government Committee, and members of the committee,

The Washington State Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA Washington) respectfully submits comments **in support of Second Substitute House Bill 1099**, which would incorporate climate considerations into the state's planning framework.

APA Washington surveys our members about legislative priorities each year, and action on climate consistently ranks near the top. Washington is overdue in addressing climate change and needs to act now. Tackling climate change now is a moral obligation to the people of Washington, not to mention future generations, as well as a wise investment in expanding resiliency and supporting the state's economy. While the cost of this work is substantial, the cost of further delay and inaction grows exponentially. In addition, the implementation of this legislation will provide much needed coherence between state and local efforts to respond to the daunting task before us.

We have reviewed the second substitute bill and agree that the work by local governments and state agencies initiated by this bill is crucial to our health, economy and sustainability. For these reasons, **APA Washington strongly supports this bill** and provides specific comments below.

- **Planning Support:** We appreciate the planning and technical support for local governments under sections 5 and 8 of the bill. We hope that the guidance will address the following topics in particular:
 - a. The relationship between climate policies and science-based protection of critical areas.
 - b. Best practices for reducing wildfire risk while balancing protections for critical areas, and a clear definition of wildland-urban interface area for the new requirements in section 4 (page 7, lines 15-18).
 - c. Effective, legally-defensible, and sustainable multimodal concurrency programs.
 - d. Clear, consistent, and coordinated data among state agencies and local jurisdictions. The lack of coordination among state agencies in addressing climate change has led to significant data gaps that would hinder jurisdictions in the preparation of Climate Change and Resiliency Elements newly required under this bill. For that reason, the state model element and its guidance should provide support for jurisdictions to address these data gaps. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has already funded county-level profiles on health through their program entitled Building Resilience Against Climate Effects (BRACE) that could possibly assist in our state process.
- **Local Government Inclusion in Guidance Development:** The group that the Department of Commerce convenes to oversee the development of model guidance should include representatives of local government (counties and cities of varying sizes) as well as state agency and tribal representation.
- **Funding:** The Fiscal Note includes allocations for state agency efforts, but while significant work required for affected cities and counties is identified in the narrative, a specific cost estimate for local government is not provided (nor likely possible). APA

supports a well-funded grant program for local government integration of climate considerations into local plans in addition to the other state support such as guidance, model plan provisions, and protection from appeals when local governments use state guidance.

APA Washington is a 1,400 member association of public and private sector professional planners, planning commissioners and elected officials, among others. We work every day to implement the state's growth management and planning framework and appreciate the opportunity to provide information that will help improve it for all Washingtonians.

We would be happy to provide additional information or answer any questions you may have at this point, or further in the trajectory of this bill. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nancy Eklund, AICP, President, American Planning Association, Washington Chapter
Yorik Stevens-Wajda, AICP, Chair, APA-WA Legislative Committee