

FROM: DRAFT  
STREET ADDRESS:  
EMAIL:  
PHONE:  
BILL(S): 1110 & 5190 (OPPOSE)  
MESSAGE:

We strongly oppose adoption of these two bills under consideration in the legislature that propose to eliminate single-family residential zoning statewide. These bills allow the state to commandeer local zoning regulations and replace them with one extreme and rigid scheme.

There are essentially four classes of cities in Washington; the great majority of those - 68% - are code cities. State law (RCW35A) affords code cities the greatest degree of local control by law, allowing them to perform any function not specifically denied them by the law. Seizure by the state of land use and zoning decisions, a fundamental prerogative of cities, is not consistent with this basic tenet in RCW. Cities have an independent charge to develop their Comprehensive Plans by next year, taking into account growth requirements in the Growth Management Act (GMA). Some cities are not projected to exceed their growth limits for nearly a generation. (\*) Cities have staff, boards, and commissions in place to direct growth in specified areas by particular means to accommodate increased population most appropriate in their unique locations.

These bills coerce all municipalities into a uniform upzoning straitjacket statewide, regardless of local conditions. Single-unit lots could convert to:

- \*At least 4 units per lot in all residential areas.
- \*6 units per lot in all residential areas, if two of the six are “affordable.”
- \*At least 6 units per lot in all residential if within ½ mi. of major transit stop.

This zoning will create dense, unplanned helter-skelter residential areas, what some call the “Ballardization” of their single-family neighborhoods. The inadequate parking standards in these bills will result in unimaginable conditions in residential streets. About “affordability”, it is true that a new single-family home in an upscale area, at \$1.5M, is not affordable. But a home in a multi-unit dwelling on the same lot at \$750,000 is not “affordable” either. Cities should have the latitude to design housing in areas and by methods actually resulting in affordability. When canvassed, citizens

often state strong preference for retention of single-family residential neighborhoods by wide margins; our elected representatives should listen. (\*\*)

**Again, we strongly disapprove the approach promoted in these bills and ask they be defeated in the 2023 legislative session.** We ask that cities and towns be allowed to devise their own solutions to housing problems in the communities they know best.

(\*) Edmonds not until 2041.

(\*\*) In 2021, for example, Edmonds @ 78% and Mukilteo @ 82%.