

For Immediate Release

**CONTACT:** Alex Brennan, [alex@futurewise.org](mailto:alex@futurewise.org), 425-268-3803

### **Washington State Senate Passes SB 5042 to close the Growth Management Act Sprawl Loophole**

On Wednesday, January 26<sup>th</sup> 2022, the Washington State Senate passed [SB 5042](#) on a vote of 27-20, with 2 abstentions. The bill passed on largely on party lines, with Democratic Senators Mark Mullett and Tim Sheldon joining Senate Republicans in voting no.

SB 5042 will have its first hearing in the House of Representatives Environment and Energy Committee on **Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 PM.**

SB 5042 is a bill to close a loophole in the Growth Management Act that currently allows for growth in rural landscapes that does not comply with the GMA. The loophole undermines the intent of the GMA by allowing counties to subvert the Growth Management Hearing Board appeals process to build sprawling developments that gobble up farmlands, forests, and critical habitats, put a financial strain on jurisdictions to provide adequate infrastructure, facilities, and services to new developments.

“SB 5042 is a long-overdue step to ensure that the Growth Management Act’s requirements to prevent sprawl are not circumvented and that growth happens in a responsible way, in areas that have the infrastructure necessary to support that growth.” – Representative Joe Fitzgibbon

“I am proud to co-sponsor SB 5042 and pleased to see this bill headed to the House of Representatives. SB 5042 is critical legislation that protects our farmlands and wildlife habitat from irresponsible sprawl. This legislation was originally introduced in 2008, nearly 15 years ago, which is why it’s so exciting to be this close to the finish line.” – Senator Andy Billig

SB 5042 makes a simple update to the GMA, by changing the effective date for land use changes to 60 days after adoption or until after a ruling from the Growth Management Hearings Board is issued. If the GMHB rules against the land use change (for example expansion of the urban growth boundary or removing designations for agricultural lands), the change won’t be allowed to go into effect, and the protections will continue.