

HB 1676 -- INFORMED GROWTH ACT

SPONSOR: Englund

This bill establishes the Informed Growth Act that requires a comprehensive economic impact study to be completed as part of a municipal reviewing authority's review of a land use permit application for a large-scale retail development. In its main provisions, the bill:

- (1) Requires the study to be completed by a person other than the applicant who is listed by the Department of Economic Development as someone who is qualified to prepare the study;
- (2) Requires a permit applicant to pay a \$40,000 fee to be deposited into the newly created Comprehensive Economic Impact Study Fund. Upon appropriation, moneys in the fund must be used solely for the purposes of the act. The department must disburse to the municipality from the fund an amount equal to the projected costs of the study contract, notice of public hearing, and related municipal staff support. The municipality's contract for the study must ensure that the \$40,000 fee will be sufficient to cover these costs. The department may charge an administrative fee of up to \$1,000 against the fee. Any portion of the fee that is unexpended must be returned to the applicant;
- (3) Requires the study to be completed within four months of the filing of the permit application and to be made available to the authority, the applicant, and the public;
- (4) Requires the study to identify and estimate the economic effects of the development on certain factors specified in the bill including existing retail operations, employment, retail wages and benefits, and municipal revenues generated;
- (5) Requires the authority to conduct a public hearing presenting the study before the permit application is approved. Requirements of the hearing notice are specified in the bill;
- (6) Specifies that the authority must issue a finding of undue adverse impact or no undue adverse impact based on the study, testimony received during the public hearing, and other presented information. The authority may only issue a permit for a large-scale retail development if it determines that there is likely to be no undue adverse impact; and
- (7) Exempts from the act any municipality that has adopted economic and community impact review criteria that apply to large-scale retail development land use permit applications and

that require a study of these impacts in applying the review criteria to the application.