

**SB 5259 - DIGEST**

(SEE ALSO PROPOSED 1ST SUB)

Provides that, encouraging the conservation of productive agricultural lands requires local governments to have a regulatory strategy that allows agricultural landowners to successfully engage in agriculture.

Permits counties and cities to use other measures, with regard to agricultural lands that include: Consolidating multiple permit requirements; exempting agricultural lands from unnecessary requirements; reducing the amount of time required for permit review; expanding opportunities for county or city employees to provide technical assistance to landowners; and increasing coordination among counties, cities, and other agencies to avoid duplication of work during permit review.

Authorizes the department of commerce to provide financial assistance and incentives to counties and cities to promote innovative zoning techniques and other measures.

Changes the date to July 1, 2020, in which the county legislative authority must adopt certain ordinances or resolutions that allow it to participate in the voluntary stewardship program.

Changes the date to July 31, 2021, in which the state conservation commission must determine, for participating watersheds, whether adequate funding to implement the voluntary stewardship program was provided during the preceding biennium.