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**SENATE BILL 5970**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Senator Hasegawa

AN ACT Relating to creating a best investment selection option for use in public works contracts; amending RCW 39.04.010, 39.04.015, 39.04.155, and 39.04.190; adding a new section to chapter 39.04 RCW; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that the lowest responsive bid process used in awarding public works contracts may limit the flexibility of both the state and municipalities in determining whether other bids are more beneficial to the state or to the community where the project is located. The legislature also finds that selection of the lowest responsive bidder may not always result in the contacting agency achieving all of its goals.

The legislature intends to create an additional bidding process that the state and municipalities may elect to use in selecting bidders for public works contracts. In electing to use this process, the contracting authority is allowed to determine which of the bids submitted best achieve the regulatory, commercial, and socio-economic goals as determined by the authority.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 39.04 RCW to read as follows:

(1) If the state or a municipality elects to use the best investment selection optional bidding process as defined in RCW 39.04.010, it must provide notice of the process in its solicitation for bids and include a list of the goals and factors that will be used in determining the selection of the winning bid.

(2) In setting its socio-economic goals in the best investment selection process, the contracting authority may consider factors such as: The opportunities created for small businesses, new businesses, businesses owned by socially or economically disadvantaged individuals; businesses more likely to consult with and work with local communities; businesses that can be more innovative; proximity of the company to the project; response time to the job site; the ready availability of workers and whether the workers are from the community where the project is being built; the impact on local employment, including the likelihood of utilization of secondary employment resources such as the unemployed, the underemployed, part-time workers, and first-time entrants in the workforce; the overall impact on the community in terms of putting money back into the local economy; and whether the bid represents the best investment for the taxpayers.

**Sec.**  RCW 39.04.010 and 2008 c 130 s 16 are each amended to read as follows:

The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Award" means the formal decision by the state or municipality notifying a responsible bidder with the lowest responsive bid or the best investment selection of the state's or municipality's acceptance of the bid and intent to enter into a contract with the bidder.

(2) "Contract" means a contract in writing for the execution of public work for a fixed or determinable amount duly awarded after advertisement and competitive bid, or a contract awarded under the small works roster process in RCW 39.04.155.

(3) "Municipality" means every city, county, town, port district, district, or other public agency authorized by law to require the execution of public work, except drainage districts, diking districts, diking and drainage improvement districts, drainage improvement districts, diking improvement districts, consolidated diking and drainage improvement districts, consolidated drainage improvement districts, consolidated diking improvement districts, irrigation districts, or other districts authorized by law for the reclamation or development of waste or undeveloped lands.

(4) "Public work" means all work, construction, alteration, repair, or improvement other than ordinary maintenance, executed at the cost of the state or of any municipality, or which is by law a lien or charge on any property therein. All public works, including maintenance when performed by contract shall comply with chapter 39.12 RCW. "Public work" does not include work, construction, alteration, repair, or improvement performed under contracts entered into under RCW 36.102.060(4) or under development agreements entered into under RCW 36.102.060(7) or leases entered into under RCW 36.102.060(8).

(5) "Responsible bidder" means a contractor who meets the criteria in RCW 39.04.350.

(6) "State" means the state of Washington and all departments, supervisors, commissioners, and agencies of the state.

(7) "Best investment selection" means the optional bidding process that may be used by the state or a municipality in determining which bid meets the regulatory, commercial, and socio-economic goals of the public works project as determined by the contracting agency.

**Sec.**  RCW 39.04.015 and 1989 c 59 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

Notwithstanding the provisions of RCW 39.04.010, a state contracting authority is authorized to negotiate an adjustment to a bid price, based upon agreed changes to the contract plans and specifications, with a low responsive bidder or a bidder with the best investment selection under the following conditions:

(1) All bids for a state public works project involving buildings and any associated building utilities and appendants exceed the available funds, as certified by the appropriate fiscal officer;

(2) The apparent low responsive bid or the bid with the best investment selection does not exceed the available funds by: (a) Five percent on projects valued under one million dollars; (b) the greater of fifty thousand dollars or two and one-half percent for projects valued between one million dollars and five million dollars; or (c) the greater of one hundred twenty-five thousand dollars or one percent for projects valued over five million dollars; and

(3) The negotiated adjustment will bring the bid price within the amount of available funds.

**Sec.**  RCW 39.04.155 and 2009 c 74 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) This section provides uniform small works roster provisions to award contracts for construction, building, renovation, remodeling, alteration, repair, or improvement of real property that may be used by state agencies and by any local government that is expressly authorized to use these provisions. These provisions may be used in lieu of other procedures to award contracts for such work with an estimated cost of three hundred thousand dollars or less. The small works roster process includes the limited public works process authorized under subsection (3) of this section and any local government authorized to award contracts using the small works roster process under this section may award contracts using the limited public works process under subsection (3) of this section.

(2)(a) A state agency or authorized local government may create a single general small works roster, or may create a small works roster for different specialties or categories of anticipated work. Where applicable, small works rosters may make distinctions between contractors based upon different geographic areas served by the contractor. The small works roster or rosters shall consist of all responsible contractors who have requested to be on the list, and where required by law are properly licensed or registered to perform such work in this state. A state agency or local government establishing a small works roster or rosters may require eligible contractors desiring to be placed on a roster or rosters to keep current records of any applicable licenses, certifications, registrations, bonding, insurance, or other appropriate matters on file with the state agency or local government as a condition of being placed on a roster or rosters. At least once a year, the state agency or local government shall publish in a newspaper of general circulation within the jurisdiction a notice of the existence of the roster or rosters and solicit the names of contractors for such roster or rosters. In addition, responsible contractors shall be added to an appropriate roster or rosters at any time they submit a written request and necessary records. Master contracts may be required to be signed that become effective when a specific award is made using a small works roster.

(b) A state agency establishing a small works roster or rosters shall adopt rules implementing this subsection. A local government establishing a small works roster or rosters shall adopt an ordinance or resolution implementing this subsection. Procedures included in rules adopted by the department of ((~~general administration~~)) enterprise services in implementing this subsection must be included in any rules providing for a small works roster or rosters that is adopted by another state agency, if the authority for that state agency to engage in these activities has been delegated to it by the department of ((~~general administration~~)) enterprise services under chapter 43.19 RCW. An interlocal contract or agreement between two or more state agencies or local governments establishing a small works roster or rosters to be used by the parties to the agreement or contract must clearly identify the lead entity that is responsible for implementing the provisions of this subsection.

(c) Procedures shall be established for securing telephone, written, or electronic quotations from contractors on the appropriate small works roster to assure that a competitive price is established and to award contracts to the lowest responsible bidder or the bidder with the best investment selection, as those terms are defined in RCW 39.04.010. Invitations for quotations shall include an estimate of the scope and nature of the work to be performed as well as materials and equipment to be furnished. However, detailed plans and specifications need not be included in the invitation. This subsection does not eliminate other requirements for architectural or engineering approvals as to quality and compliance with building codes. Quotations may be invited from all appropriate contractors on the appropriate small works roster. As an alternative, quotations may be invited from at least five contractors on the appropriate small works roster who have indicated the capability of performing the kind of work being contracted, in a manner that will equitably distribute the opportunity among the contractors on the appropriate roster. However, if the estimated cost of the work is from one hundred fifty thousand dollars to three hundred thousand dollars, a state agency or local government that chooses to solicit bids from less than all the appropriate contractors on the appropriate small works roster must also notify the remaining contractors on the appropriate small works roster that quotations on the work are being sought. The government has the sole option of determining whether this notice to the remaining contractors is made by: (i) Publishing notice in a legal newspaper in general circulation in the area where the work is to be done; (ii) mailing a notice to these contractors; or (iii) sending a notice to these contractors by facsimile or other electronic means. For purposes of this subsection (2)(c), "equitably distribute" means that a state agency or local government soliciting bids may not favor certain contractors on the appropriate small works roster over other contractors on the appropriate small works roster who perform similar services.

(d) A contract awarded from a small works roster under this section need not be advertised.

(e) Immediately after an award is made, the bid quotations obtained shall be recorded, open to public inspection, and available by telephone inquiry.

(3) In lieu of awarding contracts under subsection (2) of this section, a state agency or authorized local government may award a contract for work, construction, alteration, repair, or improvement projects estimated to cost less than ((~~thirty-five~~)) one hundred thousand dollars using the limited public works process provided under this subsection. Public works projects awarded under this subsection are exempt from the other requirements of the small works roster process provided under subsection (2) of this section and are exempt from the requirement that contracts be awarded after advertisement as provided under RCW 39.04.010.

For limited public works projects, a state agency or authorized local government shall solicit electronic or written quotations from a minimum of three contractors from the appropriate small works roster and shall award the contract to the lowest responsible bidder or the bidder with the best investment selection as those terms are defined under RCW 39.04.010. After an award is made, the quotations shall be open to public inspection and available by electronic request. A state agency or authorized local government shall attempt to distribute opportunities for limited public works projects equitably among contractors willing to perform in the geographic area of the work. A state agency or authorized local government shall maintain a list of the contractors contacted and the contracts awarded during the previous twenty-four months under the limited public works process, including the name of the contractor, the contractor's registration number, the amount of the contract, a brief description of the type of work performed, and the date the contract was awarded. For limited public works projects, a state agency or authorized local government may waive the payment and performance bond requirements of chapter 39.08 RCW and the retainage requirements of chapter 60.28 RCW, thereby assuming the liability for the contractor's nonpayment of laborers, mechanics, subcontractors, materialpersons, suppliers, and taxes imposed under Title 82 RCW that may be due from the contractor for the limited public works project, however the state agency or authorized local government shall have the right of recovery against the contractor for any payments made on the contractor's behalf.

(4) The breaking of any project into units or accomplishing any projects by phases is prohibited if it is done for the purpose of avoiding the maximum dollar amount of a contract that may be let using the small works roster process or limited public works process.

(5)(a) A state agency or authorized local government may use the limited public works process of subsection (3) of this section to solicit and award small works roster contracts to small businesses that are registered contractors with gross revenues under one million dollars annually as reported on their federal tax return.

(b) A state agency or authorized local government may adopt additional procedures to encourage small businesses that are registered contractors with gross revenues under two hundred fifty thousand dollars annually as reported on their federal tax returns to submit quotations or bids on small works roster contracts.

(6) As used in this section, "state agency" means the department of ((~~general administration~~)) enterprise services, the state parks and recreation commission, the department of natural resources, the department of fish and wildlife, the department of transportation, any institution of higher education as defined under RCW 28B.10.016, and any other state agency delegated authority by the department of ((~~general administration~~)) enterprise services to engage in construction, building, renovation, remodeling, alteration, improvement, or repair activities.

**Sec.**  RCW 39.04.190 and 1993 c 198 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) This section provides a uniform process to award contracts for the purchase of any materials, equipment, supplies, or services by those municipalities that are authorized to use this process in lieu of the requirements for formal sealed bidding. The state statutes governing a specific type of municipality shall establish the maximum dollar thresholds of the contracts that can be awarded under this process, and may include other matters concerning the awarding of contracts for purchases, for the municipality.

(2) At least twice per year, the municipality shall publish in a newspaper of general circulation within the jurisdiction a notice of the existence of vendor lists and solicit the names of vendors for the lists. Municipalities shall by resolution establish a procedure for securing telephone or written quotations, or both, from at least three different vendors whenever possible to assure that a competitive price is established and for awarding the contracts for the purchase of any materials, equipment, supplies, or services to the lowest responsible bidder or the bidder with the best investment selection, as those terms are defined in RCW ((~~43.19.1911~~)) 39.04.010. Immediately after the award is made, the bid quotations obtained shall be recorded, open to public inspection, and shall be available by telephone inquiry. A contract awarded pursuant to this section need not be advertised.

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