

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5646

As of February 20, 2007

Title: An act relating to construction work at state and regional universities and The Evergreen State College.

Brief Description: Raising the exemption amounts on public bids for construction work at state and regional universities and The Evergreen State College.

Sponsors: Senators Rasmussen, Delvin, Sheldon, Spanel, Fraser and Shin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/19/07.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: Currently, when the cost of any building, construction, renovation, remodeling, or demolition other than maintenance or repairs will equal or exceed \$35,000 at The Evergreen State College, regional universities, or state universities, complete plans and specifications for the work must be prepared, the work must be put out for public bids and the contract must be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder. However, if the work involves one trade or craft area and the estimated cost exceeds \$15,000 the public bid process must also be conducted. The public bid process does not apply when a contract is awarded by the small works roster procedure or under any other procedure authorized for an institution of higher education. The institutions may require a project to be put to public bid even when it is not required by statute.

Summary of Bill: The threshold monetary values for determining whether building, construction, renovation, remodeling, or demolition must be put out for bid are raised to \$70,000 generally and \$50,000 if the work involves one trade or craft area.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The cost of construction is going up fast. This is just an adjustment to account for the escalating costs. Community colleges are public

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facilities, so their inclusion is appropriate. This will simplify the process for many jobs and make it cheaper to perform routine matters. The bill will not require institutions to do anything differently, it just provides more flexibility. The institutions have skilled workers in place to perform these routine tasks.

CON: The private sector should have the opportunity to bid on all construction contracts. Construction work should all be contracted out, not performed by government workers.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Shin, prime sponsor; Remignus Biciunas, Washington Federation of State Employees Local 1381; Eric Norold, Public School Electrical Engineers of Washington; Tom Henderson, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; David Crook, Public School Employees of Washington; Matt Zwich, Washington Federation of State Employees; Tom Lopp, Public School Employees of Washington.

CON: Larry Stevens, Mechanical Contractor's Association, National Electrical Contractor's Association.