

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5871

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, February 25, 2003

Title: An act relating to electronic and web-based bidding.

Brief Description: Allowing the state purchasing and material control director to receive electronic and web-based bids.

Sponsors: Senators Horn, Kastama and Roach; by request of Department of General Administration.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/25/03 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Stevens, Vice Chair; Fairley, Horn, Kastama, McCaslin and Reardon.

Staff: Ronda Larson (786-7429)

Background: The Department of General Administration (GA) coordinates state agencies' purchases and sales of goods and services. Most of the transactions occur through competitive bidding.

Current law governing GA's bidding processes requires most purchases to be done through "formal sealed bidding." The statute does not define sealed bidding. Therefore, it could be considered ambiguous as to whether the statute allows businesses to submit bids through e-mail or the Internet.

GA is increasingly using e-mail and the Internet in many facets of its purchasing processes. For instance, GA now allows suppliers the option of receiving bid documents and notification of bid results through e-mail. However, because the statute is unclear regarding electronic bidding, almost all of the bidding itself occurs non-electronically.

Summary of Bill: The state is explicitly authorized to use electronic and web-based bid procedures when it purchases and sells goods.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The bill clarifies existing law, which is unclear as to whether electronic bidding is allowed. Allowing electronic bidding increases cost-effectiveness both for private businesses that submit bids and also for the state agencies running the bidding process.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Bill Joplin, Assistant Director for State Procurement, Department of General Administration.