

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5844

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As Passed Senate, February 15, 2022

**Title:** An act relating to work performed by institutions of higher education.

**Brief Description:** Concerning work performed by institutions of higher education.

**Sponsors:** Senators Liias, Holy, Lovick, Nobles and Wilson, C..

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Higher Education & Workforce Development: 1/20/22, 2/01/22 [DP, w/oRec].

**Floor Activity:** Passed Senate: 2/15/22, 47-2.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Increases bid limits required for public works projects to go through competitive bid processes at public institutions of higher education.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Randall, Chair; Nobles, Vice Chair; Holy, Ranking Member; Liias.

**Minority Report:** That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Sefzik.

**Staff:** Kellee Gunn (786-7429)

**Background:** Public Works Projects. Public entities are required to go through a competitive bid process for public works projects estimated to cost over a certain dollar amount. That amount varies depending on the entity and how many trades may be involved in the project. The awarded contract must go to the responsible bidder who submits the

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

lowest responsive bid.

Bid Limits for Public Institutions of Higher Education. The bid limit established for a competitive sealed bid process for a regional university, state university, or community and technical college (CTC) is limited to an amount equal to or more than \$90,000 for any building, construction, renovation, remodeling, or demolition, or other maintenance and repairs. If the work only involves one trade or craft area, the amount may be equal to or more than \$45,000.

**Summary of Bill:** The bid limits established for public works projects at a regional university, state university, or CTC are increased. For any building, construction, renovation, remodeling, or demolition, or other maintenance and repairs, the bid limit is increased from \$90,000 to \$110,000. For work involving only one trade or craft area it is increased from \$45,000 to \$90,000.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: These bid limits have not changed for a long time. Our institutions need these bid limits increased. We need to change the bid limits to acknowledge the increase in costs for labor and materials. The bid limit hasn't changed in over a decade. The cost of things since 2008 have increased more than 100 percent for many of the materials used in these projects. There are plenty of jobs that could be done in house, but the cost of things now put them over the single-trade limit. The types of jobs we do are small capital projects. We never do large scale projects. Using in-house labor provides a lot of flexibility and may save institutions money. Raising the limit will increase response time. These employees are on staff, and already being paid.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Marko Lias, Prime Sponsor; Matt Zuvich, WFSE; Paula Lukaszek, WFSE; Brandon Taylor, Washington Federation of State Employees.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.