

Testimony in Opposition to SB 644 — Potentially Costly to Public and Without Public Benefit

For Public Hearing Scheduled on April 30, 2013, Before the
House Committee on Consumer Protection and Government Efficiency

**To Chair Holvey, Vice-Chairs Lively and Richardson, and members of the House
Committee on Consumer Protection and Government Efficiency:**

The City of Wilsonville has strong issues of concern pertaining to SB 644, which would extend the Qualification-Based Selection (QBS) process to public procurements under \$100,000. Direct procurement as it stands under the current law has given the City and other local governments a primary measure of flexibility for procuring engineering services under the otherwise onerous QBS process.

SB 644 — Expanding use of the QBS process is not the best use of public money

Unlike the selection process for other types of public procurements, QBS typically does not consider price when making the initial selection of the best or most appropriate provider of the professional services required. SB 644 has a bias against low-bid selection, when in fact this might be the best cost/value bid-choice for the public.

SB 644 — Creates more work, without necessarily a better results for the public

SB 644 mandates that local governments use the more time-consuming and less easily quantifiable QBS process rather than a traditional, easy-to-quantify low-bid selection method. In doing so, the State disproportionately is adding to local-government staff work time and expense for the lower-end of the project-cost scale, which is of questionable benefit to the public.

SB 644 — Appears to discourage competition and to harm small businesses

By creating a bidding advantage for larger consulting firms, which generally possess larger staffs and therefore greater “qualifications,” SB 644 decreases the opportunities for small engineering firms in our area to successfully bid on these kinds of “lower-dollar” projects. As the backbone of Oregon’s economy, the State should seek to help small businesses grow and prosper, rather than place inappropriate impediments.

The City believes that SB 644 will lead to higher costs for local governments without benefit to the public, and therefore encourages a DO NOT PASS vote on the bill.

Sincerely,



Tim Knapp, Mayor, City of Wilsonville