

February 10, 2014

Representative Margaret Doherty
900 Court Street NE
H-282
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 4119 – QBS Procurement

Dear Representative Doherty,

I am sending this letter to reiterate my support for HB 4119 and request your support for the bill. As I testified to the committee last week, HB 4119 corrects a misinterpretation of HB 3316 by the Department of Justice, which passed unanimously in the house in the 2011 legislative session. You heard testimony from opponents that the bill would increase costs, result in a long selection process, and exclude small firms from these projects, but consider the following:

- Cost is still a major a consideration, but is negotiated after the firm is selected based on their qualifications, not which is cheapest. The municipality can use standard billing rates or can consider readily available audited rates from agencies such as ODOT, for example.
- The process is simple. Direct appointment is allowed using qualified firms. Where you have a list of qualified firms you just pick up the phone and call the one you think would be the best for the project. Virtually every jurisdiction already has rosters or on-call agreements in place for this process.
- This does not preclude small or local firms. I relayed two projects where my previous small firm of eight, Pacific Geotechnical in Oregon City, won contracts from ODOT and other jurisdictions based on qualifications, not the cheapest price. These were complex projects and we had the expertise to do the work, even though we were small. You also heard testimony from Peterson Structural Engineers, a small engineering firm, in support of the bill.

Please join me in supporting this bill. It is good for the consumer and for the government as it ensures that the most qualified firm is hired to provide the best value design for public projects.

Feel free to contact me if you wish to discuss this further, and thank you for your support.



TIM BLACKWOOD, PE, GE, CEG
Principal

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