

March 31, 2015

Representative Shemia Fagan
Chair, House Consumer Protection and Government Effectiveness Committee
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Fagan & Members of the Committee:

The Special Districts Association has approximately 950 single service local government district members that provide a variety of services including municipal drinking water, sewer and storm water treatment, fire, libraries, irrigation, parks and recreation to name a few. Our members strive to deliver critical services in the most efficient and cost effective manner possible. Our organization would like to express a couple of concerns with HB 3061, which would establish a task force on Family-Friendly Public Contracting.

At the outset, the measure is a little confusing to local public contracting entities. Specifically it is unclear whether this task force will focus its attention on just state contracting or whether it will also focus its attention on all public contracting in Oregon, including local public contracting. If it the focus is solely on state public contracting we have no quibble with the make-up of the membership of the Task Force, or for that matter the measure overall. On the other hand, if the task force is charged to develop a framework for providing a preference in all public contracting in Oregon we would simply request that the membership of the task force be expanded to include two members from local public contracting entities.

Furthermore, as public contracting entities we are concerned that applying this kind of preference could have an impact on the number and types of businesses that will be in a position or willing to bid on public contracts. Specifically, we worry that creating this type of a preference could result in limiting the pool of potential bidders, thereby potentially increasing the costs for public entities to conduct the necessary business that they undertake.

Preferences can often lead to bid protests, thereby delaying the delivery of important improvements, services or goods. SDAO requests that the Task Force also examine the potential negative impacts this type of preference could create and ways those impacts could be mitigated or avoided.

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,



Mark Landauer
Special Districts Association of Oregon
Government Affairs