

February 22, 2018
Senate Committee on General Government and Accountability
Senator Chuck Riley, Chair
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

The Association of Oregon Counties supports HB 4127, which provides counties a new tool to make sound consultant hiring decisions by allowing public contracting agencies the ability to request pricing information from already selected (and qualified) firms before engaging into negotiations. Current QBS practices, found in ORS 279C.110, says that public construction project contractors cannot be chosen on essential merits such as pricing. HB 4127 would still utilize the QBS process but includes the ability to request pricing information after no more than three qualified firms have been identified.

HB 4127 improves the public construction contracting process in the following common-sense ways:

- Adds additional transparency to the selection process by allowing local agencies to see all relevant information pertaining to the contract and better understand budget needs before firms are selected;
- Increases competition and encourages new and local businesses by amending a process that may favor well-established and larger firms, thus complicating the path for small and/or local firms to perform work they are capable of performing;
- Increases efficiencies in the public contracting process by providing public agencies with relevant information before the negotiation process, saving weeks of staff time. HB 4127 is good for local governments, good for businesses, and good for taxpayers. \

AOC supports the emphasis statute places on qualifications for these important consulting services, but also believe the public interest demands some level of price competition amongst highly qualified firms.

We urge a “YES” vote for HB 4127.