

Chair Jeff Barker
House Committee on Business and Labor
Re: Support for HB 2769

Mayor Denny Doyle
City of Beaverton

Mayor Brian Hodson
City of Canby

Mayor Jeffrey Dalin
City of Cornelius

Mayor Gery Schirado
City of Durham

Mayor Brian Cooper
City of Fairview

Mayor Peter Truax
City of Forest Grove

Mayor Shane Bemis
City of Gresham

Mayor Tom Ellis
City of Happy Valley

Mayor Steve Callaway
City of Hillsboro

Mayor Ken Gibson
City of King City

Mayor Kent Studebaker
City of Lake Oswego

Mayor Mark Hardie
City of Maywood Park

Mayor Mark Gamba
City of Milwaukie

Mayor Teri Lenahan
City of North Plains

Mayor Dan Holladay
City of Oregon City

Mayor Ted Wheeler
City of Portland

Mayor Walt Williams
City of Rivergrove

Mayor Keith Mays
City of Sherwood

Mayor Jason Snider
City of Tigard

Mayor Casey Ryan
City of Troutdale

Mayor Frank Bubenik
City of Tualatin

Mayor Anne McEnery-Ogle
City of Vancouver (ex officio)

Mayor Russ Axelrod
City of West Linn

Mayor Tim Knapp
City of Wilsonville

Mayor Scott Harden
City of Wood Village

Dear Chair Barker and Members of the Committee,

The Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium (MMC) represents the mayors of twenty-five cities in the Portland Metro Area, collectively home to over 1.7 million Oregonians. The MMC writes to express its strong support for HB 2769.

As mayors, we care deeply about using qualified consultants to design public projects that stand the test of time, and we believe in procuring those services in a way that is transparent and allows us to be fully accountable to our constituents. The statute as it is currently constructed guarantees neither. We oversee public contracting agencies that are required to select consultants with no information beyond each consultant's qualifications, and then enter into negotiations with the most qualified consultant in the group. Only after negotiations are underway are we permitted to access critical information such as a consultant's hourly rates, the number of hours proposed for the service, expenses and overhead. The reality is that public contracting agencies are negotiating contracts without the ability to truly compare one consultant's proposal to another's. That is not a transparent way to make spending decisions with scarce public resources, and it makes it difficult for our City Councils—many acting as the local contracting review board—to be fully accountable for the contracts we authorize.

HB 2769 provides a more transparent option when purchasing consulting services and allows us, as local elected officials, to be more accountable for the contracts we authorize while continuing to ensure that only qualified consultants are designing public projects. In practical terms, this optional process is much closer to how people make purchasing decisions in their private lives. One doesn't approach purchasing a new car by going to a car lot, picking the best car, and then negotiating the price. Instead, people determine which makes and models fit their unique combination of needs and budget before choosing a car to purchase.

HB 2769 provides a more flexible, efficient and transparent process for procuring professional services and makes it easier to negotiate contracts that represent the best overall value for our communities. For these reasons, we strongly urge the committee to support this measure.

Sincerely,

The Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium