

> Subject: Testimony HBJ 6654

> From: [dwdunne@crisradio.org](mailto:dwdunne@crisradio.org)

> Date: Thu, March 21, 2013

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> To Whom It May Concern:

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> HB 6654 unfortunately proposes replacing the current award process of

> state vendor concessions, which currently benefits people who are

> blind - a group in our society who find it very difficult to obtain employment.

> The proposed bill would require a new process that would award the bid

> to the highest bidder. Members of the blind community would unlikely

> be able to successfully compete in an open bidding process,

> eliminating the intent of the original provision that tried to level

> the playing field for the visually disabled community in terms of

> employment. As the executive director of CRIS Radio, a nonprofit that

> broadcasts news and information to people who are blind or

> print-handicapped, I see first-hand the unique challenges faced by

> people who are blind in finding employment. This provision in the law

> provides a small number of people who have a disability to be

> employed. Replacing the current vendor award process would unlikely

> result in a material financial windfall for the state, however, it

> would cause significant hardship to people who are blind and employed as a vendor at locations operated by various state agencies.

> Please weigh the importance of the current vendor arrangement against

> the insignificant financial gain that would result in changing the

> current award process. Please vote against HB6654.

> Sincerely,

> Diane Weaver Dunne

> Executive Director

> CRIS Radio

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