

Sheet Metal Workers' International Association

Local Union



No. Forty

Hartford, New Haven, Middlesex, Tolland, Windham, New London Counties, State of Connecticut and Fisher's Island, State of N.Y.

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Senator Musto, Representative Jutila, and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee,

My name is Luke J. Ford and I am writing in favor of Raised Bill No. 454 – An Act Increasing Transparency of General Bids for State Contracts.

The State spends hundreds of millions of dollars annually on construction projects. I feel this bill will standardize the bidding process, utilizing the Department of Administrative Services prequalification classifications already established and in place. By doing so all the contractors who have bid work for these projects will be known on bid day. Unlike what is presently happening, where the awarding authority does not know who all of the contractors will be on the project due to multiple tiered subcontracting.

This bill will ensure that information is available on or shortly after bid day that will benefit the Department of Labor wage and hour division, as well as ensure proper workers compensation coverage is provided to the workers on the project. The Department of Consumer Protection may also see a reduction in licensing violations by reducing opportunities for unlicensed contractors to bid on portions of work covered by an occupational license. Bid packages can also be developed to utilize more certified small, minority, women and veteran owned businesses and allow them to compete fairly against one another.

Bid shopping will be greatly reduced by this bill which will allow the true lowest qualified bid price to be identified at the time of bid. This in turn will provide cost savings for the State through quality, efficiency, and reduced unnecessary mark ups of pricing.

Many small businesses will benefit because they will be contractually closer to the awarding authority and requisition payments will be much more prompt, rather than being strung along for 60, 90 or 120 days waiting to be paid by higher tiered subcontractors. This practice has definitely put good small employers out of business.

I believe this is a good first step in public contracting, but ultimately I would like to see all State and municipal work bid in this manner. It would be further cost savings for the public, good for the construction industry in general and have a very positive effect on small and minority businesses.

In closing I ask you to measure the value of actually knowing who the contractors are that are doing work on State projects, what their history of performance is, as well as the quality and capabilities they possess versus continuing the practice currently in place. A system where only four bid packages; masonry, electrical, plumbing and HVAC, are revealed then the rest of the work is lumped into various other packages with no standardization and minimal accountability.

Respectfully submitted,

Luke J. Ford
Business Representative
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