

**Appropriations Committee
February 25, 2015
Department of Transportation Budget Public Hearing**

Senator Bye, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee:

I would like to talk to you this evening about the state's use of consultants. It is being proposed that the Commissioner of Transportation be allowed to consider alternatives to the standard low-bid process that include using a design-bid-build (DBB) contract, designating specific projects to be completed using a construction-manager-at-risk (CMAR) contract with a guaranteed maximum price, or (2) design-build contract (DB).

These types of contracts allow for innovative construction methods, early input by the contract manager (CM, often a contractor), using the CM's experience to expose constructability issues early, and provide increased controls on project costs. CMAR and DB contracts are being successfully implemented throughout the country in states like Arizona, Maryland, Kansas, Texas, and California. Although these contracts can save the State of Connecticut time and money, while reducing risk and eliminating lawsuits, they are founded on trust and experience.

Transparency during each step of the process is imperative. In contracts of this type, where costs are fixed, inspection staffs may be pressured to look the other way when a problem arises, or may not have the experience necessary to support problem resolution, resulting in projects not being delivered on schedule. It is necessary that the State of Connecticut maintain a strong, educated and experience staff of engineers to ensure that a quality product is delivered.

As a supervisor, with 27 years of experience with the Connecticut Department of Transportation, I have provided oversight on several of the State's largest projects including, the first of its kind, extradosed bridge over the Quinnipiac River. I have managed the efforts of both Department employees and outside consultants with equal success. Although consultants play an important role in providing specialty services, their role has been expanded to include oversight on projects that should be inspected in house. Consultant costs, on average, are between 20% and 30% over those of similar State employees with them having very little signatory authority.

I believe it to be in the State's best interest to hire internally, provide the training needed to oversee these projects and others that are now proposed under the Governor's transportation initiative. This will ensure that we deliver a quality product at the lowest possible cost to the tax payer.

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