

Government Administration and Elections Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1015

AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
Title: AND MODERNIZING REAL ESTATE AND CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT.

Vote Date: 3/31/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/10/2021

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Government Administration and Elections Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill seeks to make numerous changes to operations at the Department of Administrative Services regarding state property and construction projects. Changes include the removal of references to "update bid statement", reduction of certain deadlines for the disposition of surplus real property, expansion of the Department of Administrative Services' ability to grant and receive easements, clarification of the State Property Review Board's scope and standard of review, raising the threshold for review of construction consultant contracts and designating authority to the department over integrated works of art in state buildings.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Noel Petra, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Administrative Services (DAS):

In his written testimony, Deputy Commissioner Petra expressed strong support for the bill. Deputy Commissioner Petra acknowledged the potential for the provisions in the bill to help streamline unnecessary bureaucracy, eliminate archaic and confusing statutory language, allow contracting authorities to have greater power in terms of holding contractors accountable, and ultimately give DAS greater accessibility to modern construction practices and experts in the field.

Jeffrey Berger, Member, State Properties Review Board: Mr. Berger indicated the State Properties Review Board's opposition to the bill. Mr. Berger contended that the bill was designed to limit the scope of authority delegated to the State Properties Review Board. Citing the watchdog role of the Board, Mr. Berger wrote that the bill in its current form diminishes the oversight, accountability and transparency capabilities of the Board. The

Board is the only entity that reviews the merits of DAS/DCS contracts with respect to cost, scope of work, the equitable distribution of contracts among consultants, or the compliance with State laws for procurement. The State Properties Review Board believes that the bill deliberately restricts qualifications of Board members and seeks to take away the power vested to the Board by the legislature in 1975.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Connecticut: The Associated General Contractors of Connecticut made clear their support for Section 3 of the bill, which would give contractors two days after bidding opens to submit a pre-qualification statement and any updated statements. Due to the strict nature of the current requirements that disqualify any bidder who doesn't submit an updated statement, the AGC believes that the state has been forced to award contracts to companies that were not always the lowest most qualified bidder. By removing the current requirements, the AGC hopes that the extended time frame would ensure that contracts are awarded to the companies most suitable for fulfilling a given project.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Trevor Hoffman

Date: 03/31/2021