

Promote the QBS process with your clients

Qualifications Based Selection (QBS) legislation zipped through the Indiana Senate on a vote of 45-5 during the 2010 General Assembly, but did not receive a hearing in the House due to opposition from the Indiana Association of Cities & Towns (IACT.)

Several mayors told State Rep. Nancy Michael (D- Greencastle), who sponsored the bill in the House, that they did not want to be told how to select consultants and saw it as an invasion of their Home Rule authority.

The bill was introduced by State Sen. Phil Boots (R-Crawfordsville) as a potential solution to problems he saw in local public works procurement; one of his concerns was the lack of an open and competitive environment which may not be serving taxpayers as well as it could. He recognized that selection of a design professional based on qualifications and competence should lead to better projects. Rep. Michael, a former mayor, knew that to be true, and teamed with Sen. Boots on the bill.

Rather than fight with IACT, ACEC Indiana advised to these legislators that the organizations work together over the summer on a mutually-agreeable solution and try to come back with a bill for the 2011 legislative session. ACEC wants to retain flexibility for local officials in their decision making that emphasizes qualifications and competence, with a negotiated fee after selection, rather than "bidding" services.

During the discussion with the local government groups, ACEC noticed a lack of understanding of the general principles of QBS, and will pursue opportunities to conduct education to local officials at appropriate conferences in the near future.

To better inform your clients of the QBS process, point out that QBS:

- Fosters broad-based competition;
- Provides the selected professional the opportunity to completely understand the owner's needs and objectives based on a negotiated fee; and
- Allows clients to retain firms with whom they have developed a reliable relationship.

Boast the many benefits of QBS:

- Studies show that the use of QBS is more efficient and less costly than selection using price as the primary criteria.
- A clearly defined scope of work produced through the QBS process leads to more cost-effective construction.
- Bidding services can have negative impacts on project success and the ability to organize an innovative, effective and committed team.
- The initial investment in quality design, greatly benefits life cycle costs of the project.

Make discussing the benefits of the QBS process a priority with your clients. More information can be found at:

<http://www.qbsindiana.org>.

If you hear of a client soliciting for price, rather than utilizing the QBS process, please notify ACEC Indiana.

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7 p.m. Dinner
8 p.m. 22nd annual awards ceremony
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*Cost is \$99/person
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