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Senator Kurt Schaefer's County Purchasing Measure Earns Senate Passage

Political Subdivision Services Bidding Standards Act Standardizes, Expands Contract Bidding Process

JEFFERSON CITY, MO – [Senator Kurt Schaefer](#)'s legislation streamlining and modernizing county contract bidding practices today cleared the Senate and is now before the House for similar consideration.

[Senate Bill 256](#) creates the *Political Subdivision Services Bidding Standards Act*. Under the act, counties must advertise for services once a week for four consecutive weeks before bid acceptance, with the first ad appearing at least 30 days ahead of the acceptance deadline. Bids for contracts worth more than \$50,000 must be advertised with an organization regularly providing information to contractors in a field relevant to the bid solicitation. Contracts for services must then be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder deemed qualified by education and training. A lowest bidder's failure to provide a performance or payment bond and/or nonperformance on previous contracts would be disqualified.

"Standardization of the bidding process benefits Missouri's 114 counties, and is only fair for the people seeking to do business with these counties," Sen. Schaefer, R-Columbia, said. "The rules of the game should not be subject to change whenever a county line is crossed."

Senator Schaefer's bidding reform measure also:

- Raises the ceiling for when counties must seek bids from \$4,500 to \$6,000.
- Raises from \$3,000 to \$6,000 the ceiling for required posting of notice of intent to waive competitive bidding when a county commission believes only a single source for the sought item exists.
- Allows for electronic bidding, so long as confidentiality standards are met.

"Costs have gone up for counties just like they have for families," Sen. Schaefer said.

“And along with accounting for rising prices, my legislation also recognizes the Internet’s growing role in how bids are sought.”

Sen. Schaefer noted his proposed reforms don’t apply to contracts sought for architectural, engineering, or land surveying services; and that they can be suspended when seeking any goods or services in emergency situations.

House passage of SB 256 would put the measure on the governor’s desk for signing into law.

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