

HCS HB 752 -- PUBLICATION OF CERTAIN NOTICES

SPONSOR: Knight

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Economic Development by a vote of 7 to 5. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote 6 to 2.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 752.

Currently, the state and its agencies and political subdivisions are required to advertise for competitive bids for a state contract in a print publication.

This bill modifies this provision and requires that invitation for bids be advertised in a newspaper in the county where the work is located and advertising the invitation for bid through an electronic medium available to the general public for a period of at least five days before bids are to be opened.

The Commissioner of the Office of Administration may negotiate certain provisions of a contract even after that contract has been awarded to a specific vendor. The negotiated provisions may not involve any criteria that was used in the evaluation or scoring of the solicitation. The time frame for such negotiations shall be made clear in the initial solicitation and if such negotiations fail, the Commissioner may cancel the awarded contract.

This bill also requires that the County Collector shall list all delinquent lands and lots in some newspaper of general circulation published in the county once during the third calendar week before the sale. Thereafter, the list of delinquent land and lots shall be posted in the courthouse and posted on the county's public website if the county has a public website. In counties without a newspaper of general circulation, the county collector shall post a copy of the list of delinquent lands and lots on the county website or in the county courthouse in an area viewable by the public for three consecutive weeks before the sale.

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that since all bids for state projects are already posted online, this bill would update the antiquated provisions currently found in statute. Currently, a great deal of money is spent on newspaper advertising, which is outdated. The

new provisions will also save the public money by allowing for more efficiency in the process of posting public bids.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Knight; and Hannah Swann, Missouri Office Of Administration.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the reason why bids are supposed to be posted in a public forum, like a newspaper, is to reduce the risk of foul play and improperly awarded contracts. If government projects are posted on a government website, that would in effect mean that the government is serving as its own watchdog.

Opponents further say that many people in rural, poorer areas of the state have less access to Internet service, and would therefore be deprived of this information.

Testifying in person against the bill was the Missouri Press Association.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.