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March 6, 2023

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Senate Building  
Columbus, OH 43215

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To: State of Ohio Senate Committee on Government Oversight

**Dr. Chad Coauette**  
Sourcewell

Subject: **Support of SB 23**

**Eric Frank**  
E&I Cooperative  
Services

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony before the State of Ohio Senate Committee on Government Oversight. The National Cooperative Procurement Partners (NCPP), North America's professional association for cooperative procurement **supports** SB 23.

**Doug Looney**  
OMNIA Partners

During the live and written testimony, the opposition has portrayed national cooperative contracts or joint procurement as non-compliant with Ohio public purchasing requirements, and alluded the process is not transparent, competitive, or beneficial to political subdivisions and school districts.

NCPP wishes to address specific points that may misrepresent this important issue.

- To state that joint procurement bypasses a competitive process is simply not true. The solicitation—starting from the solicitation posting and initial bid to the contract award process is an open, transparent, and public government procurement process solicited by units of government for units of government. All resulting documentation, including pricing, are public information and used to validate the process and contracts.
- Cooperative organizations who solicit and award contracts for national use must comply with local laws and regulations. Whether it's new construction, roof repair or a re-paving project, those contractors and subcontractors (who might be members of the Associated General Contractors of Ohio) are required to have the proper licenses and must comply with the construction codes and compliance for the local jurisdiction.

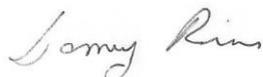
- Savings is a primary reason to choose the joint procurement contract. Whether it is savings in time, since the solicitation process has already been conducted, or savings in money due to leveraged spend of many agencies using one contract, thus driving down pricing for all. Governments and school districts are always striving to be more efficient and cooperative contracts facilitate that goal.
- One of the arguments is joint procurement contracts reduces competition or disallows local contractors from participating in contracting opportunities. Much of the work performed under a cooperative contract is completed by local contractors who live and work within the community.
- Agencies and school districts require options, and this is simply one additional contracting choice. Entities will continue to issue bids for many projects, and then use cooperative contracts for select projects for specific reasons – emergency, unexpected repairs, end of fiscal year or more advantageous pricing. Competition will expand and contract participation will be shared more equitably among Ohio contractors and subcontractors.

As a former government purchasing agent, I can personally attest that any contract or procurement vehicle is vetted prior to its use. Due diligence is performed to ensure the contract terms and conditions follow a purchasing agency's requirements. It doesn't matter if it's an in-state or out-of-state contract, the same work and oversight is involved from the perspective of a procurement professional.

**Choice and competition is at the heart of this issue.** One of the complaints about government construction procurement is that the process can be slow and cumbersome. When faced with tight deadlines, impending weather constraints, expiring grant funds, or addressing emergencies, procurement teams need tools to quickly address these types of issues.

SB23 seeks to clarify the ability for Ohio political subdivisions to procure construction services through joint procurement. NCPP offers its full support of this proposed legislation to benefit local Ohio municipalities, school districts, and taxpayers.

Thank you for your consideration,



Tammy Rimes, MPA  
NCPP Executive Director