

Assembly Bill No. 2397

CHAPTER 277

An act to amend Sections 4535.1, 7084, 7118, 14842, and 14842.5 of the Government Code, and to amend Sections 10303 and 12102 of the Public Contract Code, relating to public contracts.

[Approved by Governor August 23, 2004. Filed with Secretary of State August 23, 2004.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2397, Shirley Horton. Public contracts: debarment and suspension.

Under existing law, a supplier or contractor with a state agency may be suspended or debarred from future bidding and contracting for periods between 3 months and 2 years, depending on the basis of the suspension or debarment. A contractor that performs unsatisfactorily under a contract for acquisition of information technology may be excluded from bidding for up to 360 days, and a contractor that has demonstrated lack of reliability in completing contracts may be removed from the list of qualified bidders for up to 360 days.

This bill would permit a contractor to be ineligible to transact any business for not less than 6 months or more than 36 months for specified grounds, including unsatisfactory contract performance, unwillingness to honor a binding bid or contract, and multiple strikes.

This bill would authorize the department to temporarily remove a bidder or a supplier, that has demonstrated lack of reliability in completing contracts, from bidding for up to 36 months, as specified.

This bill would also make conforming, technical, and clarifying changes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 4535.1 of the Government Code is amended to read:

4535.1. A business that requests and is given the preference provided for in Section 4533, 4533.1, 4534, or 4534.1 by reason of having furnished a false certification, and which by reason of that certification has been awarded a contract to which it would not otherwise have been entitled, shall be subject to all of the following:

(a) Pay to the state any difference between the contract amount and what the state's cost would have been if the contract had been properly awarded.

(b) In addition to the amount specified in subdivision (a), be assessed a penalty in an amount of not more than 10 percent of the amount of the contract involved.

(c) Be ineligible to directly or indirectly transact any business with the state for a period of not less than six months and not more than 36 months.

Prior to the imposition of any sanction under this chapter, the contractor or vendor shall be entitled to a public hearing and to five days' notice of the time and place thereof. The notice shall state the reasons for the hearing.

SEC. 2. Section 7084 of the Government Code is amended to read:

7084. (a) Whenever the state prepares a solicitation for a contract for goods in excess of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), except a contract in which the worksite is fixed by the provisions of the contract, the state shall award a 5-percent preference to California-based companies that demonstrate and certify under penalty of perjury that of the total labor hours required to manufacture the goods and perform the contract, at least 50 percent of the hours shall be accomplished at an identified worksite or worksites located in an enterprise zone.

(b) In evaluating proposals for contracts for services in excess of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), except a contract in which the worksite is fixed by the provisions of the contract, the state shall award a 5-percent preference on the price submitted by California-based companies that demonstrate and certify under penalty of perjury that not less than 90 percent of the labor hours required to perform the contract shall be accomplished at an identified worksite or worksites located in an enterprise zone.

(c) Where a bidder complies with subdivision (a) or (b), the state shall award a 1-percent preference for bidders who certify under penalty of perjury to hire persons living within a targeted employment area or are enterprise zone eligible employees equal to 5 to 9 percent of its workforce during the period of contract performance; a 2-percent preference for bidders who shall agree to hire persons living within a targeted employment area or are enterprise zone eligible employees equal to 10 to 14 percent of its workforce during the period of contract performance; a 3-percent preference for bidders who shall agree to hire persons living within a targeted employment area or are enterprise zone eligible employees equal to 15 to 19 percent of its workforce during the period of contract performance; and a 4-percent preference for bidders who shall agree to hire persons living within a targeted employment area



or are enterprise zone eligible employees equal to 20 or more percent of its workforce during the period of contract performance.

(d) The maximum preference a bidder may be awarded pursuant to this chapter and any other provision of law shall be 15 percent. However, in no case shall the maximum preference cost under this section exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) for any bid, nor shall the combined cost of preferences granted pursuant to this section and any other provision of law exceed one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000). In those cases where the 15-percent cumulated preference cost would exceed the one hundred thousand dollar (\$100,000) maximum preference cost limit, the one hundred thousand dollar (\$100,000) maximum preference cost limit shall apply.

(e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, small business bidders qualified in accordance with Section 14838 shall have precedence over nonsmall business bidders in that the application of any bidder preference for which nonsmall business bidders may be eligible, including the preference contained in this section, shall not result in the denial of the award to a small business bidder. This subdivision shall apply to those cases where the small business bidder is the lowest responsible bidder, as well as to those cases where the small business bidder is eligible for award as the result of application of the 5-percent small business bidder incentive.

(f) All state contracts issued to bidders who are awarded preferences under this section shall contain conditions to ensure that the contractor performs the contract at the location specified and meets any commitment to employ persons with high risk of unemployment.

(g) (1) A business that requests and is given the preference provided for in subdivision (a) or (b) by reason of having furnished a false certification, and that by reason of this certification has been awarded a contract to which it would not otherwise have been entitled, shall be subject to all of the following:

(A) Pay to the state any difference between the contract amount and what the state's cost would have been if the contract had been properly awarded.

(B) In addition to the amount specified in subparagraph (A), be assessed a penalty in an amount of not more than 10 percent of the amount of the contract involved.

(C) Be ineligible to directly or indirectly transact any business with the state for a period of not less than six months and not more than 36 months.

(2) Prior to the imposition of any sanction under this subdivision, the business shall be entitled to a public hearing and to five days' notice of



the time and place thereof. The notice shall state the reasons for the hearing.

(h) In each instance in this section an enterprise zone shall also mean any enterprise zone or program area previously authorized under any other provision of state law.

(i) As used in this section, “enterprise zone eligible employees” means employees who meet any of the requirements of clause (iv) of subparagraph (A) of paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) of Section 17053.74, or clause (iv) of subparagraph (A) of paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) of Section 23622.5, of the Revenue and Taxation Code.

SEC. 3. Section 7118 of the Government Code is amended to read:

7118. (a) Whenever the state prepares a solicitation for a contract for goods in excess of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), except a contract in which the worksite is fixed by the provisions of the contract, the state shall award a 5-percent preference to California-based companies who demonstrate and certify under penalty of perjury that of the total labor hours required to manufacture the goods and perform the contract, at least 50 percent of the hours shall be accomplished at an identified worksite or worksites located in a local agency military base recovery area.

(b) In evaluating proposals for contracts for services in excess of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), except a contract in which the worksite is fixed by the provisions of the contract, the state shall award a 5-percent preference on the price submitted by California-based companies who demonstrate and certify under penalty of perjury that not less than 90 percent of the labor hours required to perform the contract shall be accomplished at an identified worksite or worksites located in a local agency military base recovery area.

(c) Where a bidder complies with subdivision (a) or (b), the state shall award a 1-percent preference for bidders who certify under penalty of perjury to hire persons living within a local agency military base recovery area equal to 5 to 9 percent of its workforce during the period of contract performance; a 2-percent preference for bidders who shall agree to hire persons living within a local agency military base recovery area equal to 10 to 14 percent of its workforce during the period of contract performance; a 3-percent preference for bidders who shall agree to hire persons living within a local agency military base recovery area equal to 15 to 19 percent of its workforce during the period of contract performance; and a 4-percent preference for bidders who shall agree to hire persons living within a local agency military base recovery area equal to 20 or more percent of its workforce during the period of contract performance.



(d) The maximum preference a bidder may be awarded pursuant to this chapter and any other provision of law shall be 15 percent. However, in no case shall the maximum preference cost under this section exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) for any bid, nor shall the combined cost of preferences granted pursuant to this section and any other provision of law exceed one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000). In those cases where the 15-percent cumulated preference cost would exceed the one hundred thousand dollar (\$100,000) maximum preference cost limit, the one hundred thousand dollar (\$100,000) maximum preference cost limit shall apply.

(e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, small business bidders qualified in accordance with Section 14838 shall have precedence over nonsmall business bidders in that the application of any bidder preference for which nonsmall business bidders may be eligible, including the preference contained in this section, shall not result in the denial of the award to a small business bidder. This subdivision shall apply to those cases where the small business bidder is the lowest responsible bidder, as well as to those cases where the small business bidder is eligible for award as the result of application of the 5-percent small business bidder preference.

(f) All state contracts issued to bidders who are awarded preferences under this section shall contain conditions to ensure that the contractor performs the contract at the location specified and meets any commitment to employ persons with high risk of unemployment.

(g) (1) A business that requests and is given the preference provided for in subdivision (a) or (b) by reason of having furnished a false certification, and that by reason of this certification has been awarded a contract to which it would not otherwise have been entitled, shall be subject to all of the following:

(A) Pay to the state any difference between the contract amount and what the state's cost would have been if the contract had been properly awarded.

(B) In addition to the amount specified in subparagraph (A), be assessed a penalty in an amount of not more than 10 percent of the amount of the contract involved.

(C) Be ineligible to directly or indirectly transact any business with the state for a period of not less than six months and not more than 36 months.

(2) Prior to the imposition of any sanction under this subdivision, the business shall be entitled to a public hearing and to five days' notice of the time and place thereof. The notice shall state the reasons for the hearing.



(h) In each instance in this section, a local agency military base recovery area shall also mean any local agency military base recovery area previously authorized under any other provision of state law.

SEC. 4. Section 14842 of the Government Code is amended to read:

14842. (a) A business that has obtained classification as a small business or microbusiness by reason of having furnished incorrect supporting information or by reason of having withheld information, and that knew, or should have known, the information furnished was incorrect or the information withheld was relevant to its request for classification, and that by reason of that classification has been awarded a contract to which it would not otherwise have been entitled, shall do all of the following:

(1) Pay to the state any difference between the contract amount and what the state's costs would have been if the contract had been properly awarded.

(2) In addition to the amount described in subdivision (a), be assessed a penalty in an amount of not more than 10 percent of the amount of the contract involved.

(b) Suspend any person who violates subdivision (a) from transacting any business with the state either directly as a prime contractor or indirectly as a subcontractor, for a period of not less than six months and not more than 36 months. State agencies may reject the bid of a supplier offering goods, information technology, or services manufactured or provided by a subcontractor if that subcontractor has been declared ineligible to transact any business with the state under this chapter, even though the bidder is a business in good standing.

(c) All payments to the state pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) shall be deposited in the fund out of which the contract involved was awarded.

(d) All payments to the state pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) shall be deposited in the state General Fund.

(e) The small business certification of a business found to have violated subdivision (a) shall be revoked by the department for a period of not less than one year. For an additional or subsequent violation, the period of certification revocation or suspension shall be extended for a period of up to three years. The revocation shall apply to the principals of the business and any subsequent businesses formed by those principals.

(f) Prior to the imposition of any sanctions under this article, a business shall be entitled to a public hearing and to at least five working days' notice of the time and place thereof. The notice shall state the reasons for the hearing.



SEC. 5. Section 14842.5 of the Government Code is amended to read:

14842.5. (a) It shall be unlawful for a person to do any of the following:

(1) Knowingly and with intent to defraud, fraudulently obtain, retain, attempt to obtain or retain, or aid another in fraudulently obtaining or retaining or attempting to obtain or retain, certification as a small business or microbusiness enterprise for the purposes of this chapter.

(2) Willfully and knowingly make a false statement with the intent to defraud, whether by affidavit, report, or other representation, to a state official or employee for the purpose of influencing the certification or denial of certification of any entity as a small business or microbusiness enterprise.

(3) Willfully and knowingly obstruct, impede, or attempt to obstruct or impede, any state official or employee who is investigating the qualifications of a business entity that has requested certification as a small business or microbusiness enterprise.

(4) Knowingly and with intent to defraud, fraudulently obtain, attempt to obtain, or aid another person in fraudulently obtaining or attempting to obtain, public moneys to which the person is not entitled under this chapter.

(5) Knowingly and with intent to defraud, fraudulently represent certified small business or microbusiness participation in order to obtain or retain a bid preference or a state contract.

(6) Knowingly and with intent to defraud, fraudulently represent that a commercially useful function is being performed by a certified small business or microbusiness in order to obtain or retain a bid preference or a state contract.

(b) Any person who is found by the department to have violated any of the provisions of subdivision (a) is subject to a civil penalty of not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000).

(c) The department shall revoke the small business or microbusiness certification of any person that violates subdivision (a) for a period of not more than one year, and shall, in addition to the penalties provided for in subdivision (b), be suspended from bidding on, or participating as a contractor, a subcontractor, or a supplier in, any state contract or project for a period of not less than six months nor more than 36 months. However, for an additional or subsequent violation, the period of certification revocation or suspension shall be extended for a period of up to three years. The certification revocation shall apply to the principals of the business and any subsequent businesses formed by those principals. Any business or person who fails to satisfy the penalties



imposed pursuant to subdivisions (b) and (c) shall be prohibited from further contracting with the state until the penalties are satisfied.

(d) If a contractor, subcontractor, supplier, subsidiary, or affiliate thereof, has been found by the department to have violated subdivision (a) and that violation occurred within three years of another violation of subdivision (a) found by the department, the department shall prohibit that contractor, subcontractor, supplier, subsidiary, or affiliate thereof, from entering into a state project or state contract and from further bidding to a state entity, and from being a subcontractor to a contractor for a state entity and from being a supplier to a state entity.

SEC. 6. Section 10303 of the Public Contract Code is amended to read:

10303. The department shall adopt, publish and apply uniform standards of rating bidders, on the basis of questionnaires and required statements, with respect to contracts upon which each bidder is qualified to bid. The department may adopt and publish lists of qualified bidders. No list so adopted and published shall preclude a qualified bidder not on the list from submitting a bid or bids and from being awarded a contract or contracts as the successful bidder.

The department may remove a bidder who has demonstrated a lack of reliability in complying with and completing previously awarded contracts with the state, based upon his or her performance on contracts previously been awarded by the state. The department may remove the bidder from any list of qualified bidders prepared by the department for a period of not less than six months but not to exceed 36 months.

Any bidder temporarily removed under this section shall be returned to the list of qualified bidders at any time after the initial six months, upon demonstrating to the department's satisfaction that the problems that resulted in the bidder's previously demonstrated unreliability in complying with and completing state contracts have been corrected.

SEC. 7. Section 12102 of the Public Contract Code is amended to read:

12102. The Department of General Services shall maintain, in the State Administrative Manual, policies and procedures governing the acquisition and disposal of information technology goods and services.

(a) Acquisition of information technology goods and services shall be conducted through competitive means, except when the Director of General Services determines that (1) the goods and services proposed for acquisition are the only goods and services which can meet the state's need, or (2) the goods and services are needed in cases of emergency where immediate acquisition is necessary for the protection of the public health, welfare, or safety. The acquisition mode to be used and the procedure to be followed shall be approved by the Director of General



Services. The Department of General Services shall maintain, in the State Administrative Manual, appropriate criteria and procedures to ensure compliance with the intent of this chapter. These criteria and procedures shall include acquisition and contracting guidelines to be followed by state agencies with respect to the acquisition of information technology goods and services. These guidelines may be in the form of standard formats or model formats.

(b) Contract awards for all large-scale systems integration projects shall be based on the proposal that provides the most value-effective solution to the state's requirements, as determined by the evaluation criteria contained in the solicitation document. Evaluation criteria for the acquisition of information technology goods and services, including systems integration, shall provide for the selection of a contractor on an objective basis not limited to cost alone.

(1) The Department of General Services shall invite active participation, review, advice, comment, and assistance from the private sector and state agencies in developing procedures to streamline and to make the acquisition process more efficient, including, but not limited to, consideration of comprehensive statements in the request for proposals of the business needs and governmental functions, access to studies, planning documents, feasibility study reports and draft requests for proposals applicable to solicitations, minimizing the time and cost of the proposal submittal and selection process, and development of a procedure for submission and evaluation of a single proposal rather than multiple proposals.

(2) Solicitations for acquisitions based on evaluation criteria other than cost alone shall provide that sealed cost proposals shall be submitted and that they shall be opened at a time and place designated in the solicitation for bids and proposals. Evaluation of all criteria, other than cost, shall be completed prior to the time designated for public opening of cost proposals, and the results of the completed evaluation shall be published immediately before the opening of cost proposals. The state's contact person for administration of the solicitation shall be identified in the solicitation for bids and proposals, and that person shall execute a certificate under penalty of perjury, which shall be made a permanent part of the official contract file, that all cost proposals received by the state have been maintained sealed and under lock and key until the time cost proposals are opened.

(c) The acquisition of hardware acquired independently of a system integration project may be made on the basis of lowest cost meeting all other specifications.

(d) The 5 percent small business preference provided for in Chapter 6.5 (commencing with Section 14835) of Part 5.5 of Division 3 of Title



2 of the Government Code and the regulations implementing that chapter shall be accorded to all qualifying small businesses.

(e) For all transactions formally advertised, evaluation of bidders' proposals for the purpose of determining contract award for information technology goods shall provide for consideration of a bidder's best financing alternatives, including lease or purchase alternatives, if any bidder so requests, not less than 30 days prior to the date of final bid submission, unless the acquiring agency can prove to the satisfaction of the Department of General Services that a particular financing alternative should not be so considered.

(f) Acquisition authority may be delegated by the Director of General Services to any state agency that has been determined by the Department of General Services to be capable of effective use of that authority. This authority may be limited by the Department of General Services. Acquisitions conducted under delegated authority shall be reviewed by the Department of General Services on a selective basis.

(g) To the extent practical, the solicitation documents shall provide for a contract to be written to enable acquisition of additional items to avoid essentially redundant acquisition processes when it can be determined that it is economical to do so.

Further, it is the intent of the Legislature that, if a state information technology advisory committee or a state telecommunications advisory committee is established by the Governor, or the Director of General Services, the policies and procedures developed by the Director of General Services in accordance with this chapter shall be submitted to that committee, including supplier representatives, for review and comment, and that the comment be considered by both departments prior to the adoption of any policy or procedure. It is also the intent of the Legislature that this section shall apply to the Department of General Services Information Technology Customer Council.

(h) Protest procedures shall be developed to provide bidders an opportunity to protest any formal, competitive acquisition conducted in accordance with this chapter. The procedures shall provide that protests must be filed no later than five working days after the issuance of an intent to award. Authority to protest may be limited to participating bidders. The Director of General Services, or a person designated by the director, may consider and decide on initial protests. A decision regarding an initial protest shall be final. If prior to the last day to protest, any bidder who has submitted an offer files a protest with the department against the awarding of the contract on the ground that his or her bid or proposal should have been selected in accordance with the selection criteria in the solicitation document, the contract shall not be awarded until either the protest has been withdrawn or the State Board of Control



has made a final decision as to the action to be taken relating to the protest. Within 10 calendar days after filing a protest, the protesting bidder shall file with the State Board of Control a full and complete written statement specifying in detail the grounds of the protest and the facts in support thereof.

(i) Information technology goods that have been determined to be surplus to state needs shall be disposed of in a manner that will best serve the interests of the state. Procedures governing the disposal of surplus goods may include auction or transfer to local governmental entities.

(j) A supplier may be excluded from bid processes if the supplier's performance with respect to a previously awarded contract has been unsatisfactory, as determined by the state in accordance with established procedures that shall be maintained in the State Administrative Manual. This exclusion may not exceed 36 months for any one determination of unsatisfactory performance. Any supplier excluded in accordance with this section shall be reinstated as a qualified supplier at any time during this 36-month period, upon demonstrating to the department's satisfaction that the problems that resulted in the supplier's exclusion have been corrected.

