

Chapter 232

(House Bill 251)

AN ACT concerning

State Procurement – Minority Business Enterprises – Electronic Certification Process

FOR the purpose of requiring the Board of Public Works to adopt regulations that include provisions that ~~allow a business seeking certification as a minority business enterprise to complete the application~~ promote and facilitate the submission of *all or part of* certain applications for certification as a minority business enterprise through an electronic process; and generally relating to an electronic certification process for minority business enterprises.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – State Finance and Procurement
Section 14–303
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2009 Replacement Volume)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – State Finance and Procurement

14–303.

(a) (1) (i) In accordance with Title 10, Subtitle 1 of the State Government Article, the Board shall adopt regulations consistent with the purposes of this Division II to carry out the requirements of this subtitle.

(ii) The Board shall keep a record of the number of waivers requested and the number of waivers granted each year under subsection (b)(8) of this section and submit a copy of the record to the General Assembly on or before October 1 of each year, in accordance with § 2–1246 of the State Government Article.

(2) The regulations shall establish procedures to be followed by units, prospective contractors, and successful bidders or offerors to maximize notice to, and the opportunity to participate in the procurement process by, a broad range of minority business enterprises.

(b) These regulations shall include:

(1) provisions designating one agency to certify and decertify minority business enterprises for all units through a single process that meets applicable federal requirements, **INCLUDING PROVISIONS THAT ~~ALLOW A BUSINESS SEEKING CERTIFICATION TO COMPLETE THE~~ PROMOTE AND FACILITATE THE SUBMISSION OF SOME OR ALL OF THE CERTIFICATION APPLICATION THROUGH AN ELECTRONIC PROCESS;**

(2) a requirement that the solicitation document accompanying each solicitation set forth the expected degree of minority business enterprise participation based, in part, on:

(i) the potential subcontract opportunities available in the prime procurement contract; and

(ii) the availability of certified minority business enterprises to respond competitively to the potential subcontract opportunities;

(3) a requirement that the unit provide a current list of certified minority business enterprises to each prospective contractor;

(4) provisions to ensure the uniformity of requests for bids on subcontracts;

(5) provisions relating to the timing of requests for bids on subcontracts and of submission of bids on subcontracts;

(6) provisions designed to ensure that a fiscal disadvantage to the State does not result from an inadequate response by minority business enterprises to a request for bids;

(7) provisions relating to joint ventures, under which a bidder may count toward meeting its minority business enterprise participation goal, the minority business enterprise portion of the joint venture;

(8) consistent with § 14-302(a)(6) of this subtitle, provisions relating to any circumstances under which a unit may waive obligations of the contractor relating to minority business enterprise participation;

(9) provisions requiring a monthly submission to the unit by minority business enterprises acknowledging all payments received in the preceding 30 days under a contract governed by this subtitle;

(10) a requirement that a unit shall verify and maintain data concerning payments received by minority business enterprises, including a requirement that, upon completion of a project, the unit shall compare the total dollar

value actually received by minority business enterprises with the amount of contract dollars initially awarded, and an explanation of any discrepancies therein;

(11) a requirement that a unit verify that minority business enterprises listed in a successful bid are actually participating to the extent listed in the project for which the bid was submitted;

(12) provisions establishing a graduation program based on the financial viability of the minority business enterprise, using annual gross receipts or other economic indicators as may be determined by the Board;

(13) a requirement that a bid or proposal based on a solicitation with an expected degree of minority business enterprise participation identify the specific commitment of certified minority business enterprises at the time of submission;

(14) provisions promoting and providing for the counting and reporting of certified minority business enterprises as prime contractors; and

(15) other provisions that the Board considers necessary or appropriate to encourage participation by minority business enterprises and to protect the integrity of the procurement process.

(c) The regulations adopted under this section shall specify that a unit may not allow a business to participate as if it were a certified minority business enterprise if the business's certification is pending.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2010.

Approved by the Governor, May 4, 2010.