
SENATE BILL 6556

State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2014 Regular Session

By Senators Kohl-Welles, Pedersen, McAuliffe, Darneille, Fraser, Nelson, Hasegawa, McCoy, Conway, Chase, Frockt, Billig, Keiser, Ranker, Rolfes, and Kline

Read first time 02/06/14. Referred to Committee on Governmental Operations.

1 AN ACT Relating to studying barriers to access; and creating new
2 sections.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** Every year the state of Washington issues
5 contracts worth billions of dollars in contracting opportunities. Many
6 of these are combined with federal dollars in order to leverage the
7 total capacity of both entities. Many federal contracts have
8 stipulations attached, that require goals and metrics to ensure fair
9 participation with small, disadvantaged, minority, and women-owned
10 businesses.

11 In 2013, after responding to several complaints by a small
12 contractor the federal highway administration found that the prime
13 contractor on the Seattle viaduct project was violating the terms of
14 contract with relation to small, women, and minority business
15 participation. Further, the federal highway administration found that
16 the prime contractor was purposely placing barriers to access for the
17 smaller contractors. Further, studies have shown that such barriers in
18 the past have had very detrimental effects for the communities
19 represented by these businesses. From record high unemployment rates

1 to increased negative social issues like high dropout rates and
2 swelling prison populations, the social impact of these businesses'
3 denials of jobs has been devastating on these communities.

4 The legislature intends for a study to be completed to determine
5 how best to address the various barriers that remain for women and
6 minorities and how best to remedy these barriers.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The Washington state institute for
8 public policy shall study the impacts of Initiative Measure No. 200
9 (approved by the voters in 1998) on minorities in higher education and
10 public contracting. For the purposes of this study, the term minority
11 includes women. The factors to be considered include race, sex, color,
12 ethnicity, and national origin.

13 (2) The study shall review and analyze the enrollment data of
14 minorities in four-year universities and community and technical
15 colleges starting in 1993 and ending in 2013. For each year within the
16 designated time period, the enrollment analysis shall include the
17 number of minority students enrolled at the institution, new minority
18 students who enrolled during that year, minority students who graduated
19 during that year, and minority students who left the institution during
20 that year prior to graduation.

21 (3) The study shall also review and analyze public contracts
22 awarded to minority and women-owned businesses between 1993 and 2013.
23 The study shall focus on public works contracts and public contracts
24 for goods and services. For each year within the designated time
25 period, the public contracts analysis shall include the amount expended
26 with certified minority and women-owned businesses compared to state
27 overall expenditures by industry category. The analysis shall be
28 disaggregated by ethnicity. The study shall also analyze Washington's
29 practices of awarding contracts to minority and women-owned businesses
30 compared to other states, assess best practices for public contracting,
31 methods for improving public knowledge of opportunities to engage in
32 increased contracting and procurement prospects, and assess agency
33 purchasing.

34 (4) The study shall analyze whether there are any links between the
35 implementation of Initiative Measure No. 200 and the social impacts on
36 minorities based on data between 1993 and 2013. For each year within
37 the designated time period, the study shall analyze incarceration rates

1 of minorities, school drop-out rates, unemployment rates, and the
2 impact of contracts not being awarded to minority and women-owned
3 businesses.

4 (5) The Washington state institute for public policy must make
5 determinations on the link between the implementation of Initiative
6 Measure No. 200 and its impact on minorities in higher education and
7 public contracting.

8 (6) The Washington state institute for public policy shall submit
9 its report on the study with recommendations to the legislature by
10 January 1, 2015.

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