

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5385

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Higher Education & Workforce Development, February 1, 2023

**Title:** An act relating to work performed by institutions of higher education.

**Brief Description:** Concerning work performed by institutions of higher education.

**Sponsors:** Senators Liias, Holy, Saldaña, Shewmake and Wilson, C..

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Higher Education & Workforce Development: 1/25/23, 2/01/23  
[DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Increases bid limits required for public works projects to go through competitive bid processes at public institutions of higher education.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Randall, Chair; Nobles, Vice Chair; Holy, Ranking Member; Hawkins and Liias.

**Staff:** Alicia Kinne-Clawson (786-7407)

**Background:** Public Works Projects. Public entities are required to go through a competitive bid process for public works projects estimated to cost over a certain dollar amount. That amount varies depending on the entity and how many trades may be involved in the project. The awarded contract must go to the responsible bidder who submits the lowest responsive bid.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Bid Limits for Public Institutions of Higher Education. The bid limit established for a competitive sealed bid process for a regional university, state university, or community and technical college (CTC) is limited to an amount equal to or more than \$90,000 for any building, construction, renovation, remodeling, or demolition, or other maintenance and repairs. If the work only involves one trade or craft area, the amount may be equal to or more than \$45,000.

**Summary of Bill:** The bid limits established for public works projects at a regional university, state university, or CTC are increased. For any building, construction, renovation, remodeling, or demolition, or other maintenance and repairs, the bid limit is increased from \$90,000 to \$110,000. For work involving only one trade or craft area it is increased from \$45,000 to \$90,000.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: Bid limits have not been updated since 2009. More work could be done to keep our institutions in good repair more efficiently if they were adjusted. This is good, common sense pro worker policy. This bill is timely and necessary. With significant increases in materials cost, even minor repair projects are being forced into competitive bidding processes. This bill will save workers time and save the state money. Bid limits should be raised on an inflationary basis.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Marko Liias, Prime Sponsor; Brandon Anderson, WFSE, Washington Federation of State Employees; Paula Lukaszek, Washington Federation of State Employees, WFSE; Dan Andreason, Washington Federation of State Employees, WFSE.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.