



One Sealaska Plaza, Suite 200 • Juneau, Alaska 99801  
Tel (907) 586-1325 • Fax (907) 463-5480 • [www.akml.org](http://www.akml.org)

February 8, 2016

House State Affairs Committee  
Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska

RE: HB 50

Dear House State Affairs Committee Members,

The Alaska Municipal League has been opposed to this bill for many years. It appears to us to be a solution without a problem. Due to the fiscal circumstances of which we all find ourselves, additional "hoops" to jump through seem inefficient and ineffective.

We object to the State creating "rules" as to how individual municipalities select engineering firms for projects with State money. At this time, municipalities can use this selection process, if they so choose. We object to this becoming a requirement.

In speaking with the Engineers group supporting this bill, they stressed to us that when selecting engineers, it should not be "all about the money." Instead, it should be done by qualifications. That discussion held no weight a number of years ago and holds even less now. Municipalities have less and less money. Match money is a thing of the past. Of course it is all about the money! We would all LOVE to be able to select items of purchase based on quality. That is why there is often a K-Mart in the same vicinity as a Nordstrom. Perhaps a solution would be a fiscal plan that allowed municipalities to be able to plan and to see a return of funding sources to municipalities.

This bill requires additional work by municipalities and attempts to solve "municipal" problems that do not exist. If engineering firms are selected that are "below par," we would hope the open market would deal with those firms and in just as timely a manner as new legislation.

While many engineering firms may have the luxury of time to sit down and re-negotiate RFSs, municipalities, especially small municipalities, do not have that luxury. Money is desperately short; staff is desperately short. Of ALL changes needed by municipalities, this has never made the top 100. If a municipality does wish to follow this process, they currently are able to do so.

Sincerely,

Kathie Wasserman