



Maximizing Private Sector Innovation

Delivering For Massachusetts: *The critical role the engineering industry plays in addressing state Infrastructure needs*

ISSUE

The engineering industry plays an essential role in helping state agencies deliver services to taxpayers. From designing solutions to address congestion on roadways, ensuring continued access to safe drinking water, to putting green technologies to work to make industry and government more sustainable, engineering firms in Massachusetts are working to solve public policy challenges and improve the quality of life for residents.

Unfortunately, efforts have been made in the past to prevent state agencies from taking advantage of the value and technical innovation that the private sector engineering and land surveying community in Massachusetts offers. Delivery of critical infrastructure improvements requires a close partnership between public and private resources. The public sector has a key role to play in this process, providing the overall management and oversight of public projects, while the private sector brings the innovation, expertise, on-time delivery and long-term cost savings to ensure that taxpayer dollars are well invested.

We oppose SB 1434 titled “An Act to Promote Safety, Efficiency and Accountability in Transportation Projects Through Public Inspections,” because it will prohibit the state from utilizing the skills of private sector firms for construction inspection work, including construction engineering, contract administration, quality control inspection, material testing, and resident engineer and assistant resident engineer functions. State agencies need the flexibility to determine how they will get this work done.

KEY POINTS

- **State agencies need the unique expertise, technical innovation, and on-time performance that engineering firms provide in delivering projects to the public.** Many of the best engineers in the world live and work in Massachusetts, giving state agencies -- and the taxpayers they serve -- access to the most highly qualified engineering services.
- **Using engineering firms in Massachusetts provides value to the taxpayer.** Staffing state agencies to handle peak workloads requires paying employees even during slow times. The private sector is only paid for the time they are actually needed. This cost-effective process allows the state to experience an overall lower life cycle cost for delivering engineering services to the public.
- **Private engineering firms are highly accountable to their clients and to taxpayers.** State project managers oversee all contracts and work, approving all billings, time charged to the project, and work product. Contracts are open for inspection and subject to frequent audits and are highly regulated.
- **Eliminating the private sector design engineer from performing construction inspections for all surface transportation projects receiving State or Federal funding (SB 1434) will increase the overall construction cost of projects.** The design engineer is intimately familiar with the design and is the best person equipped to deal with unforeseen site conditions, design modifications, and construction change orders.

ACTION REQUESTED

Oppose SB. 1434 – requiring public employees to carry out Construction Inspection functions for all surface Transportation projects receiving State or Federal funding. The House and Senate should oppose any amendments or attempts to prevent state agencies and municipalities from contracting out for design services and construction phase engineering or testing services.