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SENATE BILL NO. 26

Offered January 8, 2014

Prefiled December 12, 2013

A BILL to amend and reenact § 56-573.1:1 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 56-573.1:2, relating to public comment and transparency; presentation of proposals to committees of the General Assembly.

Patron—Alexander

Referred to Committee on Transportation

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 56-573.1:1 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 56-573.1:2 as follows:

§ 56-573.1:1. Posting of conceptual proposals; public comment; public access to procurement records.

A. Conceptual proposals submitted in accordance with subsection A or B of § 56-560 to a responsible public entity shall be posted by the responsible public entity within 10 working days after acceptance of such proposals as follows:

1. For responsible public entities that are state agencies, authorities, departments, institutions, and other units of state government, posting shall be on the Department of General Services' central electronic procurement website *and on the responsible public entity's website*. For proposals submitted pursuant to subsection A of § 56-560, the notice posted shall (i) provide for a period of ~~120~~ 180 days for the submission of competing proposals; (ii) include specific information regarding the proposed nature, timing, and scope of the qualifying transportation facility; and (iii) outline the opportunities that will be provided for public comment during the review process; and

2. For responsible public entities that are local public bodies, posting shall be on the responsible public entity's website ~~or~~ and on the Department of General Services' central electronic procurement website. In addition, such public bodies may publish in a newspaper of general circulation in the area in which the contract is to be performed a summary of the proposals and the location where copies of the proposals are available for public inspection. Such local public bodies are encouraged to utilize the Department of General Services' central electronic procurement website to provide the public with centralized visibility and access to the Commonwealth's procurement opportunities.

In addition to the posting requirements, at least one copy of the proposals shall be made available for public inspection. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the posting of the conceptual proposals by additional means deemed appropriate by the responsible public entity so as to provide maximum notice to the public of the opportunity to inspect the proposals. Trade secrets, financial records, or other records of the private entity excluded from disclosure under the provisions of subdivision 11 of § 2.2-3705.6 shall not be required to be posted, except as otherwise agreed to by the responsible public entity and the private entity.

B. In addition to the posting requirements of subsection A, for 30 60 days prior to entering into an interim or comprehensive agreement, a responsible public entity shall provide an opportunity for public comment on the proposals. The public comment period required by this subsection ~~may~~ shall include a public hearing ~~in~~ at the sole discretion of the responsible public entity. After the end of the public comment period, no additional posting shall be required.

C. Once the negotiation phase for the development of an interim or a comprehensive agreement is complete and a decision to award has been made by a responsible public entity, the responsible public entity shall (i) post the major business points of the interim or comprehensive agreement, including the projected use of any public funds, on the Department of General Services' central electronic procurement website *and on the responsible public entity's website*; (ii) outline how the public can submit comments on those major business points; and (iii) present the major business points of the interim or comprehensive agreement, including the use of any public funds, to its oversight board at a regularly scheduled meeting of the board that is open to the public.

D. Once an interim agreement or a comprehensive agreement has been entered into, a responsible public entity shall make procurement records available for public inspection, in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (§ 2.2-3700 et seq.). For the purposes of this subsection, procurement records shall not be interpreted to include (i) trade secrets of the private entity as defined in the Uniform Trade Secrets Act (§ 59.1-336 et seq.) or (ii) financial records, including balance sheets or financial statements of the private entity that are not generally available to the public through regulatory

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59 disclosure or otherwise.

60 E. Cost estimates relating to a proposed procurement transaction prepared by or for a responsible
61 public entity shall not be open to public inspection.

62 F. Any inspection of procurement transaction records under this section shall be subject to reasonable
63 restrictions to ensure the security and integrity of the records.

64 G. The provisions of this section shall apply to accepted proposals regardless of whether the process
65 of bargaining will result in an interim or a comprehensive agreement.

66 ***§ 56-573.1:2. Presentation to committees of the General Assembly.***

67 *Before a comprehensive agreement is entered into on projects valued in excess of \$1 billion, the*
68 *Secretary of Transportation shall present the proposal submitted pursuant to § 56-560 and resulting*
69 *public comment to the Senate Committees on Finance and Transportation and the House Committees on*
70 *Appropriations and Transportation.*