

November 6, 2025

Representative Jerry O'Connor
Senator Cory Tomczyk
State Capitol
PO Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708

Re: AB 217 – *Procurement Thresholds for Public Contracts*/SB 216 - *Local government competitive bidding thresholds. (FE)*

Dear Representative O'Connor and Senator Tomczyk:

On behalf of the International Institute of Building Enclosure Consultants (IIBEC), I am writing to share our perspective on Assembly Bill 217 and Senate Bill 216, which propose changes to procurement thresholds for local government contracts. IIBEC represents over 3,900 professionals specializing in roofing, exterior wall, and waterproofing systems who serve as trusted advocates for building owners, ensuring that projects meet applicable standards, codes, warranties, and performance expectations.

We commend the legislature for seeking to modernize procurement procedures and increase efficiency for local governments. At the same time, we are concerned that raising thresholds without explicitly exempting professional design services could inadvertently undermine qualifications-based selection (QBS) for architects, engineers, and other licensed design professionals.

Design services differ fundamentally from commodity purchases. Selecting design professionals based on lowest bid rather than qualifications can lead to costly design errors, premature failures, and increased life-cycle costs, ultimately reducing value for taxpayers. Federal and state law, including the Brooks Act and Wisconsin licensing statutes, establish QBS as the standard for procuring professional design services, ensuring that firms are selected first on competence and technical expertise, with price negotiated afterward.

Wisconsin has a strong history of QBS, with statutes such as Wis. Stat. § 66.29 for local governments and Wis. Stat. §§ 16.855 / 84.02 / 84.06 for state agencies, ensuring that professional service providers, including architects, engineers, land surveyors, and building enclosure consultants are selected based on qualifications.

To safeguard public safety, project quality, and fiscal responsibility we recommend the following amendment to AB 217/SB216:

“The procurement thresholds established in this act shall not apply to professional design services, including architectural, engineering, surveying, and related licensed professional services, which shall continue to be procured under qualifications-based selection procedures.”

This language would preserve the efficiencies intended by AB 217/ SB216 for low-risk goods and services while ensuring that professional design services remain independent, unbiased, and focused on delivering long-term value.

IIBEC appreciates the opportunity to provide input and stands ready to work with the committee to refine language, provide guidance, and support the legislature in maintaining high standards for public procurement.

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding these recommendations or if IIBEC can serve as a resource to support your efforts. Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your continued service to Wisconsin

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brian Pallasch, CAE
Executive Vice President & CEO