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SEA Applauds Contracting Reform Bill

MADISON – A bill that would require state agencies to do a “uniform and complete cost analysis” before work is contracted out is being praised by State Engineering Association (SEA) members.

“Senator Cowles and Senator Ellis understand that in a time of tight budgets, the state can no longer afford to assume the private sector is always cheaper,” said SEA President Mark Klipstein.

An impetus behind this commonsense measure was the DOT report which confirmed that taxpayers pay 18 percent more when engineering work is contracted out. It revealed that the state has been fleeced for more than \$27.6 million for DOT engineering contracts alone.

That means taxpayers would save at least \$19,000 for each contract engineering consultant replaced by a state employee.

Ironically, DOT’s reorganization plan calls for 58 additional engineering professionals to be laid off. “Laying off these people will cost the state more than \$1.13 million, every year, when they are replaced by engineering consultants,” explained Klipstein.

“Senator Cowles’ and Senator Ellis’ contracting reform bill has the ability to restore public confidence in a process that seems to have more to do with politics than saving money,” said Klipstein. “But as

layoffs continue, we will lose our capacity to engineer and design projects, oversee consultants' work and protect the public's interest in safety and quality.”

-30-

Check the SEA website, http://www.wisea.org/outsourcing_article_links.htm for links to recent newspaper articles on outsourcing.