

CONCERNED
CONTRACTORS

Date: June 8, 2010
Contact: [Linda Rhinehart](#)
(717) 571-2567

News Release

Senate Education Committee Considers Costly Bills *Concerned Contractors of PA Oppose Extending the Waiver Program in SB 250*

HARRISBURG, Pa. – The Pennsylvania Senate Education Committee will meet today at 10:30 a.m. to consider several bills dealing with the modification and or extension of the Education Empowerment Act. One bill in particular, SB 250, would extend the school construction waiver program.

The Education Empowerment Act is part of the Public School Code of 1949 that is set to expire June 30. A section of the Act has allowed for waivers to be issued to school districts to bypass multi-prime contracting when dealing with construction contractors. Multi-prime contracting requires at least four bidders forcing the contract price down ultimately saving the district and its taxpayers' dollars. A task force created to analyze 'mandate waivers' recommended against using only the single-prime bid process.

"Single prime bids will always be more expensive than multiple prime bids because of the general contractor's mark-up of the subcontractors." said Linda Rhinehart, spokesperson for the Concerned Contractors of PA. "Waivers have not resulted in greater efficiency or savings, instead costing the taxpayers millions of dollars with the only benefit accruing to the general contractors and architects who convinced school districts to build under the single prime system. Our concern is for maintaining jobs for local contractors who need the work and want to bid on local projects."

By allowing the Empowerment Act to expire on June 30, 2010 all school districts will be required to solicit multiple contractual bids. The Concerned Contractors fully support allowing the Act to expire. "Allowing the Act to expire has many benefits," said Rhinehart. "Not only will tax payer money be saved, but local contractors who may have otherwise been overlooked will now have a shot at employment."

The Concerned Contractors of Pennsylvania is a coalition of open shop and

union shop contractors (plumbers, electricians, HVAC and building trades) that have organized to represent the many small business owners and construction workers across the state. The mission of the coalition is to bring unfair and needlessly expensive bidding to the attention of the parents, students, school board officials, legislators and the media.