

**Testimony of Inspector General Jeffrey S. Shapiro, Esq., CIG  
Regarding House 56, *An Act Empowering Municipalities and Local Governments*  
Before the Joint Committee on Municipalities  
and Regional Government  
October 28, 2025**

Chair Rausch, Chair Lewis, members of the Committee,

Good day.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on this important bill, House 56. My comments today focus on commonsense updates to the procurement procedures in Chapter 30B of the General Laws. The version before you contains numerous provisions allowing municipal government greater flexibility in managing the day-to-day operations of cities and towns while maintaining appropriate transparency and fairness.

These seemingly minor changes will have a very positive and significant impact on the daily work of municipal officials in each and every one of our 351 cities and towns. These are the communities you represent. I am unaware of any individual or group who opposes the concepts that I am addressing today. I remain optimistic that they will become law this year.

Most people don't get excited by procurement law, but it's near and dear to my heart. In fact, as the statewide Inspector General with both state and municipal procurement oversight, this is a significant portion of my statutory role. And the passage of those changes do really matter to the hardworking municipal employees in your districts who regularly conduct procurements. These changes will help them. I know this because I've traveled across our Commonwealth speaking directly with them. I have spoken with over 84 municipal leaders many whom were here today and their teams in city or town halls in all regions of the state. Thus, I am confident that I really understand the positive impact these proposed changes will have for our municipal leaders.

During these meetings I regularly ask where the pain points are, what is challenging and what we can do to make their jobs a little easier while adhering to the principles of transparency, fairness and good government. The provisions in this bill represent issues that have been consistently discussed with me at these meetings.

### **Procurement Procedures & Thresholds**

House 56 makes some commonsense changes to the thresholds in Chapter 30B. There are different types of procurements based on three different thresholds in Chapter 30B, with increasing levels of responsibility from the procuring body at each threshold (Appendix A):

1. sound business practices,
2. written quotations and
3. either sealed bids or sealed proposals.

House 56 would increase the upper threshold for using sound business practices, from \$10,000 to \$15,000. Given current economic uncertainty, I am recommending this threshold increase to \$25,000. I believe this increase is appropriate.

### **Different Thresholds to be Equalized.**

The most significant pain point that House 56 addresses is the difference in thresholds between school districts and municipalities for the use of written quotations. In 2022, the upper threshold for schools to seek written quotes rather than sealed bids or proposals was increased from \$50,000 to \$100,000. However, the threshold for municipalities, and all other entities that follow Chapter 30B, was left at \$50,000. This has led to needless confusion and headaches, especially for those municipalities that jointly procure supplies and services with their school departments. It just makes sense to equalize these thresholds.

### **Snow Plowing & Hauling**

Believe it or not, snow plowing and snow hauling are considered differently when it comes to how the services can be procured.

Snow plowing is exempt from Chapter 30B, but snow hauling and snow removal are not. This makes it difficult and needlessly complicated for communities to secure these basic services. Since plowing is separate from hauling and removal, municipalities are finding it harder to contract for snow plowing.

Municipal leaders strongly believe that if the snow removal and snow hauling could be included in the plowing contract, it would be more attractive to contractors, provide greater leverage for municipalities to secure the services, and ultimately benefit the public.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the inability to pass these changes is not due to opposition to the concepts I have just discussed. Instead, I believe the inaction is due to indifference. These concepts have been through the process before but did not make it across the finish line. I am hoping they will this time. These in-the-weeds improvements and updates to our procurement laws will benefit each and every city and town of the Commonwealth, including your communities, thus I request your assistance turning these updates into law. I urge passage of this bill.

Thank you.

#### **Appendix A. Proposed Chapter 30B Thresholds**

| <b>Procurement procedure</b>    | <b>Current</b>                    | <b>Recommended change</b> |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Sound business practices        | Under \$10,000                    | Under \$25,000            |
| Written price quotations        | \$10,000 to \$50,000 <sup>1</sup> | \$25,000 to \$100,000     |
| Sealed bids or sealed proposals | Over \$50,000 <sup>2</sup>        | Over \$100,000            |

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<sup>1</sup> The price quotation threshold for municipal and regional school districts is \$100,000.

<sup>2</sup> Municipal and regional school districts must use sealed bids or sealed proposals for procurements over \$100,000.