

HB 1755 -- Minority-Owned Businesses

Sponsor: Parker

This bill creates the Office of Minority Affairs in the Office of Administration, the Small and Minority Business Mentor-Protegee Program, and the Council for Historically Underutilized Businesses.

The office must implement a minority business reform program. The program will sunset six years after its effective date and must:

- (1) Propose legislation requiring that 10% of state contracts be entered into with small and minority businesses;
- (2) Require bidding contractors to provide the office a list of any subcontractors that are minority businesses;
- (3) Request proposals from small and minority businesses in order to increase the number of contracts awarded to these types of businesses;
- (4) Invite small and minority businesses to submit bids for construction projects and the sale of goods and services to state agencies; and
- (5) Establish a responsive procurement solicitation to include information about small and minority business participation in the procurement of goods and services by state agencies.

The Small and Minority Business Mentor-Protegee Program will be administered by the office and will sunset six years after its effective date. The program will facilitate a voluntary mentor-protegee relationship between prime contractors and small and minority businesses. Regarding this program, the office must:

- (1) Allow prime contractors to assist small and minority businesses in developing the technical and business capabilities necessary to successfully compete for contracts;
- (2) Match mentor and protegee businesses that are in the same field or product and in the same geographic region;
- (3) Maintain a list of current and potential mentors and protegees; and
- (4) Contact mentors and protegees at least once every three months to obtain information regarding the success of the program.

The Council for Historically Underutilized Businesses will have nine members with the Director of the Office of Minority Affairs as the chairperson. The bill specifies the remaining membership of the council and their terms. The council will serve in an advisory capacity to the office on matters related to minority businesses and provide other consultation as requested by the director. The Office of Minority Affairs and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor will provide the primary staff support for the council. The council must meet at least three times per year and report its progress and achievements to the Governor prior to December 31 of each year.