



## QUALIFICATIONS-BASED SELECTION (QBS)

It is the position of the National Society of Professional Engineers that "all engineering services should be performed by qualified engineers on the basis of design ability, experience, integrity, and judgement. Engineering is a learned profession, requiring of its members sound technical experience, personal ability, education, honesty, and integrity." NSPE supports and advocates for qualifications-based selection (QBS) in procurement of engineering services. This process prioritizes technical proficiency, expertise, and experience, and allows engineers and firms to be considered based on merit. QBS provides the means for qualified engineers and firms to be ranked based on their ability to provide the service, with cost negotiations taking place only after the most qualified engineer or firm has been chosen. QBS is the best method for procurement because it places the public's health, safety, and welfare above all other considerations

### Key Points

- The Brooks Act (P.L. 92-582) established QBS on the federal level when Congress passed the legislation in 1972.
  - The law requires federal agencies to use agencies to use QBS procedures when procuring design services.
  - Forty-six states have taken the provisions found in the Brooks Act and enacted their own state-level laws requiring the use of QBS when procuring design services.
- QBS procedures are less time-consuming and expensive than low-bid processes.
  - In a comparative study, the American Institute of Architects looked at Florida's QBS procedure and Maryland's low-bid procedure for procuring design services and concluded that Maryland's process was more expensive and time consuming.
- QBS is the best method for procuring engineering services.
  - QBS places the public's health, safety, and welfare above all other considerations
  - QBS protects taxpayers.

### Action Items

- Advocate for the use of a QBS procedure for all engineering services procurement.
- Encourage the use of a QBS procedure which recognizes the desirability of the opportunity for engineers and firms to be considered on merit in the procurement process for engineering services.