103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2023 and 2024

HB4846

Introduced 2/7/2024, by Rep. Curtis J. Tarver, II

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

30 ILCS 57	5/3.5 new					
30 ILCS 57	5/5	from	Ch.	127,	par.	132.605
30 ILCS 57	5/7	from	Ch.	127,	par.	132.607
30 ILCS 575	5/8	from	Ch.	127,	par.	132.608

Amends the Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities Act. Provides for a uniform standard of contract goals for State agencies, public institutions of higher education, and other departments. Specifies further requirements concerning the uniform standard of contract goals. Provides that the Secretary of the Business Enterprise Council for Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities shall have the duty to establish an enforcement procedure whereby the Council may recommend to the appropriate State legal officer that the State exercise its legal remedies which shall include, among other legal remedies, the imposition of a penalty in the amount of the discrepancy between the commitment contained in a utilization plan, as such amount may be amended over the term of the contract, and the qualifying payments made to the eligible certified vendors listed in the utilization plan. Provides that the terms of every contract entered into by a State agency or public institution of higher education for purposes of the Act shall include a provision requiring vendors who fail to comply with a utilization plan to return all funds paid to that vendor with an expectation of compliance. Provides that the Council may (rather than shall) grant a waiver when the contractor demonstrates that there has been a good faith effort to comply with the goals for participation by businesses owned by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities. Makes conforming and other changes.

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1 AN ACT concerning finance.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly:

Section 5. The Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women,
and Persons with Disabilities Act is amended by changing
Sections 5, 7, and 8 and by adding Section 3.5 as follows:

7 (30 ILCS 575/3.5 new)

8 Sec. 3.5. Uniform standard of contract goals.

9 (a) The Business Enterprise Program shall establish uniform standards for calculating contract specific Business 10 Enterprise Program goals for all State contracts and State 11 12 construction contracts subject to this Act. The uniform 13 standards may consider normal industry practice, the scope of 14 the work to be performed under a contract, the availability of vendors that are able to perform the scope of the work to be 15 performed under a contract, the availability of certified 16 vendors that are able to perform the work to be performed under 17 a contract, and the State's progress to date toward meeting 18 19 the aspirational goals set forth in this Act.

20 <u>(b) No State agency or public institution of higher</u> 21 <u>education shall maintain a policy of establishing contract</u> 22 <u>specific goals for the participation of certified vendors that</u> 23 <u>is inconsistent with or less stringent than the uniform</u>

standards for calculating contract specific goals established by the Business Enterprise Program.

3 (c) Each State agency and public institution of higher 4 education subject to the requirements of this Act shall, on an 5 annual basis, submit a report to the Council detailing its 6 plan to meet the aspirational contract goals established under 7 this Act and established for that agency and institution.

8 (30 ILCS 575/5) (from Ch. 127, par. 132.605)

9 (Section scheduled to be repealed on June 30, 2029)

10 Sec. 5. Business Enterprise Council.

11 (1) To help implement, monitor, and enforce the goals of 12 this Act, there is created the Business Enterprise Council for 13 Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities, hereinafter referred to as the Council, composed of the Chairperson of the 14 15 Commission on Equity and Inclusion, the Secretary of Human 16 Services and the Directors of the Department of Human Rights, the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the 17 18 Department of Central Management Services, the Department of Transportation and the Capital Development Board, or their 19 duly appointed representatives, with the Comptroller, or his 20 21 or her designee, serving as an advisory member of the Council. 22 individuals representing businesses Ten that are 23 minority-owned, women-owned, or owned by persons with 24 disabilities, 2 individuals representing the business 25 community, and a representative of public institutions of

higher education shall be appointed by the Governor. These 1 2 members shall serve 2-year terms and shall be eligible for 3 reappointment. Any vacancy occurring on the Council shall also be filled by the Governor. Any member appointed to fill a 4 5 vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term for which his or her predecessor was appointed shall be appointed 6 7 for the remainder of such term. Members of the Council shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for any 8 9 ordinary and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of 10 their duties.

11 The Chairperson of the Commission shall serve as the 12 Council chairperson and shall select, subject to approval of the Council, a Secretary responsible for the operation of the 13 14 program who shall serve as the Division Manager of the Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women, and Persons with 15 16 Disabilities Division of the Commission on Equity and 17 Inclusion.

18 The Director of each State agency and the chief executive 19 officer of each public institution of higher education shall 20 appoint a liaison to the Council. The liaison shall be 21 responsible for submitting to the Council any reports and 22 documents necessary under this Act.

23 (2) The Council's authority and responsibility shall be24 to:

(a) Devise a certification procedure to assure that
 businesses taking advantage of this Act are legitimately

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1 classified as businesses owned by minorities, women, or persons with disabilities and a registration procedure to 2 3 recognize, without additional evidence of Business Enterprise Program eligibility, the certification of 4 5 businesses owned by minorities, women, or persons with disabilities certified by the City of Chicago, 6 Cook 7 County, or other jurisdictional programs with requirements 8 and procedures equaling or exceeding those in this Act.

9 (b) Maintain a list of all businesses legitimately 10 classified as businesses owned by minorities, women, or 11 persons with disabilities to provide to State agencies and 12 public institutions of higher education.

(c) Review rules and regulations for the
 implementation of the program for businesses owned by
 minorities, women, and persons with disabilities.

(d) Review compliance plans submitted by each State
agency and public institution of higher education pursuant
to this Act.

(e) Make annual reports as provided in Section 8f to
the Governor and the General Assembly on the status of the
program.

(f) Serve as a central clearinghouse for information on State contracts, including the maintenance of a list of all pending State contracts upon which businesses owned by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities may bid. At the Council's discretion, maintenance of the list may

include 24-hour electronic access to the list along with
 the bid and application information.

3 (g) Establish a toll-free telephone number to 4 facilitate information requests concerning the 5 certification process and pending contracts.

6 (h) Adopt a procedure to grant automatic certification to businesses holding a certification from at least one of 7 8 following entities: (i) the Illinois Unified the 9 Certification Program; (ii) the Women's Business 10 Development Center in Chicago; (iii) the Chicago Minority 11 Supplier Development Council; or (iv) any other similar 12 entity offering such certification to businesses.

13 (i) Develop and maintain а repository for 14 non-certified vendors that: (i) have applied for 15 certification and have been denied; (ii) have started, but 16 not completed, the certification process; (iii) have 17 achieved certification, but did not seek renewal; or (iv) known businesses owned by minorities, women, or 18 are 19 persons with disabilities.

(3) No premium bond rate of a surety company for a bond required of a business owned by a minority, woman, or person with a disability bidding for a State contract shall be higher than the lowest rate charged by that surety company for a similar bond in the same classification of work that would be written for a business not owned by a minority, woman, or person with a disability. 1 (4) Any Council member who has direct financial or 2 personal interest in any measure pending before the Council 3 shall disclose this fact to the Council and refrain from 4 participating in the determination upon such measure.

5 (5) The Secretary shall have the following duties and 6 responsibilities:

7 (a) To be responsible for the day-to-day operation of8 the Council.

9 (b) To serve as a coordinator for all of the State's 10 programs for businesses owned by minorities, women, and 11 persons with disabilities and as the information and 12 referral center for all State initiatives for businesses 13 owned by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities.

14 (c) To establish an enforcement procedure whereby the 15 Council may recommend to the appropriate State legal 16 officer that the State exercise its legal remedies which 17 shall include (1) termination of the contract involved, (2) prohibition of participation by the respondent in 18 19 State public contracts for a period not to exceed 3 years, 20 imposition of a penalty in the amount of the (3) 21 discrepancy between the commitment contained in the 22 utilization plan, as such amount may be amended over the 23 term of the contract, and the qualifying payments made to 24 the eligible certified vendors listed in the utilization plan a penalty not to exceed any profit acquired as a 25 26 result of violation, or (4) any combination thereof. Such

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procedures shall require prior approval by Council. All 1 2 funds collected as penalties under this subsection shall 3 exclusively for maintenance and further be used development of the Business Enterprise 4 Program and 5 encouragement of participation in State procurement by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities. 6

7 (d) To devise appropriate policies, regulations, and procedures for including participation by businesses owned 8 9 by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities as 10 prime contractors, including, but not limited to: (i) 11 encouraging the inclusions of qualified businesses owned 12 by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities on solicitation lists, (ii) investigating the potential of 13 14 blanket bonding programs for small construction jobs, and 15 (iii) investigating and making recommendations concerning 16 the use of the sheltered market process.

17 (e) To devise procedures for the waiver of the18 participation goals in appropriate circumstances.

19 (f) To accept donations and, with the approval of the 20 Council or the Chairperson of the Commission on Equity and 21 Inclusion, grants related to the purposes of this Act; to 22 conduct seminars related to the purpose of this Act and to 23 registration fees; charge reasonable and to sell 24 directories, vendor lists, and other such information to 25 interested parties, except that forms necessary to become 26 eligible for the program shall be provided free of charge

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1 to a business or individual applying for the Business 2 Enterprise Program.

3 (Source: P.A. 101-601, eff. 1-1-20; 101-657, eff. 1-1-22; 4 102-29, eff. 6-25-21; 102-558, eff. 8-20-21; 102-721, eff. 5 1-1-23.)

6 (30 ILCS 575/7) (from Ch. 127, par. 132.607)

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7 (Section scheduled to be repealed on June 30, 2029)

Sec. 7. Exemptions; waivers; publication of data.

9 (1) Individual contract exemptions. The Council, at the 10 written request of the affected agency, public institution of 11 higher education, or recipient of a grant or loan of State 12 funds of \$250,000 or more complying with Section 45 of the 13 State Finance Act, may permit an individual contract or 14 contract package, (related contracts being bid or awarded 15 simultaneously for the same project or improvements) be made 16 wholly or partially exempt from State contracting goals for businesses owned by minorities, women, and persons with 17 18 disabilities prior to the advertisement for bids or 19 solicitation of proposals whenever there has been а determination, reduced to writing and based on the best 20 21 information available at the time of the determination, that 22 there is an insufficient number of businesses owned by 23 minorities, women, and persons with disabilities to ensure 24 adequate competition and an expectation of reasonable prices 25 on bids or proposals solicited for the individual contract or contract package in question. Any such exemptions shall be
 given by the Council to the Bureau on Apprenticeship Programs
 and Clean Energy Jobs.

4 (a) Written request for contract exemption. A written
5 request for an individual contract exemption must include,
6 but is not limited to, the following:

7 (i) a list of eligible businesses owned by
8 minorities, women, and persons with disabilities;

9 (ii) a clear demonstration that the number of 10 eligible businesses identified in subparagraph (i) 11 above is insufficient to ensure adequate competition;

(iii) the difference in cost between the contract proposals being offered by businesses owned by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities and the agency or public institution of higher education's expectations of reasonable prices on bids or proposals within that class; and

18 (iv) a list of eligible businesses owned by 19 minorities, women, and persons with disabilities that 20 the contractor has used in the current and prior 21 fiscal years.

(b) Determination. The Council's determination
concerning an individual contract exemption must consider,
at a minimum, the following:

(i) the justification for the requested exemption,
 including whether diligent efforts were undertaken to

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identify and solicit eligible businesses owned by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities;

(ii) the total number of exemptions granted to the
affected agency, public institution of higher
education, or recipient of a grant or loan of State
funds of \$250,000 or more complying with Section 45 of
the State Finance Act that have been granted by the
Council in the current and prior fiscal years; and

9 (iii) the percentage of contracts awarded by the 10 agency or public institution of higher education to 11 eligible businesses owned by minorities, women, and 12 persons with disabilities in the current and prior 13 fiscal years.

14 (2) Class exemptions.

(a) Creation. The Council, at the written request of 15 16 the affected agency or public institution of higher 17 education, may permit an entire class of contracts be made exempt from State contracting goals for businesses owned 18 19 by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities 20 whenever there has been a determination, reduced to writing and based on the best information available at the 21 time of the determination, that there is an insufficient 22 number of qualified businesses owned by minorities, women, 23 24 persons with disabilities to ensure and adequate 25 competition and an expectation of reasonable prices on 26 bids or proposals within that class. Any such exemption shall be given by the Council to the Bureau on
 Apprenticeship Programs and Clean Energy Jobs.

3 (a-1) Written request for class exemption. A written
4 request for a class exemption must include, but is not
5 limited to, the following:

(i) a list of eligible businesses owned by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities;

8 (ii) a clear demonstration that the number of 9 eligible businesses identified in subparagraph (i) 10 above is insufficient to ensure adequate competition;

(iii) the difference in cost between the contract proposals being offered by eligible businesses owned by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities and the agency or public institution of higher education's expectations of reasonable prices on bids or proposals within that class; and

17 (iv) the number of class exemptions the affected
18 agency or public institution of higher education
19 requested in the current and prior fiscal years.

20 (a-2) Determination. The Council's determination
 21 concerning class exemptions must consider, at a minimum,
 22 the following:

(i) the justification for the requested exemption,
including whether diligent efforts were undertaken to
identify and solicit eligible businesses owned by
minorities, women, and persons with disabilities;

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1 (ii) the total number of class exemptions granted 2 to the requesting agency or public institution of 3 higher education that have been granted by the Council 4 in the current and prior fiscal years; and

5 (iii) the percentage of contracts awarded by the 6 agency or public institution of higher education to 7 eligible businesses owned by minorities, women, and 8 persons with disabilities the current and prior fiscal 9 years.

(b) Limitation. Any such class exemption shall not be
 permitted for a period of more than one year at a time.

12 (3) Waivers. Where a particular contract requires a vendor to meet a goal established pursuant to this Act, the vendor 13 14 shall have the right to request a waiver from such 15 requirements prior to the contract award. The Business 16 Enterprise Program shall evaluate a vendor's request for a 17 waiver based on the vendor's documented good faith efforts to meet the contract-specific Business Enterprise Program goal. 18 19 The Council may shall grant the waiver when the contractor 20 demonstrates that there has been made a good faith effort to 21 comply with the goals for participation by businesses owned by 22 minorities, women, and persons with disabilities. Any such 23 waiver may shall also be transmitted in writing to the Bureau 24 on Apprenticeship Programs and Clean Energy Jobs.

(a) Request for waiver. A vendor's request for a
 waiver under this subsection (3) must include, but is not

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1 limited to, the following:

(i) a list of eligible businesses owned by
minorities, women, and persons with disabilities that
pertain to the the class of contracts in the requested
waiver that were <u>contracted</u> contacted by the vendor.
Eligible businesses are only eligible if the business
is certified for the products or work advertised in
the solicitation or bid;

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(ii) (blank);

10 (iia) a clear demonstration that the vendor 11 selected portions of the work to be performed by 12 certified vendors to facilitate meeting the contract 13 specific goal, and that certified vendors that have 14 the capability to perform the work of the contract 15 were solicited through all reasonable and available 16 means;

17 (iib) documentation demonstrating that certified vendors are not rejected as being unqualified without 18 19 sound reasons based on a thorough investigation of 20 their capabilities. The certified vendor's standing 21 within its industry, membership in specific groups, 22 organizations, or associations, and political or 23 social affiliations are not legitimate causes for 24 rejecting or not contacting or negotiating with a 25 certified vendor;

(iic) proof that the prime vendor solicited

eligible certified vendors with: (1) sufficient time to respond; (2) adequate information about the scope, specifications, and requirements of the solicitation or bid, including plans, drawings, and addenda, to allow eligible businesses an opportunity to respond to the solicitation or bid; and (3) sufficient follow up with certified vendors;

8 (iid) a clear demonstration that the prime vendor
9 communicated with certified vendors;

10 (iie) evidence that the prime vendor negotiated 11 with certified vendors to enter into subcontracts to 12 provide a commercially useful function of the contract 13 for a reasonable cost;

14 (iii) documentation demonstrating that the 15 difference in cost between the contract proposals 16 being offered by certified vendors is excessive or 17 unreasonable;

18 (iv) a list of certified vendors owned by 19 minorities, women, and persons with disabilities that 20 the contractor has used in the current and prior 21 fiscal years;

(v) documentation demonstrating that the vendor made efforts to utilize certified vendors despite the ability or desire of a vendor to perform the work with its own operations by selecting portions of the work to be performed by certified vendors, which may, when HB4846

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appropriate, include breaking out portions of the work to be performed into economically feasible units to facilitate certified vendor participation; and

(vi) documentation that the vendor used the 4 5 services of: (1) the State; (2) organizations or 6 contractors' groups representing or composed of 7 minorities, women, or persons with disabilities; (3) State, or federal assistance offices 8 local, 9 representing or assisting minorities, women, or 10 persons with disabilities; and (4) other organizations 11 that provide assistance in the recruitment and 12 engagement of certified vendors.

13 If any of the information required under this 14 subdivision (a) is not available to the vendor, despite 15 the vendor's good faith efforts to obtain the information, 16 the vendor's request for a waiver must contain a written 17 explanation of why that information is not included.

18 (b) Determination. The Council's determination19 concerning waivers must include following:

(i) the justification for the requested waiver,
including whether the requesting vendor made a good
faith effort to identify and solicit certified vendors
based on the criteria set forth in this Section;

(ii) the total number of waivers the vendor has
been granted by the Council in the current and prior
fiscal years;

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(iii) (blank); and

2 (iv) the vendor's use of businesses owned by 3 minorities, women, and persons with disabilities in 4 the current and prior fiscal years.

(3.5) (Blank).

6 (4) Conflict with other laws. In the event that any State 7 contract, which otherwise would be subject to the provisions 8 of this Act, is or becomes subject to federal laws or 9 regulations which conflict with the provisions of this Act or 10 actions of the State taken pursuant hereto, the provisions of 11 the federal laws or regulations shall apply and the contract 12 shall be interpreted and enforced accordingly.

13 (5) Each chief procurement officer, as defined in the Illinois Procurement Code, shall maintain on his or 14 her official Internet website a database of the following: (i) 15 16 waivers granted under this Section with respect to contracts 17 under his or her jurisdiction; (ii) a State agency or public institution of higher education's written request for an 18 exemption of an individual contract or an entire class of 19 20 contracts; and (iii) the Council's written determination 21 granting or denying a request for an exemption of an 22 individual contract or an entire class of contracts. The 23 database, which shall be updated periodically as necessary, 24 shall be searchable by contractor name and by contracting 25 State agency.

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(6) Each chief procurement officer, as defined by the

Illinois Procurement Code, shall maintain on its website a
 list of all vendors that have been prohibited from bidding,
 offering, or entering into a contract with the State of
 Illinois as a result of violations of this Act.

5 Each public notice required by law of the award of a State contract shall include for each bid or offer submitted for 6 that contract the following: (i) the bidder's or offeror's 7 8 name, (ii) the bid amount, (iii) the name or names of the 9 certified vendors identified in the bidder's or offeror's 10 submitted utilization plan, and (iv) the percentage of the 11 contract awarded to each certified vendor that is a business 12 owned by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities identified in the utilization plan. 13

14 (Source: P.A. 102-29, eff. 6-25-21; 102-662, eff. 9-15-21; 15 103-570, eff. 1-1-24.)

16 (30 ILCS 575/8) (from Ch. 127, par. 132.608)

17 (Section scheduled to be repealed on June 30, 2029)

18 Sec. 8. Enforcement.

(1) The Commission on Equity and Inclusion shall make such findings, recommendations and proposals to the Governor as are necessary and appropriate to enforce this Act. If, as a result of its monitoring activities, the Commission determines that its goals and policies are not being met by any State agency or public institution of higher education, the Commission may recommend any or all of the following actions:

Establish enforcement procedures whereby the 1 (a) 2 Commission may recommend to the appropriate State agency, 3 public institutions of higher education, or law enforcement officer that legal or administrative remedies 4 5 be initiated for violations of contract provisions or 6 rules issued hereunder or by a contracting State agency or 7 public institutions of higher education. State agencies 8 and public institutions of higher education shall be 9 authorized to adopt remedies for such violations which 10 shall include (1) termination of the contract involved, 11 (2) prohibition of participation of the respondents in 12 public contracts for a period not to exceed one year, (3) 13 the assessment of a penalty in the amount of the 14 discrepancy between the commitment contained in the 15 utilization plan, as such amount may be amended over the 16 term of the contract, and the qualifying payments made to 17 the certified vendors listed in the utilization plan 18 imposition of a penalty not to exceed any profit acquired 19 as a result of violation, or (4) any combination thereof.

20 (b) If the Commission concludes that a compliance plan 21 submitted under Section 6 is unlikely to produce the 22 participation goals for businesses owned by minorities, 23 women, and persons with disabilities within the then 24 current fiscal year, the Commission may recommend that the 25 State agency or public institution of higher education 26 revise its plan to provide additional opportunities for participation by businesses owned by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities. Such recommended revisions may include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

4 (i) assurances of stronger and better focused 5 solicitation efforts to obtain more businesses owned 6 by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities as 7 potential sources of supply;

8 (ii) division of <u>the scope of work</u> job or project 9 requirements, when economically feasible, into tasks 10 or quantities to permit participation of businesses 11 owned by minorities, women, and persons with 12 disabilities;

(iii) elimination of extended experience or capitalization requirements, when programmatically feasible, to permit participation of businesses owned by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities;

17 (iv) identification of specific proposed contracts particularly attractive or appropriate 18 for as 19 participation by businesses owned by minorities, 20 women, and persons with disabilities, such 21 identification to result from and be coupled with the 22 efforts of subparagraphs (i) through (iii);

(v) implementation of those regulations
established for the use of the sheltered market
process.

(2) State agencies and public institutions of higher

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education shall monitor a vendor's compliance with its 1 2 utilization plan and the terms of its contract. Without 3 limitation, a vendor's failure to comply with its contractual commitments as contained in the utilization plan; failure to 4 5 cooperate in providing information regarding its compliance with its utilization plan; or the provision of false or 6 7 misleading information or statements concerning compliance, 8 certification status, or eligibility of the Business 9 Enterprise Program-certified vendor, good faith efforts, or 10 any other material fact or representation shall constitute a 11 material breach of the contract and entitle the State agency 12 or public institution of higher education to declare a 13 default, terminate the contract, or exercise those remedies 14 provided for in the contract, at law, or in equity.

15 (3) Prior to the expiration or termination of a contract, 16 State agencies and public institutions of higher education shall evaluate the contractor's fulfillment of the contract 17 goals for participation by certified businesses owned by 18 19 minorities, women, and persons with disabilities. The agency or public institution of higher education shall prepare a 20 report of the vendor's compliance with the contract goals and 21 22 file it with the Secretary. If the Secretary determines that 23 the vendor did not fulfill the contract goals, the vendor 24 shall be in breach of the contract and may be subject to 25 remedies or sanctions, unless the vendor can show that it made 26 good faith efforts to meet the contract goals. Such remedies

or sanctions for failing to make good faith efforts may 1 2 include (i) disqualification of the contractor from doing 3 business with the State for a period of no more than one year, or (ii) cancellation, without any penalty to the State, of any 4 5 contract entered into by the vendor, or (iii) the assessment 6 of a penalty in the amount of the discrepancy between the commitment contained in the utilization plan, as such amount 7 8 may be amended over the term of the contract, and the 9 qualifying payments made to the certified vendors listed in the utilization plan. The Business Enterprise Program shall 10 11 develop procedures for determining whether a vendor has made 12 good faith efforts to meet the contract goals upon the expiration or termination of a contract, which may include, 13 14 but shall not be limited to: (i) consideration of whether State or local action caused a shortfall, such as a change in 15 16 the scope of work that eliminated work to be performed by 17 certified vendors or a change in specifications; (ii) whether the vendor was unable to obtain certified business 18 19 participation without requiring the introduction of extra participants not performing a commercially useful function; or 20 (iii) whether the vendor made efforts to use appropriate 21 22 forums for purposes of advertising subcontracting 23 opportunities suitable for certified businesses.

^{24 (}Source: P.A. 101-657, eff. 1-1-22; 102-29, eff. 6-25-21.)