

## **INVITATION TO BID - LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SECRETARIAL, TELEPHONE MESSAGE, AND BILL AND JOURNAL ROOM SERVICES**

Please submit your bid in accordance with the instructions. Please use this invitation to submit your bid and attach supplemental pages as necessary. One copy of your bid must be received in the Legislative Council office no later than 10:00 a.m. on Friday, September 19, 2008. The bids will be opened and read on that date. The bids will be reviewed by the Legislative Management Committee on Wednesday, September 24, 2008. The decision to accept a bid will depend on the quality of the bid, not necessarily on the lowest bid price. If your bid is accepted, your bid constitutes a binding contract and includes the specifications of this invitation to bid.

### **BACKGROUND - 2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION Background**

In 2007 the Legislative Assembly contracted with one employment contractor to provide secretarial services, telephone message services, and bill and journal room services.

#### **Secretarial Services**

The contractor prepared correspondence and envelopes, news releases, and other miscellaneous documents, e.g., written testimony presented by legislators to committees. The contractor's employees were assigned work without regard to the political affiliation of the requester. For example, no employee was assigned to do work solely for the majority party or solely for the minority party.

During the 2007 legislative session, the contractor's employees produced a variety of documents, which included 410 letters (817 copies), 77 merge mailings (5,442 copies), 93 floor speeches (631 copies), 42 news releases (284 copies), 13 charts and lists (254 copies), and 260 miscellaneous documents--labels, etc. (558 copies). The secretarial service also made the number of photocopies as indicated.

During the 2007 legislative session, the contractor provided four secretarial services employees, one of whom was the onsite services supervisor.

#### **Telephone Message Services**

The same employment contractor staffed a telephone message center through which North Dakota residents used toll-free incoming wide area telephone service (WATS) lines to obtain information about pending legislative proposals and to leave messages for their senators and representatives. In addition, materials faxed to the Legislative Assembly are received in the telephone room, are sorted, and are delivered to the appropriate individuals in the legislative chambers. Telephone calls are rotated to

an available attendant or to the next available attendant on a basis that attempts to equalize the calls received by each attendant. Rather than a busy signal if all attendants are busy with calls, voice mail instruction gives the caller an option to wait until the next available attendant or to leave a voice mail message. Calls received afterhours are routed to voice mail, and these messages are handled the next business day by the first attendant on duty.

Telephone attendants usually receive two types of calls--either seeking information or leaving a message. If a caller asks for information on whether a bill on a particular subject has been introduced or on the status of a specific bill, the telephone attendant accesses the computerized bill status system through that attendant's personal computer and either uses the subject index to review the subject matter of bills introduced or accesses the bill by number to determine the current status of that proposal. The attendant then gives the information to the caller. If the caller asks to leave a message for a legislator (by policy a caller may leave a message only for that caller's senator and two representatives of the district in which that caller resides), the attendant determines who the caller's legislators are (if the caller does not know), accesses the computerized message system (LAWS), and enters the caller's name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, the specific bill number for the message, and the message. The legislator then receives this information on the legislator's personal computer. If a message is for a legislator who does not use a personal computer, the telephone attendant completes a message form and an employee of the secretarial service delivers the message to the legislator. During a legislative session, approximately 138 of the 141 legislators use personal computers.

The number of calls has gone down each session since 1993--62,320 calls were received in 1993; 41,668 in 1995; 28,433 in 1997; 22,491 in 1999; 16,028 in 2001; 10,021 in 2003; 6,282 in 2005; and 4,227 in 2007. It is unknown whether the number of calls will continue to decrease each session. Factors that may influence the number of calls include increased use of e-mail to contact legislators, increased use of information available from the legislative branch website, and the extent of public interest in legislative issues.

The telephone message service also processes e-mails by which e-mail messages to legislators are added to the constituent views feature of the LAWS system.

The fax machine for the Legislative Assembly is located in the telephone message service area and the telephone message services personnel sort fax

messages and deliver them to legislators as appropriate.

During the 2007 legislative session, the contractor provided two telephone message services employees.

### **Bill and Journal Room Services**

The employment contractor also staffed and operated the bill and journal room, which is located on the ground floor in the legislative wing of the State Capitol. Bill and journal room personnel are responsible for receiving copies of bills, resolutions, journals, daily calendars, weekly committee hearing schedules, and daily bill status reports from the printers. The personnel sort and place the copies of bills, resolutions, and journals on shelves; deliver copies of bills, resolutions, journals, daily calendars, weekly committee hearing schedules, and daily bill status reports to the Legislative Council office; hand out copies of bills, resolutions, journals, daily calendars, and committee hearing schedules to individuals who request these items at the "walkup" windows in the bill and journal room; hand out calendars and hearing schedules on request; receive subscription fees for transmittal to the Legislative Council office and maintain a list of subscribers to sets of bills and resolutions, journals, the journal index, calendars, committee hearing schedules, and bill status reports; maintain "boxes" in the bill and journal room for distribution of bills, resolutions, journals, calendars, committee hearing schedules, and bill status reports to entities that have subscribed to those materials or reserved those boxes for receipt of those materials; mail copies of bills, resolutions, journals, calendars, committee hearing schedules, and bill status reports to those entities that have subscribed to receive sets of those items by mail, and to any other entities who request individual copies of those items by mail; and assemble a set of bills and resolutions and a set of journals for each legislator who has a personal computer and requests a set of bills, resolutions, and journals upon adjournment of the Legislative Assembly. The Legislative Assembly pays the postage costs for documents mailed by the bill and journal room personnel.

Total work product or service information is unknown, but in 2007, 71 entities subscribed to pick up 95 sets of bills and resolutions as available (bills and resolutions are introduced daily during the first three weeks of session and on a very limited basis thereafter, journals are printed on a daily basis, and bill status reports are printed on a daily basis); 36 entities subscribed to pick up the daily journals, and one subscribed to receive them by mail; and one entity subscribed to pick up a daily bill status report. Also, the Legislative Council office received 15 sets of bills and resolutions, 22 sets of daily journals, and 16 sets of daily calendars, and 14 sets of weekly committee hearing schedules. State agencies are not required to pay for these documents but can reserve a "box" to receive copies that are placed in the box by bill and journal room personnel. Subscribers who pick

up their documents also have reserved a "box" to receive the copies. In 2007, 71 entities (private subscribers and state agencies) had boxes for receipt of one or more copies of the materials.

During the 2007 legislative session, the contractor provided two bill and journal room services employees.

### **2007 Contract Price**

Although the 2007 contract was to provide secretarial, telephone message, and bill and journal room services through eight employees for 77 days at \$714.25 per day, the contractor used flexible work scheduling, reduced the number of employees to reflect actual workload, and billed only for actual costs incurred at an average cost of \$649.46 per day for 78 days.

### **GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS**

The successful bidder must provide personnel necessary to perform secretarial services, telephone message services, and bill and journal room services required by the House of Representatives and the Senate of the 61<sup>st</sup> Legislative Assembly similar to that provided during the 2007 legislative session.

Except for bill and journal room services, the period of the contract is from the first day of the 2009 regular session (January 6, 2009) through the last day of the legislative session (unknown, but probably in mid-April). With respect to bill and journal room services, the period of the contract is from the first day that bills are delivered to the bill and journal room (approximately December 8, 2008) through the last day of the legislative session. The Legislative Assembly meets in session Monday through Friday, with the possibility of meeting in session on a few Saturdays. The Legislative Assembly may be in session on Martin Luther King, Jr., Day, George Washington's Birthday, and Good Friday. The Legislative Assembly is scheduled for a recess from Saturday through Tuesday, February 21-24, 2009. The Legislative Assembly is responsible for paying any overtime required under state or federal law if the Legislative Assembly meets on a Saturday or Sunday. Otherwise, the contractor is responsible for overtime required to complete projects on a timely basis.

This bid proposal is for six employees--three employees and the onsite supervisor in the secretarial and message services area and two employees in the bill and journal room area. Of the three employees and one onsite supervisor in the secretarial and telephone message services area, all four should be able (and will receive the training) to provide secretarial services and telephone message services. During the first three weeks of the session, the contractor should be prepared to assign one of the employees to the bill and journal room area, as workload requires.

The contractor is responsible for the discipline or the dismissal of any employee. The chairman of the

House and Senate Employment Committees may discuss with the contractor the discipline or dismissal of any employee.

Employees of the contractor will be working with confidential information and are required to sign a nondisclosure agreement. The contractor must enforce this agreement and terminate an employee who violates the nondisclosure agreement.

The contractor must provide:

1. Continuous monitoring of the performance of employees and provide a replacement if a current employee does not perform as required.
2. Payroll services for its employees and maintenance of all required payroll records, including necessary employee forms, taxes, Social Security, and workers' compensation and any other employment-related taxes and fees.
3. All recruiting and testing to ensure employees will possess high-quality skills and workmanship.
4. A signed nondisclosure form from each employee.

The contractor must designate an account manager or liaison to manage the communication process between the Legislative Council, the secretarial and telephone message area, the bill and journal room, and the contractor.

### **Secretarial and Telephone Message Services**

Secretarial and telephone message service employees will be collocated in a room to the west of the Senate balcony. Equipment, supplies, and postage will be provided by the Legislative Assembly. Each employee will be provided a personal computer and a telephone. A fax machine will be provided in the secretarial and telephone message services room. Each legislator has personalized stationery. Each personal computer is equipped with a color monitor and a mouse. The word processing software will be Microsoft Word.

Secretarial services are provided through standardized formats, which will be furnished by the Legislative Council. Almost all the legislators have notebook personal computers and drafts of work may be sent to the secretarial service through a network connection.

Employees will be required to answer calls, operate personal computers, access programs to obtain bill status information or transmit messages to legislators, and personally deliver telephone messages or faxes to legislators.

The contractor, through the onsite supervisor, is accountable to the Chief Clerk of the House with respect to projects or messages for representatives and is accountable to the Secretary of the Senate with respect to projects or messages for senators.

The onsite supervisor is to:

1. Supervise employees of the contractor and provide for flexible work schedules. The supervisor must designate an assistant to assign work when the supervisor is not at work. Secretarial and telephone message services should be provided between the hours of 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on each legislative day.
2. Assign all work, keeping track of all incoming and outgoing documents.
3. Supervise a proofreading process.
4. Answer the telephone and delegate this responsibility when necessary.
5. Supervise the checking in and checking out of handheld dictation units to legislators.
6. Notify the majority leader or minority leader of a request for a restricted work project in violation of the *Policy Regarding Secretarial Services to Legislators* by a member of that leader's caucus.

The staff employed to provide secretarial and telephone message services must:

1. Possess proficiency in Microsoft Vista.
2. Possess proficiency in using Microsoft Word 2007 after attending two days' training provided by the Legislative Council. The Legislative Assembly will reimburse the contractor at the hourly rate the contractor pays the employee for the length of the training.
3. Possess proficiency in handling telephone messages after attending three hours of training provided by the Legislative Council. The Legislative Assembly will reimburse the contractor at the hourly rate the contractor pays the employee for the length of the training.
4. Be able to operate a personal computer, telephone, copy machine, fax machine, and transcription equipment.
5. Be able to hear telephone callers in a room containing several other telephone attendants answering calls.
6. Be proficient and diplomatic in responding to telephone callers.
7. Be proficient in proofreading documents.
8. Be proficient in the English language and proper rules of grammar.
9. Be able to go to a legislator's desk in the chamber and deliver messages and take instructions or notes regarding a project.
10. Be able to deliver the finished product to the legislator, if necessary.

The normal turnaround for a project should be within 24 hours. A press release submitted by noon Friday must be completed by 5:00 p.m. Friday. For any extensive project or mailings, the turnaround time should be within a reasonable period, recognizing the importance of timely response to requests.

### Bill and Journal Room Services

Bill and journal room employees will be located in the bill and journal room, which is located on the ground floor in the legislative wing of the State Capitol. Equipment and supplies will be provided by the Legislative Assembly. This includes envelopes, address labels, and postage for documents required to be mailed.

The contractor, through its onsite supervisor, is accountable to the Chief Clerk of the House with respect to requests from representatives and is accountable to the Secretary of the Senate with respect to requests from senators.

The onsite supervisor is to:

1. Supervise employees of the contractor and provide for flexible work schedules. Bill and journal room service should be provided between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on each legislative day. On any Friday when both houses have recessed before 3:00 p.m., the room may be closed at 3:30 p.m. During any extended recess beyond Saturday and Sunday, bill and journal room service should be provided the day after the Legislative Assembly recesses and the day before the Legislative Assembly is to reconvene.
2. Assign work to the employees.
3. Supervise the process for ensuring appropriate handling of subscription requests and requests made by telephone or mail.
4. Ensure that the employees are proficient and diplomatic in responding to requests.
5. Answer the telephone and delegate this responsibility when necessary.
6. Work with the Legislative Council staff in determining the appropriate number of bills, resolutions, journals, daily calendars, weekly hearing schedules, and bill status reports to be printed.
7. Collect subscription fees and photocopying fees and transmit those fees along with the appropriate completed subscription forms to the Legislative Council office.

The contractor must provide the following basic level of service:

1. At least one person must be onsite between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday during the period beginning December 8, 2008, through January 5, 2009, excluding Christmas Eve Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day, to organize the bill and journal room, receive copies of bills and resolutions from the printer, sort and place those copies on the shelves, and distribute those copies to individuals who come to the walkup windows.
2. At least one person must be in the bill and journal room, providing copies of items as

requested, anytime either house of the Legislative Assembly is in session after 4:30 p.m.

3. At least one person must be available during all hours of operation to respond to requests for bills, resolutions, and journals from persons who make the requests at the walkup windows.
4. Bills and resolutions must be placed in the boxes in the bill and journal room as soon as possible after receipt from the printer and must be mailed to subscribers on the same day received from the printer.
5. Daily journals, daily calendars, and weekly committee hearing schedules must be placed in the boxes in the bill and journal room as soon as possible and not later than three hours after receipt from the printer and must be mailed to subscribers on the same day received from the printer.
6. Bill status reports must be placed in the boxes in the bill and journal room as soon as possible and not later than two hours after receipt from the printer and must be packaged and labeled for distribution to subscribers the same day received from the printer.
7. Daily calendars and weekly committee hearing schedules must be made available for distribution immediately upon receipt from the printer.
8. Any person who requests an item for which a copy is available in the bill and journal room should receive that document within three minutes of the request.

The contractor must provide, above the basic level of service, photocopying services upon payment of fees set by the contractor after consultation with the Legislative Council. The contractor may not charge a fee for providing a photocopy of a legislative document available for distribution to the public by personnel in the bill and journal room, nor for providing a photocopy to a legislator, a House or Senate employee, or to a Legislative Council employee.

### BID SPECIFICATIONS

Your proposal must be accompanied by a list of similar projects you have handled and a list of no fewer than three references who can attest to your capability to handle a contract of this magnitude.

This contract can be amended only by a written modification signed by both parties to the contract.

Bids are requested based on the general specifications outlined above. For purposes of this proposal, a legislative day is a day when the Legislative Assembly is in session.

Bid proposal: Six employees, which includes an onsite services supervisor for approximately 75 legislative days (amount per day)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

One bill and journal room services employee for 18 days before the Legislative Assembly convenes (amount per day)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Pay ranges: List the pay rate or ranges for employees included in the bid proposal (hourly rate of pay)

Secretarial and telephone message services \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Bill and journal room services \$ \_\_\_\_\_

What arrangements will be made to adjust the daily contract amount if fewer or more employees are needed to adequately perform the work? For example, the secretarial and telephone message services area could operate with one to three fewer employees during the first two to three weeks of the

session and during the last two to three weeks of the session.

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If the Legislative Assembly meets for more than 75 legislative days, each additional day of service beyond 75 days will be provided for (amount per day) \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Bidder \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_