

- SUBJECT:** Allowing Harris County to use a local preference policy for contracts
- COMMITTEE:** County Affairs — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 6 ayes — Coleman, Stucky, Anderson, Lopez, Spiller, J. Turner
- 1 nay — Cason
- 2 absent — Longoria, Stephenson
- WITNESSES:** For — DeWight Dopslauf, Harris County Purchasing Department;
(*Registered, but did not testify:* Tammy Narvaez, Harris County Commissioners Court)
- Against — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Perry Fowler, Texas Water Infrastructure Network)
- BACKGROUND:** It has been suggested that Harris County would benefit from the ability already held by some counties to use a local preference policy with respect to contracting and purchasing.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 4437 would allow a county with a population of more than 3.3 million (Harris County) to award a contract for services or for the construction, repair, or renovation of a structure, road, highway, or other improvement or addition to real property to a bidder whose principal place of business was in the county if:
- the bid or proposed price submitted by the bidder was within 3 percent of the lowest bid or proposed price received by the county from a suitable bidder from outside the county; and
 - the commissioners court determined that the bid or proposal offered the county the best combination of price, ability to perform the contract, and additional economic development opportunities for the county.

The bill would not prohibit a county from rejecting all bids.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021, and would apply only to a contract for which the county first advertised or otherwise solicited bids on or after that date.