

Good Afternoon. My name is Maureen O'Brien and I am the President and CEO of New York State Industries for the Disabled. I would like to thank the Procurement Council members for your time and thoughtful consideration of the proposed modernization of the definition of mail fulfillment services.

Let me give you a short history of why the modernization of the definition of mail fulfillment services is needed. The standard 20 years ago was - one master copy of a form letter was dropped off to a mail fulfillment center where it was photo copied thousands of times and then each copy was folded, inserted, sealed, stamped and eventually mailed.

Fast forward to 10 years ago, thousands of personalized letters were individually printed at a state agency print shop and couriered to a mail fulfillment center where they were folded, inserted, sealed, sorted and mailed.

Ten more years forward to today...An electronic mailing file is emailed or drop boxed to a mail fulfillment center where it is mail merged – the data is cleaned, and the addresses corrected and then a personalized letter is printed with an individual address, bar code and zip plus 4. Each letter is then folded, inserted, sealed, pre-sorted and eventually mailed. The letters returned as undeliverable or change of address - are updated and a clean file is returned to the state agency.

The current definitions that NYSID and our member agencies do business under are in the 20 year and 10 year old examples. The modernization of the mail fulfillment services definition that you will entertain today - would simply allow NYSID and our member agencies to operate by today's standards. The disadvantages of working under a 20

year old definition makes NYSID and our member agencies uncompetitive in today's marketplace. Imagine using a 20 year old cell phone or computer?

These changes in the market place drove the Procurement Council to form a Work Group in 2016 to negotiate the modernization of the definition of mail fulfillment services. The Work Group was comprised of representatives from NYSID, The Business Council of New York, Department of Health, Office of General Services, The Printing Industries Alliance, Office of Mental Health, Division of Budget, ITS, SUNY, Empire State Development, NYSPSP and the Center for Disability Services. Those who served on the Work Group can attest that this was a highly negotiated definition where they were responsive to the concerns raised by various constituencies. Action on this definition by the Council was tabled in 2016. Council members voiced a desire to wait until NYSID's designation agreement with State Education was completed. Last month I sent to all members of the Council an executive summary of NYSID's annual report filed with SED and a copy of the 2017 executed Designation Agreement. In addition, I have met or spoken with nearly all the members of the Council and directly responded to questions that you had. I truly hope that this dialogue has demonstrated transparency and NYSID's focus on creating jobs for individuals with disabilities.

The goal of this modernized definition is two fold - utilize today's technology and preserve jobs for individuals with disabilities. Four non-profits currently do the bulk of this work – The Center for Disability Services in Albany with 165 employees, Fed Cap in New York City with 34 employees, South East Works in Buffalo with 20 employees and the Warren Washington Albany ARC with 68 employees.

From 2015 to today we have been fortunate – ancillary contracts for mail room services and packaging have allowed for the creation of 20 new positions for individuals with disabilities amounting to 15,392 hours of work. We also have been fortunate with our state agency customers that have agreed to work with us allowing us to retain contracts while this definition has been negotiated. Our State Agency customers have made it crystal clear that they want a one stop shop for mail fulfillment services that includes electronic file transfer and letter printing. Make no mistake, this works goes away for nearly 300 individuals with disabilities without modernization of the definition.

Let me give you a live example. In the case of the Center for Disability Services here in Albany New York, The Center holds a mail fulfillment contract with the NYS Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA). OTDA prints letters in the OTDA print shop. The letters are then boxed up and couriered to the Center. OTDA no longer wants the letters with personal information to go outside a chain of custody. It is a data safety issue. OTDA has requested that the Center receive the file electronically and print the letters on site prior to folding, sealing, sorting and mailing. Under the current definitions The Center can not meet this customer need.

In addition, OTDA is missing out on the efficiencies related to the file being delivered electronically – the data cleaning and return addresses.

The Center could better manage their staff with electronic delivery. One morning that I visited the Center there were a number of idle employees. A glitch of some sort had happened at the OTDA print shop and all of the boxes of letters that were due to be delivered had not arrived. If the

Center had printed the letter the night before on site – all of the staff would have been diligently working upon their arrival. Imagine getting over all the hurdles that public transportation in a wheel chair creates – to get to work - and then be sent home?

I appreciate the efforts of the Council and OGS in fully understanding the business model at the Center for Disability Services. All work on Preferred Source contracts at the Center for Disability Services mail fulfillment center is done by the non-profit that employs those with significant disabilities. Opponents to allowing these opportunities for the disabled workforce have attempted to portray the Center's Preferred Source Contract work as commercial services. That is untrue.

The printing for the ODTA contract as well as the vast majority of our projects are being done at state agencies. The statements by the Printing Industries Alliance, that this is approval for digital printing in all forms is completely false and misleading. **This is not business that is currently in the hands of any for profit entity. This is not business that will be taken away from any for profit entity. Printing on a NYSID contract can ONLY BE DONE in conjunction with mail fulfillment services. If we are not mailing it – we CAN NOT print it.** Open Book NY listed 12 contracts for mail fulfillment services among NYS agencies that also included printing. Two of the 12 contracts are currently NYSID contracts. The total estimated annual value of the 12 contracts is \$3.9m.

The work group concurred that defining the market was difficult and negotiated a number of items that have NEVER been in previous definitions:

1. A provisional approval – this definition is valid for two years. At the end of this 2-year period the council has the ability to review the marketplace before giving it a final approval.
2. All NYSID mail fulfillment contracts must be reported to the council. The goal is to fully identify the market place and ensure that all contract work is in compliance.
3. There is a detailed list of what CAN NOT be done – Ad Slicks, Catalogs, Badges, Ballots, Maps, Magnets, business cards and the list goes on and on.
4. No Corporate partners – this work can only be done by our non-profit members.

No doubt, you have all received a whole bunch of letters (electronically) on this definition and the rhetoric is reminiscent of language used by interest groups in the time leading up to the passage of the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act. It is inflammatory with the sole purpose of inciting fear. The Preferred Source Program and individuals with disabilities have played NO role in the demise of any specific industry. Suggesting that NYSID and the Member agencies that serve individuals with disabilities have played a role in the printing industry's demise is patently untrue and it cheapens inclusion efforts. There is room in New York State for both the printers industry and our member agencies that serve individuals with disabilities. Claiming otherwise does both groups a dis-service.

An individual living with a disability is twice as likely to live in poverty and three times as likely to be homeless. Those who are willing to work and can work should be given the opportunity to do so, thereby accessing the same quality of life as their peers. Your positive recommendation of the work group definition and NYSID's application

will preserve and save nearly 300 jobs for individuals with disabilities in New York State.