

RESPONSE TO ISSUE 1.1 THROUGH 1.4 FOR THE TEXAS COUNCIL ON PURCHASING FROM PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Comptroller's office supports the mission and goals of the State Use Program, and, as required by statute (e.g., Tex. Human Resources Code §122.012), the agency continues to provide procurement-related expertise to TCPPD to help the program succeed.

In reviewing the Staff Report's recommendations, we stress that the Comptroller's expertise in these matters is centered primarily on statewide procurement and contracting issues with state agencies. The Comptroller's office does not have the expertise to adequately address the needs of the disabled workforce or the training and resources needed to prepare disabled workers for the competitive workforce.

The Staff Report recommends requiring an advisory committee to assist the Comptroller in running the State Use Program pursuant to the original mission and goals of providing meaningful employment to disabled Texans and outplacing disabled workers to the competitive workforce. The Comptroller's office will need such assistance if the TCPPD's duties are transferred here. However, given our focus on statewide procurement and lack of skills and expertise needed to fully implement the State Use Program as intended, the Legislature may want to consider placing the Comptroller's office on an advisory committee to an entity more suited to understanding disabled workers' needs, like the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services or the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services.