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July 9, 2023

### **DECISION MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Council Members

**FROM:** Bill Edmonds, Executive Director

**SUBJECT:** Authorization to contract for government affairs services

**PROPOSED ACTION:** Recommend that the Council authorize staff to execute a short-term contract for government affairs services in an amount not to exceed a total of \$90,000 spread over the end of FY2023 and for a short but indefinite period into FY2024

### **BACKGROUND**

Ann Gravatt, Public Affairs division director, recently announced she will be departing from the Council in mid-July. The Council will need government affairs services Ann has been providing while the Council is working to fill the empty staff position. The only way to obtain these services in the short term will be to contract with a person with expertise in government affairs. That is the purpose of this agenda item – to recommend that the Council authorize the staff to secure these services by contract.

We need to have a person in place to provide government affairs assistance well before the coming Congressional staff tour set for August 21-23. Because of this timing, Council staff is seeking authorization to put a short-term contract in place before the Council meets again in August. The contract will provide the needed government affairs assistance during the recruitment process for a new division director.

The services needed during this phase include support before, during and after the Congressional tour, including contacts with key policymakers following the tour. The contractor is expected also to continue contacts with Congressional offices regarding key Council products, to support the preparation of the annual report to Congress, to support Council staff is addressing the budget limitation within the Power Act, assist the Council in engaging with officials in the central offices of executive branch agencies to

the extent needed, and in general to help in responding to questions and inquiries from policymakers.

We are still working to identify an appropriate contractor and determine the details of the contract. We also cannot be certain at this point of the precise time frame in which we will need to contract for these services, other than to assume the need for these services will continue past the end of FY2023 for some indefinite period into FY2024. Even so, we estimate that the services can be obtained for no more than \$90,000, and possibly less, and so we ask the Council for authority to contract for such services in an amount not to exceed \$90,000 over a time frame that spans the end of this fiscal year and into the next. This authorization will provide sufficient flexibility to allow the staff to negotiate a deal that best matches the organization's needs in terms of length and level of service. Because of retirements and departures within the public affairs division, this contract amount is available within the current budget. We will of course keep the Council informed of the progress in contracting and will return to the Council for further discussions and consideration if something changes.

John Shurts, General Counsel, assisted in the preparation of this decision memorandum and is comfortable with the Council proceeding in this fashion.