

Dems stand in opposition to PLA bill; GOP defends

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As discussion begins on the PLA bill, Dem senators lined up in opposition to the legislation, as few Republicans defended the bill.

Decrying the bill as “anti-worker,” the Dems warned the legislation would roll back local control. They added the bill should not be a priority for the Senate.

But Republicans pushed back, saying the bill merely increases options for local governments while allowing more contractors an opportunity to get involved in projects.

Addressing her GOP colleagues, Sen. Jennifer Shilling, D-La Crosse, said the PLA bill would run in opposition to the governor’s call to build up the state’s work force.

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“Unfortunately what you’re doing is going to fly in the face of workforce development,” Shilling said.

She also called the bill “a solution in search of a problem.”

Sen. Dave Hansen, D-Green Bay, said the bill is “a thinly veiled attack on organized labor.” Its passage, he said, would give “advantage to out-of-state contractors” who prioritize completing a job cheaply.

Sen. Leah Vukmir, R-Brookfield, pushed back on Dem objections, saying the bill doesn’t take away a local government’s ability to use PLAs.

She added the law establishes “neutrality” and “fairness.” She also said th state “should not be alienating any part of our workforce” because all “deserve equal

access.”

Meanwhile, Sen. Duey Stroebel, R-Saukville, said the legislation would “level the playing field for all,” because it would allow for increased competition in the bidding phase of public projects.

This post will be updated as discussion continues.