

Procurement in Other States

February 19, 2013

Senators have asked how the following two statements can be reconciled. The Governor's Office has cited the NASCA figure, while the Materials Management Office referenced NASPO during the Finance Subcommittee.

National Association of State Chief Administrators (NASCA)

In at least 45 states, procurement resides in the Department of Administration. In some others, it is shared between multiple executive agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction.

National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO)

38 states have a Single Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) who prescribes procurement rules and regulations. The CPO reports to a cabinet-level official in 26 states.

These statements are not in conflict because they speak to different issues.

NASCA's figure looks at where procurement is managed – whether it be in a pure administrative agency in the executive branch, or if it is overseen by a board or a mixed executive/legislative entity instead. In the overwhelming majority of states, procurement is managed by an executive agency whose head is appointed or nominated by the Governor. The NASCA figure is relevant to the current debate because the question before the Senate is whether procurement should be managed by an executive agency (as it is in the rest of the country) or if it should continue to be overseen by a mixed legislative/executive board instead.

NASPO's figures address a different question, which is how far “up” or “down” a state's Chief Procurement Official appears in his or her respective agency's organization chart. This question is entirely independent of the question answered by NASCA. NASPO's figures show that in 26 of the 38 states with a single Chief Procurement Officer, the CPO reports to a cabinet-level official. What NASPO doesn't explain here is how the reporting relationship works in the other 12 states.

The answer is that in those states, the CPO is at least one level further down in the organization from the cabinet-level officer. For instance, the CPO in some states reports to a Deputy Secretary, who in turn answers to the Secretary of Administration. In each of these cases, however, the procurement organization is still within an executive agency under the Governor's jurisdiction.

In short, although the NASPO figures may be accurate, they are neither in conflict with NASCA's statistics, nor central to the current question.