



## Senate takes step toward better acquisition

Vote gives support to Federal Acquisition Institute

- By [Matthew Weigelt](#)
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The Senate has passed legislation designed to reorganize and strengthen the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI), a training center for acquisition employees in civilian agencies.

The [Federal Acquisition Institute Act](#) (S. 2902) also seeks to ensure that training standards are consistent across the civilian acquisition workforce, and would make better use of money going to training.

The bill passed Dec. 14 would have the administrator for the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) appoint FAI's director based on expertise in acquisition, management and the workforce. The director would report to the OFPP administrator.

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In addition, the bill would expand the use of the Acquisition Workforce Training Fund. Previous law had been interpreted as preventing using that money for functions such as recruiting highly qualified candidates into acquisition jobs.

Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine), the ranking member of the Homeland Security and Government Reform Committee, said if better trained employees can help to avoid overpaying even 1 percent of \$538 billion in total contract spending, it would save more than \$5 billion each year.

“This is a wise investment that will yield substantial returns,” said Collins, who introduced the bill in December 2009.

Sen. Daniel Akaka (D-Hawaii), chairman of the committee's Oversight of the Federal Workforce Subcommittee, said elevating the institute's prominence and ensuring it has adequate resources will ultimately lead to more effective oversight of government contracting.

The House must pass the bill before it could go to the president.