



Memorandum

To: Health Connector Board of Directors

CC: Audrey Morse Gasteier, Executive Director
Patricia Grant, Deputy Executive Director/Chief Operating Officer

From: Jesse Salvato, Member Communications Manager

Date: September 4, 2026

Re: Recommendation of Contract Award for Apparent Successful Bidder
for Readability and Translation Services

Executive Summary

This memorandum recommends that the Board of Directors (Board) authorize the Health Connector to execute an agreement with Prisma International, Inc. (Prisma), to provide Readability and Translation Services. Under the proposed contract, Prisma would provide culturally and linguistically appropriate support for readability and usability review and written translations of notices, ¹ and web content. If approved, the Health Connector anticipates the Agreement will last for an approximately forty-five and a half (45.5) month term, from September 10, 2026 through June 30, 2030, with a not-to-exceed cost of \$800,000.

Subject to the contractor's satisfactory performance, as determined by the Health Connector, the Agreement may be extended in any increment through June 30, 2034. The Health Connector may also extend the agreement for any reasonable period it determines necessary to complete a subsequent procurement.

Readability and Translation Services Procurement

The incumbent Contractor, Maximus Health Services, Inc. (Maximus), currently provides readability and translation services to the Health Connector. The agreement term associated with these services will end on December 31, 2026.

¹ The RFR also included, as contingent scope to which the Health Connector could expand the contract at some time in the future, live interpretation.

As such, The Commonwealth Health Insurance Connector Authority (Health Connector) issued a request for response (RFR) on April 2, 2026, to provide Readability and Translation Services, CommBuys Bid# BD-25-1175-1175C-1175L-127564.

This RFR sought a qualified vendor to provide Readability and Translation Services that are compliant with the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the Health Connector's enabling legislation, Chapter 176Q of the Massachusetts General Laws (MGL).

The Health Connector was seeking a Bidder who:

- had demonstrated focus on a customer-centric approach where the needs of the customer are prioritized and acknowledged, and functions and processes are implemented with the customer in mind;
- had experience delivering comparable services within a healthcare and/or Exchange setting;
- utilized industry-standard technologies and business best-practices. This includes use of a reporting tool to:
 - **provide live status visibility for the Health Connector** - reporting tool, LexAI, shows the current state of every in-flight job: which station in the process, who owns it, when it was last updated, the service level agreement window remaining, and any flags (at-risk, awaiting reference materials, in revision). Status is updated in real time, eliminating the need for email-based status inquiries.
 - **provide standard reports** - LexAI produces the daily standard reports delivered by email per the contract, plus the monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, and annual reports called for in Attachment 5 (Reports). Reports are also available on demand through the reporting view.
 - **provide data dictionary and traceability** - a data dictionary documents every report field, metric definition, and validation methodology. A contract administrator can always trace a number on a report back to its source: which jobs contributed to it, what the calculation was, and what the underlying log entries say.
- had proven agility in ramping up staff to meet service and quality standards during the Open Enrollment period;
- had flexible and scalable operations as membership grows and business needs evolve;
- had a proven ability to manage scope and risks and implement on time and on budget;
- fostered excellence, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness in all processes, including applying continuous quality improvement practices to and incorporating Health Connector feedback into services;
- adjusted services in collaboration with the Health Connector to be responsive to changing Health Connector needs and initiatives;
- ensured visibility into vendor operations through the provision of user-friendly reporting tools that monitored service levels and key performance indicators;
- had a robust tracking system that captured request type, source and target languages, word count, urgency tier, assignment, owner, and progress, and that finalized the time stamp; and

- acted as a proactive, collaborative, resourceful partner to the Health Connector, through recommending best practices and learnings from other clients, and facilitating consistent communication.

Health Connector staff believe that the RFR process that is described below has resulted in the selection of a vendor whose proposal demonstrated understanding of these needs and was most responsive to these requirements.

Summary of Readability and Translation Services Business Requirement

The main scope of the RFR required the ability to:

- provide a complete range of written translation services, including but not limited to documents, social media, text messages, emails, graphic design, literature, website content, marketing materials, and any other written translation services as requested;
- deliver accessible materials compliance, features, formatting, and validation/testing of complete language translations, including ensuring the application of accessibility standards, compliance and accessibility features and formatting;
- review, edit, and proofread previously translated documents;
- utilize culturally and linguistically appropriate terminology and content, including appropriate regional dialect and idiomatic differences;
- maintain a library of translated materials, including a version control system;
- generate reports per business requirements;
- review materials for readability and usability, taking into consideration the educational level of the target audience;
- as needed, provide document remediation services, as well as document design in line with the Health Connector's style guide;
- perform usability testing i.e., website, brand refresh, etc.;
- perform field testing to identify potential issues, and ensure materials are culturally relevant, improve usability, and ensure compliance;
- review previously translated text into braille; and
- provide written overview of field testing findings.

Composition of Strategic Sourcing Team (SST)

In preparation for evaluation of Bidders, a cross-functional Strategic Sourcing Team (SST) was created. The voting members of the SST were:

- Patricia Grant, Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer
- KimMarie Mercure, Deputy Chief Operating Officer
- Signe Flieger, Director of Policy
- Niki Conte, Director of Outreach and Education
- Jesse Salvato, Member Communications Manager

In addition, the following Health Connector staff served as advisors to the SST:

- Kirsten Blocker, Director of Content Strategy and Marketing
- Linda Hamel, Senior Counsel

Bidder Responses

On May 1, 2026 the Health Connector received Responses to the Contact Center and Support Services RFR from six (6) Bidders:

1. Maximus US Services, Inc. (Maximus)
2. Piedmont Global LLC (Piedmont)
3. Prisma International, Inc. (Prisma)

The three Bidder responses were evaluated as described below.

Evaluation of Bidder Responses

Step 1 – Written Proposal Evaluation: A Combination of Three Scoring Components

Evaluation Methodology

The SST evaluated Bidder responses using a score card that was designed to select a vendor whose capabilities best fit all the readability and translation requirements of the Health Connector. The SST considered the details of business, programmatic, and cost responses, plus the depth and relevance of the Bidder's experience, and qualifications of the team proposed to support the Health Connector program.

Business Response

Bidders were required to provide all requested information and follow all instructions in the Business response.

Programmatic Response

Following individual review of the Bidders' written responses, team sessions were held with the purpose of arriving at a collective team rating for each of the Bidders' programmatic responses. Strengths and weaknesses of each Bidder were discussed and compared to the criteria of the evaluation sheet. At the conclusion of the sessions, each Bidder received overall ratings according to the following scale:

E – Excellent, VG – Very Good, G – Good, F – Fair, P – Poor, NR – Non-Responsive

The overall ratings for each Bidder are detailed in the table below:

		Maximus	Piedmont	Prisma
RFR SECTION	OVERALL RATING FOR PROGRAMMATIC RESSPONSE	G	G	G
5.3.A	Bidder Experience with State Based Exchanges and Similar Organizations	F	F	G
5.3.B	References	G	G	G
5.3.C	Approach Narrative	G	VG	VG
5.3.D	Bidder Operations	F	VG	G
5.3.E	Bidder's Organization	G	G	G
5.3.F	Subcontracting	G	NR	P
5.3.G	Relevant Experience	G	G	G
5.3.H	Staffing Approach	F	G	G
5.3.I	Reporting	G	VG	VG
5.3.J	Performance & Service Level Agreements (SLAs)	G	F	F
5.3.K	Other	P	G	G
5.3.L	Technology Response	G	F	G
5.3.M	Vendor Terms	G	G	G
Attachment 4	Requirements	VG	NR	NR

Cost Response

Cost responses were reviewed after scoring of the business and programmatic responses were scored.

Cost was based on per word pricing for our most common languages (Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Mandarin Chinese, Vietnamese) and other less common languages. Pricing was also submitted for readability and usability review, ADA compliance, formatting, graphic design services, quality assurance for braille translations, and field testing. All pricing was quoted for both standard turnaround and expedited turnaround.

Step 2 - Best and Final Offer (BAFO)

On June 29, 2026, the SST extended requests for a BAFO to all three Bidders. BAFOs were received from each Bidder by July 2, 2026.

Step 3 - References

SST team members reached out to references for Prisma: Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). Both references provided very good feedback indicating that their respective experiences with Prisma were positive ones. Prisma originally had a six-year contract in Iowa which has been extended for approximately another 10 years. DHHS stated that Prisma was timely in their work and able to handle expedited orders. DSHS in Washington noted that they were very happy with Prisma's management style of managing from the top down, and the fact that Prisma's CEO is visible as part of the contract. They indicated that Prisma is not afraid to approach things differently and comes prepared with suggestions and solutions to improve processes. They concluded the conversation stating they would definitely renew with Prisma as they wouldn't want to disrupt something that works well.

Members of the SST team also contacted references for Piedmont. A community agency in Spokane, Washington indicated that Piedmont acquired the company that originally had the contract with them. Overall, their assessment was mostly positive, and they indicated Piedmont had done well with accommodating a shift in languages due to the changing population that the agency served. The second reference in Michigan indicated that Piedmont had only been in place for three years. The reference contact provided was the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) who was more familiar with Piedmont's billing practices and less familiar with the actual day-to-day work. Despite this, the CFO, who was part of the procurement team that chose Piedmont initially, stated he would choose them again.

References for Maximus were not contacted, as Maximus has been the incumbent vendor for the Health Connector for over 10 years.

The SST concluded that Prisma International, Inc. (Prisma) can provide the best overall value and has identified Prisma as the apparent successful Bidder for CommBuys Bid # BD-25-1175-1175C-1175L-127564. Prisma received a programmatic response rating of **Good** by providing the Health Connector with a comprehensive and innovative bid that clearly demonstrated its extensive knowledge of readability and translation services.

Throughout individual and group review of their written proposal, responses to the Q&A, and their BAFO, Prisma continued to demonstrate transparency and responsiveness to the Health Connector.

Additional Prisma Strengths:

- **Understanding of the Health Connector's Business and Mission**
 - Prisma understands the strategic direction of the Health Connector which is centered around improvements to member experience and customer satisfaction.
 - Their work is grounded in delivering clear, culturally appropriate, and usable communications.
 - They bring 44 years of experience and support over 300 languages and dialects.
 - They employ a high percentage of staff that are multilingual and multi-cultural.
- **Demonstrated Ability and Experience to Meet the Health Connector's Requirements**
 - Prisma has the technology infrastructure and reporting tools required under this contract to meet the needs of the Health Connector.
 - They have the ability to meet all Service Level Agreements.
- **Cost and Overall Value**
 - Prisma's cost response was at the lower end of the range of all bids and was reasonable and competitive.
 - Their cost was consistent across groups of languages.

They offered a scalable solution to meet Open Enrollment and membership growth goals. As a result, the SST concluded that Prisma's bid offers the best value for the Health Connector.

Recommendation

The Health Connector recommends that the Board of Directors approve entering into an agreement with Prisma International, Inc. to perform Readability and Translation Services on the terms described in this memorandum.