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MHEC Launches the *i-buy marketplace*TM

*Members get simple, powerful tool for
online purchasing from diverse MHEC contracts portfolio.*

Amherst, MA – April 6, 2022 – MHEC, the not-for-profit buying consortium for its New England members, announced today the launch of their new e-commerce site, ***i-buy marketplace***TM. This new free capability simplifies purchasing for MHEC members, regardless of contract, supplier, or product/service they desire. Like many other online shopping sites, ***i-buy*** equips members with the capabilities to compare products and pricing, brands, and suppliers. As a buying consortium, a key member benefit of ***i-buy***, is its ability to enable members to buy from multiple contracts during the same shopping episode from reliable, vetted suppliers. Now, members have a tool that can serve as a “one stop” shopping experience.

Michael Di Yeso, executive director of MHEC spoke of the benefit to MHEC’s members saying, “We have over 2100 members that range from large university systems to small local libraries, from municipal government offices to K-12 schools, with varying levels of support for the purchasing function. Our ***i-buy marketplace*** delivers a powerful capability for a member organization to target their search and purchase specifically to what they need, regardless of size, sector, location, or purchasing operations. It’s a game changer and I’m proud to offer it to our members.”

The MHEC, known for its vast and diverse offering of over 25,000 products and services, began searching for an online platform following research conducted in 2020. Findings indicated members desired a simpler means to access and purchase from the 50+ contracts currently in the MHEC portfolio. Chris Raymond, director, contracts and operations noted, “It was a difficult task to find a platform that could embrace everything that was needed. We have many contracts, many products and services, and many suppliers. We needed a purchasing platform that could enable a many-to-many capability to meet the requirements identified by our members; including system integration. We found that in provider, EqualLevel.”

Michael Di Yeso added, "MHEC's staff has over 300 years of collective experience in understanding the needs of those who buy. This is the team that supports our members. Their experience, training, and passion is what distinguishes us when it comes to sourcing products and services, bidding contracts, and delivering service. Our research led us to offer i-buy, but it also told us that service is our number one attribute. And that's not going to change."

A training video, a PDF with a list of steps, and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are available on the mhec.net website.

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MHEC is a not-for-profit Group Purchasing Organization. The organization was created in 1977 as the Massachusetts Higher Education Consortium to provide purchasing contracts for the state's higher education systems. Its membership reach has expanded to include any not-for-profit organization with an educational component located in the six New England states. For this reason, the organization now identifies itself as MHEC to eliminate confusion over its regional coverage and the additional sectors beyond higher ed such as K-12, Municipalities (Cities and Towns), and Libraries.