

House Committee on Consumer Protection and Government Efficiency, HB 3360

Chair and members of the Committee,

My name is Gary Weeks and I am here in support of HB 3360 as amended with new language

As some of you know, I spent 31 years in Oregon state government, serving as the director of four different state agencies. In my retirement, I am serving as the Chair of the Oregon Student Access Commission, a small agency that distributes state funded grants and privately funded scholarships to students attending postsecondary education.

In my experience managing state agencies, I have found that all agencies, but especially small to medium sized agencies, struggle with the challenges of identifying the appropriate technology solutions to meet their needs and, subsequently, procuring and installing those solutions. Smaller agencies rarely have the trained and experienced staff needed to assess technology needs, determine the best solution and then acquire or develop a technology solution in the most efficient and cost effective manner.

As a result, we have seen many examples of agencies acquiring or developing the wrong technology or the wrong hardware to address their needs. Making the wrong decisions on much needed technology is costly to any organization, but particularly so for smaller agencies, as evidenced by the widely published misfortunes of the Board of Accountancy.

I can tell you as the Chair of the Oregon Student Access Commission, we are in need of significant improvements in the agency's aging technology. OSAC is an agency with approximately 28 FTE which distributes over \$100 million each biennium to thousands of students attending colleges and universities throughout the state. The growth in applications in recent years and the growth in both the public and private programs is putting great stress on our existing system. While we have a dedicated and hardworking staff, we do not have the expertise to manage the design, acquisition, implementation and project management of a new system. The Governor has wisely included in his budget an amount that will permit the agency to begin the initial steps of moving to new technology.

Based on my experience in state government, I believe that it is imperative for the state to create a shared technology resource group within DAS to assist agencies in: (1) defining technology needs and the consequences of inaction; (2) assessing the alternative service or product solutions; (3) determining whether the solutions are best achieved by using dedicated state staff or private sector contractors and (4) supporting and overseeing the acquisition, development and implementation of any new technology solution through competent architecture and project management.

This is not a new model for DAS since the agency has for many years been successfully delivering services to small agencies in the form of accounting, payroll, human resources and

other services. The Oregon Student Access Commission now uses many of the shared serves from DAS.

Staffing for an Office of Shared Technology Services could come from existing IT staff now in state government. Staff in this office would need continuous training and education to assure the most informed and up-to-date cadre of technology professionals. With the right group of technology specialists available, agencies could save substantially over the historic pattern of contracting out decisions relating to needs assessment, product selection, acquisition, development and project management. Savings achieved through effective use of a shared technology services office would cover the cost of replacing some IT staff that move from agencies to the Shared Technology Services group.

For these reasons, I urge your support for legislation that establishes this resource for agencies and gives the state the best opportunity to make good decisions on the difficult technology challenges that we will continue to face in the years ahead.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration and I will be happy to answer and questions.