

Dear Chair and Members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for SB0982, a bill that will significantly accelerate the process of modernizing our State's Information Technology (IT) systems through adopting a modern digital services approach. As our world continues to evolve rapidly, the need for agile, efficient, and user-centric IT solutions has never been more critical, especially in civic systems that are used by all constituents from disparate socioeconomic backgrounds. The adoption of a modern digital services model is not just an upgrade; it's a transformational shift that promises to redefine how we deliver citizen services, engage with stakeholders, and achieve our collective objectives.

The existing process has been hampered by lack of continuity and consistent strategic planning, disparate priorities, and layers of bureaucratic oversight by entities that are far removed from the actual modernization work that needs to be addressed. Key provisions of SB0982 such as modifying the statutory responsibilities of the Secretary of Information Technology, exempting IT modernization project procurements from Board of Public Works (BPW) approval under certain conditions, and establishing the Information Technology Investment Fund within DoIT to pay for legacy system assessments and replacements with requisite oversight, will significantly unlock momentum to address the grave state of IT in our State.

The digital services approach centers on leveraging the latest technologies and methodologies to create more responsive, accessible, and secure IT environments. By embracing cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and mobile technologies, we can significantly enhance our operational efficiency and provide superior service to our users. This approach also emphasizes the importance of user experience (UX) design, ensuring that digital services are intuitive, reliable, and accessible to all, including those with disabilities. SB0982 would enable the State to be able to procure from vendors who are able to work in a more adaptive, iterative, co-creative way than the current approach, which has led to long cost overruns and lack of continuity due to scope changes.

One of the key benefits of modernizing our IT through digital services is the potential for improved data management and analytics capabilities. With advanced data analysis tools, we can gain deeper insights into our operations, customer behaviors, and market trends. This will enable us to make informed decisions, identify new opportunities, and anticipate challenges more effectively. There are new technical innovations that have arisen in just the past 12 months such as AI-enabled code generators and new techniques for encapsulation that should be adopted as part of the modernization process. However these approaches should be adopted incrementally in smaller projects, which SB0982 would advance.

Moreover, the digital services model supports a culture of continuous improvement and innovation. By adopting agile development practices and fostering a collaborative environment, we can iteratively improve our services, responding quickly to user feedback and changing requirements. This approach not only accelerates the development cycle but also ensures that our digital services remain relevant and valuable over time. A more agile approach to procurement and contracting smaller, "bite-sized" smart contracts would greatly reduce both the cost and time-to-adoption cycles for large scale legacy systems.

Security is another cornerstone of the digital services approach. As cyber threats continue to evolve, it is imperative that our IT systems are built with robust security measures from the ground up. By prioritizing security in every aspect of our digital services, we can protect sensitive information, maintain user trust, and comply with regulatory requirements.

To realize these benefits, it is essential that we invest in the necessary resources, including talent, technology, and training. We must also foster a culture that embraces change, encourages experimentation, and rewards innovation. This will require strong leadership, clear vision, and a commitment to excellence from all levels of our organization.

In conclusion, the modernization of our IT through a digital services approach is a strategic imperative that will position us for success in the digital age. It promises to enhance our efficiency, improve service delivery, and drive innovation. I urge all stakeholders to support this transformative journey by supporting SB0982, as we work together to build a more agile, responsive, and user-focused IT environment.

Thank you for considering this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Jacob Hsu

Chairman

Just Economy