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Executive Director

August 1, 2014

The Honorable Ken Cooley
Assemblymember
State Capitol, Room 2188
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SUPPORT FOR ASSEMBLY BILL 2523

Dear Assemblymember Cooley:

The Little Hoover Commission supports Assembly Bill 2523, the measure you have authored that would take steps toward installing a permanent team of senior consulting information technology (IT) experts within the Department of Technology to serve as advisors for other state agencies that are developing and deploying large technology projects.

In its 2008 report, *A New Legacy System: Using Technology to Drive Performance*, the Commission found the state continued to approach technology planning in a decentralized manner that defied attempts to capture the full potential of the state's investments. Additionally, the Commission found the state's technology culture to be veiled in a general fear both of another big system failure and repeating the Oracle disaster of the 1990s. In order to overcome the cultural fear of investing in technology and catch up with advancements made by other states to use data to drive performance, the Commission issued a series of recommendations aimed at empowering the state's chief information officer to consolidate IT tools and resources and to help other state agencies invest responsibly in large scale technology projects. The Commission, too, saw the need for the formation of a statewide project management team under the office of the State Chief Information Officer.

Though many of the Commission's recommendations were implemented in the Governor's 2009 IT Reorganization Plan, the state has yet to form a consulting team of information technology experts, such as the one proposed in Assembly Bill 2523. The Commission believes the creation of a dedicated IT project management team would ultimately help agencies and department leaders use state resources most efficiently by reducing reliance on costly information technology consultants, while at the same time creating a centralized unit to capture and share best practices across department silos. Additionally, the existence of such a team would ensure more consistent leadership through the inevitable turnover that occurs while rolling out lengthy technology projects.

Assembly Bill 2523 would implement the Commission's recommendation and as a result, the Commission supports this measure. As the bill moves through the legislative process, I am available to write letters to legislators on behalf of the Commission urging aye votes. If you have any questions about the Commission's previous findings and recommendations, or if I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Carole D'Elia
Executive Director

c: Commissioners, Little Hoover Commission