

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY**

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SUBJECT: STATE GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS OFFICER TESTIMONY

Dear Commission Membership,

I look forward to the opportunity to provide testimony to the Commission on June 26th 2014. Below you will find a brief summation of my comments and answers to questions provided by the Little Hoover Commission staff.

Overview of the responsibilities of the State Geographic Information Officer:

The Geographic Information Officer of the State of California is responsible for providing leadership and strategic direction for the State's GIS (Geographic Information Systems) program. These responsibilities range from policy and standards development and project approvals to operating and maintaining the State's Spatial Data Infrastructure. The State GIO occupies the role of Deputy Director, and is part of the State Chief Information Officer's Executive team.

State's GIS Program:

Most data developed by government has one key commonality; location. GIS or Geographic Information Systems is the single most transformative and important technology that governments can use to analyze and understand complex relationships. GIS has been used in many facets of California state government for the past 30 years. Currently, GIS is leveraged in over 90 State of California organizations. These organizations vary from Fish and Wildlife to the Board of Equalization. The technology can be applied to any organization that manages location based data.

The GIO (Geographic Information Officer) plays a unique key role in the coordination of these programs. Recognizing the proliferation of GIS, and the potential for duplicative efforts, the GIO developed GIS infrastructure, housed within the State's Data Center, to reduce costs and increase efficiency in the use of GIS technology.

An aspect of this infrastructure is the State of California Geoportal. The Geoportal is a place for citizens and organizations to search discover and use geographic information resources developed by local, state and federal partners. It is an articulation of the State's geographic data portfolio. By developing this portal, the GIO has provided the State with a capability to document and manage its investment in geographic data development; giving us the opportunity to identify data duplication and data development opportunities to further State goals and initiatives.

Another important component of this infrastructure is our ability to create and disseminate geographic information on the web. GIS over the years has developed from software that is used on a desktop computer, to software deliver over the web. The GIO has developed a capability for all of State government to leverage. This capability provides partner organizations the ability to, at a drastically reduced cost; provide access to important geographic datasets. By doing so, information sharing is streamlined and access to information to citizens and government alike is increased.

Current/Recent GIS Partnerships and Initiatives:

The GIO is actively engage in many initiatives across the State. Below is a high-level summary of some of our current activities:

Application Development

- We are developing a regional planning tool that will allow city and county organizations to submit their general planning documentation. This aids in the support of the Governor's EGRP (Environment Goals Regulations and Policy report).
- We developed a dashboard to help policy makers and emergency managers understand the localized severity of the drought conditions in California.
- We have developed an application for the Governor's Office of Economic Development that will encourage business development in California in high poverty and high unemployment areas of the State. The application determines if business qualify for special incentives that want to start up or expand in these types of areas.
- We are developing an application for the EB-5 program at the Governor's Office of Economic Development (<http://business.ca.gov/Programs/EB5Program.aspx>). This application helps Go-Biz quickly determine if foreign investors can qualify for a special visa to work in the US. The application will save hundreds of hours a week in application processing and will bring increased efficiency to the EB-5 program element at Go-BIZ

Data Partnerships

- Acquiring and compiling property level data from all 58 counties in California for use by both government and citizen. This data is important to many aspect of government operation. This will be the first time that parcel/property level data has been made available statewide.
- The GIO continues to interface with local, state, federal and private sectors partners on data needs and issues. As mentioned before, the State Geoportal provides a mechanism for us to engage partners and catalog various geographic datasets from our partnering organizations. This help us to provide a comprehensive understanding of the State's investment in geographic data development, and facilitates a way for individuals and organizations to access this important resource.

Additional Questions and Response:

To date, where and how has your office used health indicators, and what other opportunities, if any, do you envision for incorporating health data into geographic mapping applications in the future?

Currently, my office has incorporated health indicators into the development of the General Plan Guideline Tool being developed for the Governor's Office of Planning and Research. We incorporated health indicators as part of the overall planning process. Health indicators are an integral part of urban and regional planning. We are taking health statistics and indicators related to crime, obesity rates, access to food, as well as walkability of regions, clean air etc... these elements are part of the overall view that planners need to build the future urban landscapes of California. These datasets are geographic and we are positioned well to help support this effort.

GIS plays a major role in public health. With the increasing role of health information systems in administering public health policy and plans, GIS plays a key role in displaying and analyzing health related information. GIS can be used for siting hospital or clinics based on demographic needs. GIS can be applied for disease surveillance and containment. The opportunities are endless on how GIS can support an organization that service to promote and sustain the health of a community.

How does GIS fit into the state's information technology strategic planning efforts?

GIS fits into this strategy well. Information sharing and collaboration is at the core of many strategic planning efforts in the State of California. GIS is providing ways for organizations to share and collaborate in ways never before leveraged. By developing the State Geoportal and providing an infrastructure to share, manage and access vast amounts of relevant data content, the State is more prepared to meet the strategic goals set by our leaders.

What obstacles or challenges are there for developing a larger presence at the state?

Many of the barriers to the growth of GIS have been removed with the development of the Office of the GIO, but there still remain some road blocks in the way. Many of these obstacles can be overcome with education and outreach. Our ability to grow the State's GIS program is contingent on our ability to engage higher levels of leadership to educate and illustrate the benefits and power of this technology.

Funding for the statewide program is another key to continued success. A consistent and reliable funding stream to support the State's program is at the heart of the continued success of our efforts. The technology has been proven; we need to next focus on how we can sustain it into the future.

Sincerely,

Scott Gregory
Deputy Director – GIS
State Geographic Information Officer