

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5194

As Passed Senate, March 12, 1999

Title: An act relating to information technology management in state government.

Brief Description: Changing information technology management provisions.

Sponsors: Senators Brown, Rossi, Fraser, Finkbeiner, Gardner and Winsley; by request of Department of Information Services.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Energy, Technology & Telecommunications: 1/28/99, 2/11/99 [DP]. Passed Senate, 3/12/99, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, TECHNOLOGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Brown, Chair; Fairley, Fraser, Hochstatter, Roach and Rossi.

Staff: Karen Kirkpatrick (786-7403)

Background: The Information Services Board (ISB) is the 12-member body charged with setting policy regarding information technology (IT) resources for state agencies. Its staff support comes from the Department of Information Services (DIS).

In January 1998, ISB directed agencies to adopt the portfolio management system for their IT resources. Under this system, each agency's IT resources, such as computers, computer systems, and telecommunications equipment, are managed as one would manage other investments such as real estate or stocks. Each proposed investment is examined in the context of the agency's current and planned investments as well as in the context of the state's overall IT holdings. DIS' enabling statute reflects the former IT management structure which focused on individual agencies' acquisition plans.

The DIS enabling statute also contains a limitation on the total number of deputy and assistant directors. DIS is one of only two cabinet-level agencies with such a restriction in its enabling statute. This restriction was placed in statute in 1987 when DIS was created to prevent proliferation of deputy and assistant directors during the consolidation of several service centers into the new department. Since that time, DIS services and responsibilities have expanded as the use of technology has increased. It has been suggested that this provision has become inconsistent with the development of the agency.

The department is requesting this legislation to bring its enabling statute into conformance with current policies and practices and to give the director more flexibility to organize and administer the agency.

Summary of Bill: A definition for "information technology portfolio" is added. References to "acquisition plans," "oversight committees" and other outdated language are replaced by terms such as "information technology portfolios" and "advisory board."

A provision requiring approval of project plans by the director of the agency, and the directors of financial management and DIS is deleted.

Agencies are directed to develop IT portfolios and to consider those portfolios when making decisions about IT investments. Requirements for review of agency IT budget requests are amended by requiring criteria consistent with the portfolio system.

A provision limiting the department to a total of four deputy and assistant directors is deleted.

Other clarifying and technical changes are made.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This bill will move the state to a new system of managing information technology assets, one that better considers the context in which agencies operate. The portfolio management approach actively manages risks while moving forward with new technology purchases because it reviews all proposals within the context of an agency's business needs, current holdings, and the larger state holdings and plans.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Rosemary Williamson, GTE; Paul Taylor, DIS (pro).