Information Technology and the Role of the Joint Technology Committee
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Information technology (IT) is used by every state agency to make operations more efficient and services more widely available to the citizens of Colorado. Along with other day-to-day expenses of state government, expenses related to IT are paid through the capital construction and operating budget in the state's annual budget bill.

This *issue brief* outlines the types of projects and expenses related to IT, the role of the Joint Technology Committee (JTC) in overseeing the approval and implementation of IT budget requests, and recent major IT projects. Section 2-3-1701, C.R.S. defines the term "information technology" for purposes of the work of the JTC to mean technology, infrastructure, equipment, systems, or software that controls, displays, switches, interchanges, transmits and receives data or information, including audio, video, graphics, and text.

Operating budget requests related to the ongoing costs associated with the maintenance of IT systems are reviewed and prioritized by the Joint Budget Committee (JBC). IT operations for state agencies are managed by the Governor's Office of Information Technology (OIT). According to Section 2-3-1701 (8), C.R.S., an information technology budget request is a budget request from a state agency or state institution of higher education for the installation, development, maintenance, or upgrade of information technology, including the purchase of services from the office. They do not include budget requests that are primarily operational or requests

where the funding will be used to modify state staffing levels.[1]

Pursuant to Joint Rule 45, the JTC is responsible for reviewing state agency IT capital budget requests with a total project cost of $500,000 or more, regardless of the source of funds, and higher education IT capital budget requests with a total state-funded cost of $500,000 or more. Pursuant to Section 24-75-303, C.R.S., a capital construction appropriation remains available to an agency for expenditure or encumbrance for a period of three years.

Joint Technology Committee

The JTC is charged with reviewing major IT projects, prioritizing IT capital budget requests, forecasting the state's need for future IT budget requests, and reviewing IT legislation. Established in 2013 and pursuant to Section 2-3-1702, C.R.S., the JTC is a statutory, six-member committee of the Colorado Senate and House of Representatives. Prior to FY 2014-15, IT capital budget requests were considered capital construction budget requests and were reviewed by the Capital Development Committee. Starting in FY 2015-16, the JTC began reviewing all major IT capital budget requests. The committee is required to meet at least once a year to consider IT capital budget requests and other IT issues. The JTC reports recommendations, prioritization, findings, and comments regarding IT capital budget requests to the JBC for inclusion in the capital

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[1]Section 2-3-1701 (8), C.R.S.

construction section of the state's annual budget bill (the Long Bill). The JBC may also seek the JTC's review of any IT operating budget request.

Members of the JTC. The JTC consists of three members of the Senate and three members of the House of Representatives. Two Senate members are chosen by the Senate President and one by the Senate Minority Leader. Two of the House members are appointed by the Speaker of the House and one by the House Minority Leader. Members of the JTC must be appointed after the general election, but prior to the convening of the General Assembly. The committee elects a chair and vice-chair, one from the House and one from the Senate, both of whom serve for the first regular session. They switch roles for the second session.

Committee oversight. The JTC has oversight responsibility for OIT, which includes reviewing the state of information technology, any general information technology needs, and any anticipated short-term or long-term changes for information technology. This oversight does not include interference with the general responsibilities of OIT.

Other JTC oversight responsibilities include:

- the Chief Information Security Officer and his or her duties;
- review of the actions of the Statewide Internet Portal Authority; and
- IT strategy through the review of state agency IT plans.[2]

Reporting requirements. The JTC is required to submit a written report on the committee's findings and recommendations to the JBC by the first day of each regular legislative session. The report may include recommended legislation, any other information pertaining to approved IT capital budget requests, and a report on the status of multi-year IT projects.

Recent Major IT Projects

The JTC has approved major IT projects since FY 2015-16. Recent examples of major IT projects are listed below.

Payroll modernization. The state of Colorado currently uses the Colorado Personnel Payroll System (CPPS) to pay state employees. This system is more than 35 years old and based on COOBOL mainframe technology. The Colorado Department of Personnel Administration (DPA) and the Governor's Office of Information technology (OIT) were appropriated $41.6 million from FY 2014-15 through FY 2109-20 to replace CPPS and to eliminate or consolidate other human resources systems across state agencies though the HRWorks project. However, in 2020, the General Assembly denied a request from the department for additional funding for the project, and the project was cancelled without any new systems having been implemented. For FY 2022-23, DPA received $6 million for the first phase of a projected $53 million project to implement a new, modernized payroll system.

Colorado Rural Connectivity Program. The Governor's Office of eHealth Innovation (OeHI) received $17.5 million in state and federal funding in FY 2021-22 and FY 2022-23 for the Colorado Rural Connectivity Program. The program will increase rural health care providers' access to health information, analytics, and technical support to improve the health and safety of rural communities.

Reduction of technical debt. For FY 2022-23, OIT was appropriated $53.3 million for phase one of a project to begin reducing the state's estimated $465 million in technical debt. Technical debt is defined as IT applications and software that are inefficient or ineffective. Technical debt leads to increased security risks, as well as higher costs to maintain legacy systems. These higher costs and challenges often result from outdated coding language and staff retirements. OIT has requested $22.7 million for FY 2023-24 as year two of funding to address technical debt.

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[2]Section 2-3-1704, C.R.S.