



KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

January 25, 2011

Senator Jean Schodorf, Chairwoman
Senate Education Committee
Statehouse, Room 236-E
Topeka, KS 66612

Senator Anthony Hensley, Ranking Member
Senate Education Committee
Statehouse, Room 345-S
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Chairwoman Schodorf and Ranking Member Hensley:

On behalf of the Kansas Board of Regents and the six state universities, I write to you in support of SB 8, legislation that would amend statutes to raise the dollar threshold that currently triggers approval from the State Chief Information Technology Officer (CITO) from \$250,000 to \$1,000,000 and would eliminate infrastructure projects from the definition of Information Technology Project. Currently, state university projects undertaken above the \$250,000 level must be approved by the CITO, a process that was created 12 years ago. Today, significant changes in technology costs have made this an extremely low threshold for projects. This proposed change would increase efficiency by reducing the reporting burden and staff costs/overhead.

The current reporting and approval process was established 12 years ago primarily for other state agencies as a planning and budgeting process by which they are requesting a project budget and then held accountable for reporting on the use of those funds. The state universities do not request specific project funding but are required to follow the same process, and the state universities move at a very different pace than the current CITO approval process allows. The amount of time it takes to go through this process does not blend well with the agility necessary to implement a project, particularly when an increasing number of projects include some element of leverage and negotiations with a vendor. Since this legislation was passed 12 years ago, all of the state universities have developed capable Information Technology (IT) and telecommunications support groups who are capable of routinely handling infrastructure projects. In the last 12 years, technology costs have changed, the complexity of IT has changed, making \$250,000 an extremely low threshold for enterprise scale projects. In addition, the \$250,000 threshold is a one-size-fits-all figure intended to cover everything from a university to the Kansas Board of Cosmetology. A \$250,000 undertaking is a major effort for the Cosmetology Board but a very modest initiative for a state university. In addition, the planning process methodology, based on 15-year old frameworks for application development, is inappropriate for infrastructure projects and adds considerable unproductive overhead to otherwise straightforward, routine IT and telecommunication activities. Reducing the project

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reporting burden (and staff cost/overhead of generating those reports) to the state results in increased efficiencies and is consistent with the principles embodied in block grants and decentralized purchasing authority.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 8.

Sincerely,

Dr. Andy Tompkins
President & CEO