Campaign Finance/Lobby Disclosure System Upgrade

Colorado General Assembly

Joint Technology Committee (JTC)

September 9, 2021

Statutory Mandate/Authority

Campaign Finance

- Section 1-45-109 (5), (6), C.R.S.
- Current System Release: 2010
- System Developer: External Vendor
- System Cost: $1.4 million
- Current System Users: 5,000*
    *varies by election year

Lobby

- 24-6-303 (6.3), (7) C.R.S.
- Current System Release: 2002
- System Developer: Internal CDOS IT Resources
- System Cost: N/A
- Current System Users: 800

Guiding System/Program Goals

- Provide increased transparency into campaign finance and lobbying activities in Colorado
- Provide an intuitive and efficient system for filers (User Interface)
- Provide the public with easily extractable information in the form of canned and customizable reports
- Meet statutory obligations in the most cost effective and efficient manner possible

Why a New System?

- Age of Current Systems
  - Contemporary system filers, administrators, and consumers of system information demand and deserve modernized functionality, search capabilities, and system interfaces

- Risk of Obsolescence
  - Possibility of vendor sunsetting current system and system support

- Increasing Support and Maintenance Costs
  - Legacy systems require a significant maintenance investment and ongoing annual costs
  - Obsolete or unsupported technical architecture design and components

- No current system linkage between campaign finance and lobbying data

Key gaps a new system can fill

- Improve the user experience for filers
  - Streamline reporting, eliminate redundancies, improve proactive communication/filing reminders
- Close the "follow the money" circle between lobbying activities and campaign finance
  - Public can identify and trace money spent by individuals and groups throughout the entire political process
- Improve data accessibility
  - Allow for full system extracts and "bulk" data downloads in a variety of contemporary formats
- Harmonize reporting systems
  - Both systems share similar users and consumers of information; a streamlined and consistent system interface would allow users to enter and extract data from both programs more efficiently
- Leverage modern technology
  - App interfaces, API possibilities for 3rd party reporting software, ADA compliance, mobile optimization

Next Steps

- User Feedback/Buy-In
    - Focus groups
    - Best practices from other states/jurisdictions

- Secure Funding
    - Current campaign finance system support contract expires in 2024

- Initiate RFP Process
    - Limited/committed Internal IT resources
    - Take advantage of commercially available systems/development work already done in other states/jurisdictions (COTS)