



Colorado  
**Secretary of State**

# Combined Money-in-Politics System

Colorado Department of State

Presentation to the Joint Technology Committee (JTC)

January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022



# Statutory Authority

## Campaign Finance

- Section 1-45-109 (5), (6), C.R.S.
- System Initially Designed: 2009
- 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.
- System Initially Designed: 2002
- System Developer: Internal CDOS IT Resources
- System Cost: N/A
- Current System Users: 800



# Overview of request

- Modernize and combine campaign finance and lobby systems into one comprehensive platform
- No change in state law / policy to campaign finance, lobby disclosure
- General Fund request of \$1.5m
  - Lobby / Campaign Finance Fees insufficient to fund project
- Work with external vendor, ideally a COTS solution
- Project timeline: range of 13-22 months (inclusive of RFP)



## 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



## Goals of a modernized system:

- Increased **transparency** into campaign finance and lobbying activities in Colorado by combining disclosures into one platform
- Provide better **user interface and experience** for all filers
- Enhance systems to provide **better experience** on mobile devices and tablets
- Provide the public with **greater access** to information in the form of canned and customizable reports
- Meet statutory obligations in the most **cost effective** and **efficient** manner possible



## 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 3<sup>rd</sup> party reporting software, ADA compliance, mobile optimization



## Next Steps

- **Secure Funding**
  - Current campaign finance system support contract expires in 2024
  - Department is supportive of Capital Construction Fund / IT Capital legislative option (24-75-301, CRS)
- **User Feedback**
  - Focus groups with various users
  - Best practices from other states/jurisdictions
- **Initiate RFP Process**
  - Take advantage of commercially available systems/development work already done in other states/jurisdictions (COTS)



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# Questions?

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