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Chief Information Technology Officer – Executive Branch
Summary of Quarterly IT Projects

Joint Committee on Information Technology
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Jim Clark
Secretary, Kansas Department of Administration/Interim CITO

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to appear before the committee. I am Jim Clark, Secretary of the Department of Administration. I've been in that position with the state for about 15 months now. As you all know, recently I have taken on the role of Interim Chief Information Technology Officer to assist the Office of Information Technology Services during this period of transition. So it's a pleasure to be here today to meet with you to discuss where OITS stands today, and the direction it is heading.

Before I came to work for the state in August 2013, I was enjoying playing golf and spending time with my grandkids. Prior to retirement, I was CIO at Westar Energy, in charge of their IT. And in that capacity, I faced a number of IT challenges. So I am not unappreciative of the many obstacles faced by OITS, nor do I want to fail to recognize the great work done by the diligent and talented staff who work there, and who work at all the agencies.

I can attest that two recent projects directly affecting the KDOA were performed by OITS with great success. The first is our new website, developed last winter and made public this past April. OITS partnered with content managers in our agency to develop our new site, and we couldn't be much happier with the result.

Secondly, OITS worked with our staff to redesign KanView, the state's statutorily mandated transparency website. That new version of the site - kanview.ks.gov - went live on Monday. The OITS staff worked closely with technicians from other agencies to make available data that the public has not really had easy access to heretofore.

So there is good work being done at OITS. I've seen it. But there is more work to be done. And there are some fundamental issues that need to be dealt with to make IT operate more smoothly and efficiently throughout the state.

Probably the issue that has received the most attention since I came to KDOA is the location of OITS' data centers in the Landon and Eisenhower buildings. Almost since my first day on the job, I've been seeking a safe, secure environment in which to house those data centers. The new location of those data centers has not been finalized, but you can rest assured we are not going to delay resolving that issue.

As you are well aware, I'm sure, one of the biggest challenges OITS has been facing is in the area of financial management and billing. The first step in the solution to that issue was to move the accounting and budget functions into the KDOA Office of Financial Management under the direction of Pam Fink. This move provides broader support and guidance in the day to day accounting operations for OITS as well as assistance with budget preparation and preparing the IT section of the Statewide Cost Allocation Plan.

The next steps for this area are to backfill other accounting vacancies. The first position to be filled was the Director of Finance. Steven Green, a recent retiree from KU brings many years of financial and rate management to the team. There are still a couple of vacancies to fill in the rate analysis and accounts receivable section.

With the finance staff in place, a thorough cost center and rate analysis will be the next steps in providing agencies with the necessary transparency of the rates for services provided by the OITS. Timely and accurate billings will also be a result of the additional staff and the merger of this team with the exisitng accounting and budget teams within the KDOA Office of Financial Management.

Now, as is typical in a quarterly report, I can share with you the status of OITS' active projects.

Now, one last question before I conclude is the will of the committee when it comes to quarterly reports. ITEC Policy 2500 requires that a full project status report be given to the Joint Committee every quarter for projects with a total cost of more than $250,000. The report is enormous in length – between 500 and 700 pages.

There are details contained within the LPA section of the report dealing with IT security that cannot be made public. If we were to forward that report, it would be necessary for us to redact a large amount of that section.

An option that I recommend is for the Joint Committee to use the quarterly summary provided by OITS, which is only about 80 pages in length and excludes sensitive material. The summary is available online to the public at http://oits.ks.gov/docs/default-source/kitodocumentlibrary/QR-Summaries/july_sept-2014.pdf?sfvrsn=0 .

A second option would be for copies of the full report to be made available to members of the committee in an executive session or upon their request, with redactions. That would save paper and put it in the hands of only those who really desire to see the full report.

I will await the will of the committee regarding quarterly reports, and I thank you for this opportunity to speak this morning.