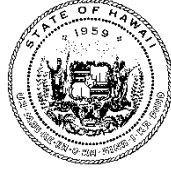


**SB 1285**

**EDT**

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR



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Comptroller

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DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING  
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TESTIMONY  
OF  
BRUCE A. COPPA, COMPTROLLER  
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES  
TO THE  
COMMITTEE ON  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY  
ON  
February 9, 2011

S.B. 1285

RELATING TO CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

Chair Fukunaga and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on S.B. 1285.

The Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) strongly supports S.B. 1285.

DAGS has an immediate and pressing need to upgrade its legacy systems and hardware to ensure reliable, efficient, and effective technology solutions for State agencies and our citizens through transparency in the access to government records and services. To accomplish this upgrade, tens of millions of dollars are needed and the traditional financing source of general fund appropriations are unrealistic and archaic in today's environments.

Currently, the State's accounting platform, the Financial Accounting Management Information System (FAMIS) is over 25 years old. Replacement has been estimated at \$50

million dollars. Another alternative would be to implement an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) integrated system to provide interfaces between all programs such as budget, general ledger, personnel, and payroll to eliminate the redundancy of data that now exists with our incompatible systems. The ERP solution will cost millions of dollars to purchase and implement and perhaps be equal to or greater than the FAMIS replacement cost of \$50 million. With the State facing an \$800 million deficit in the upcoming biennium, the funding for these system replacements cannot be from general funds. The only viable alternative would be to treat it as a capital project and utilize general obligation bond financing.

Is this approach reasonable? Yes, and it is the current practice in private industry where legacy system replacement is treated as a capital project for three reasons. First, the life of the asset or system. Because of the extensive effort required to develop and implement applications including changes in corporate culture (doing things differently), corporations utilize these systems for a minimum of 10 years. Secondly, because of its life, it is treated as a depreciable asset, like a building. Lastly, these projects are funded with long term borrowings or possibly equity capital.

Into the long term, we must begin to think about how the CIO will implement the IT strategic plan. It would be tragic to see the demise of the implementation of the IT strategic plan and the CIO by the CIO's failure to implement the IT strategic plan because the required funding to purchase the hardware, software, and other resources (i.e. consultants) were not available. That will happen like the countless other general funded IT initiatives (i.e. alternate data center) which have failed due to a lack of funding. S.B. 1285 is the financing vehicle to overcome the funding road blocks and elevate the State's IT capacity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

**Date:** 02/09/2011

**Committee:** Senate Economic  
Development and Technology

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Kathryn Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** SB 1285 RELATING TO CAPITAL INVESTMENTS.

**Purpose of Bill:** Amends chapter 37, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to include agency-wide technology and computer systems with an estimated useful life of greater than seven years as capital investments to allow all costs to be financed with bond funds and depreciated as capital investments.

**Department's Position:** The Department **supports** this bill. Passage of this measure would clarify the Legislature's support of the concept of bond financing of large technology and computer system projects and advance discussion on the need to replace the Department's Financial Management System (FMS).

The Department needs to upgrade, improve, or replace its technology and computer systems infrastructure to become more efficient and productive. However, the cost of large-scale new technology or computer systems is prohibitively expensive when trying to budget for the project within a biennium budget, even with phased implementation. A large-scale project designed to have a useful life of multiple years should be able to be funded as a capital investment over a longer period of time. For example, the Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) uses FAMIS, which is approximately 20 years old. The DOE is currently using FMS, which is also approximately 20 years old, and other systems that are based on antiquated technologies. Replacement of these systems would result in improved efficiencies, greater accountability and transparency in the use of public funds, and improved reporting for

decision makers and stakeholders at all levels.

The development and implementation of large information systems is costly but essential to provide efficient and accurate program execution. Allowing the cost of such systems to be classified as capital investment costs is realistic and recognizes their long-term importance to state agencies. The Department has been pro-active in planning for the replacement of its financial management systems, and now has a request for proposal (RFP) ready to proceed. However, the main road block to proceeding is funding.

It should be noted that this concept was supported in the January 2010 report of the Task Force on Reinventing Government, which stated on page 12, "We do strongly recommend, however, that investments in technology should be considered as capital improvements by the executive and legislative branches. The corporate sector regularly capitalizes such purchases, and government would do well to do the same."