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Subject: Gear committee

Chad and Marcia

Before I leave for Jamaica I just wanted to kind of put what I have seen and heard in perspective. There are lots of "nits and lice" issues out there in IT that are annoying and loudly discussed. While they are nice (and easy) to talk about they actually keep folks from talking about the really big issues where there real money at and the efficacy of government is at stake.

As I see it right now there are four major issues we need to attack. They are not easy but they are doable if we just go straight at them. They are:

1. Cost Reimbursement – CIO is very reluctant to talk in any detail about this subject. I suspect the reason is that this is an awful mess that will be embarrassing when it is laid out in detail. I was pleasantly and nicely stonewalled when I tried to get into it with Jim Bryant. There are signs that this is a very large "slush fund" that heretofore has escaped scrutiny. We need to keep after this until we understand it, until it is completely transparent and until it is perceived as "fair and equitable" by customers and providers. The CIO office needs to understand that they cannot just charge what they want in order to maintain their current staff, their favorite toys and their pet projects.

2. SCEIS - This project is way behind schedule and the costs are quite high and likely to go higher. There are big dollars that will not be needed to maintain and operate the old systems as they are replaced. These folks (agencies and CIO shop) are not stupid. They have already begun to "recast" those operating dollars so that the numbers that are "saved" will become only a fraction of the money that is actually being paid now. The Governor needs oversight of this project and we need how to figure out how to get that oversight.

3. Telecommunications (TC) – This is a very large part of the problem and the mindset, statute and rules are from another era. In today's environment we need to be smart enough to figure out when it makes sense to foster competition and when it makes sense to centralize or consolidate. Agency CIO's estimate a 20% to 40% saving if they are allowed to compete their requirements in the open market. While this is undoubtedly high there is merit to their arguments. TC will increase in importance and ubiquity as time marches on and the cost saving for the savvy buyer will significant. We cannot have a CIO shop that wants all power and authority in their hands. Remember from Poly Sci 101 "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely".

4. Relationships and Communications between State CIO and Agency CIO's – There is

almost a total breakdown in communications and trust between the State CIO and large Data center user agency CIO's. I am not sure this can be fixed in the current environment without some real "head knocking" at all levels. But I can tell you from experience that technology is so complex and pervasive in today's management environment that cooperation is absolutely required. It may require changing players until we can find folks that can play nicely in the sandbox.

I will not get back on my soapbox but what we are seeing is a direct result of "management by committee" aka BCB.

Have a great day.

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