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STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

March 18, 2013

Ms. Mary H. Kiraly
9221 Aldershot Drive
Bethesda, MD 20817

Dear Ms. Kiraly:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the State Board of Elections FY 2014 Operating Budget Appropriation of $1.2 million for the purpose of planning for the proposed Optical Scan voting system.

The Optical Scan Voting System is a huge undertaking for the State, and I want to assure you that spending for the planning phase of the project will be done with the utmost care and oversight. Any agency conducting what is defined in statute as a "major" IT development project is required by law to complete a substantive planning phase before a request for proposals (RFP) may be issued. The planning phase for the Optical Scan system assumes specific tasks will be performed. These tasks not only prepare for the issuance of the RFP, but will also help the State to mitigate risks associated with a transition to a new voting system, once a vendor is chosen.

Five outside consultants are currently envisioned to be needed for this planning phase. Because of their unique, specialized skills, the average project management professional consultant costs between $200k and $275k per year. These professionals, plus the 5% required for the statutorily required oversight by the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) will be the costs that make up the majority of the $1.2 million appropriation. These consultants will be responsible for the following deliverables:

1) Initiation: Begin to identify and document the detailed needs and goals for the project. Identify stakeholders and project team.

2) Concept Development Phase: Determine project scope and update all planning documents for DoIT. Create an organization chart that includes all stakeholders and stakeholder groups affected by the project, and assign responsibilities.

3) Planning: Determine and document the requirements schedule, costs, quality standards, staffing management and duties, communications, risks, change control, and the major procurement phase that includes the development of the RFP and monitoring of project.

4)   Requirements Analysis: Create a formal statement describing the system requirements. Establish the test master plan. Execute the RFP process from RFP issuance for bids through contract award. Determine, document, and start to initiate all the other related procurement of products and services that will be required.

If you are interested in understanding more about the overall IT project planning process and its requirements, you may do so at http://doit.maryland.gov/SDLC/Pages/SDLCHome.aspx.

Language has been added to the budget by the House of Delegates expressing intent that funding for the full rollout of the Optical Scan Voting System be included in the Fiscal Year 2015 budget. The Senate Budget and Taxation Committee has concurred with this language, but the full Senate has not yet acted.

Thank you again for your letter regarding the FY 2014 appropriation for planning of the Optical Scan Voting System.

Sincerely,

T. Eloise Foster

T. Eloise Foster
Secretary

cc: Linda H. Lamone, State Administrator of Elections
        Stacia Cropper, Chief Operating Officer, Department of Information Technology