

February 17, 2020

RE: Office of Information Technology Services (OITS) in the State Budget

Dear Legislator:

As a constituent and a state employee in the Office of Information Technology Services (OITS) represented by the Public Employees Federation (PEF), I am concerned that the Governor, in his Executive Budget, seeks to allow for ITS “Comprehensive Technology Service Contracts.”

While the concept of streamlining the contracting process may initially sound appealing, one should carefully consider the details and potential long-term effects before agreeing to such a procedure. This is similar to the “design-build” process that has led to the loss of hundreds of skilled engineers at the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the use of over 1,450 consultants at that agency.

Currently, OITS has the 7th most consultants of all state agencies with 438 full-time equivalents. With spending at nearly \$84 million, this averages out to just shy of \$200,000 annually per consultant. These numbers will only increase if programs such as the comprehensive technology service contracts are allowed to move forward. A cost/benefit analysis should be mandated to ensure that any work done by consultants could not be done at the same or lower cost by state employees.

Instead of increasing the state’s reliance on costly consultants, we believe a more cost-effective option is to invest in the state workforce at OITS. Currently, there is a budget proposal (A.9500/S.7500 p. 411) to spend \$2 million at OITS towards achieving specific certifications that are not currently held by employees in sufficient quantity to meet the state’s needs. We must ensure that this money is properly spent and, if needed, increased to help meet the state’s IT needs with qualified, state-employed professionals.

Finally, having the same firm design and implement IT systems is bad public policy. As we have seen at DOT, many smaller, New York-based companies are excluded from the process and the contracts are awarded to a handful of national or international companies.

As my elected representative, I kindly ask that you work with the leadership in your house to **remove Part X of the Public Protection and General Government Article VII Budget Bill (A.9505/S.7505)** to allow the Governor to use comprehensive technology service contracts at OITS. Thank you for your time, attention and consideration of this very important issue.

Sincerely,
