

# memo

To: Speaker Shap Smith  
From: Sam Young  
CC: Cynthia Browning, Maida Townsend, Carolyn Branagan, Anne O'Brien, Alice Emmons, Donna Sweany  
Date: 4/16/2013  
Re: IT Committee Recommendations/Ideas

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Comments: **Short Overview**

Our committee has met for 4 weeks and has reviewed our current policies regarding IT projects in the state as well as what oversight is exercised by legislatures in other states.

It is interesting to note that between 1994 and 1996 the Vermont Legislature had a Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee (JITOC) which had some recommendations.

**Committee**

An ongoing IT Committee could be useful in either vetting and/or approving of projects outside of the Legislature, similar to the Joint Fiscal Committee or JTOC. With the projected expenditure for IT to be \$1B over the next five years it is certainly reasonable to consider this level of oversight

**Committee Structure**

**Standing Committee-** Give jurisdiction over IT oversight to an existing standing committee.

**Joint Legislative Committee-** Similar to JFC or JTOC it would make sense to have the members appropriations with jurisdiction over the DII Budgets and at least one additional member from each body.

**Committee including outside members-** Some states have a committee that includes members from each branch of government and members of the business community that have some expertise. Expertise in IT is something that is really lacking in the legislature.

**Powers of the Committee**

**Authority-** Should the committee have the ability to approve/disapprove of projects before they come to the legislature?

**Advisory-** Should the committee just give an advisory to the legislature about which projects should be included in the budget?

I think that in order to have some value and real power to this committee that it should have approval authority. Otherwise it will just be like the Legislative IT Committee where it has become nearly impossible to get a quorum.

**IT Book**

Create statutory language that creates a book of projects for the upcoming years so budget committees can prioritize which projects to fund.

**Leg Council/JFO Analysis**

To see if the current strategic plan complies with 3 V.S.A. § 2222 and issue a memo to DII instructing them what they need to do in order to bring it into compliance.

**Expertise for JFO**

Money should be made available either in the form of training for an existing JFO staff person or more likely outside consulting to provide expertise to the legislature. As has been already stated we have very little expertise inside the legislature. This was also a recommendation of the 1994 JITOC.

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## **Handbook of IT Questions**

Some good questions for committee members to ask when confronted with IT projects. Basically the first problem that legislators have in IT oversight is knowing what questions to ask.

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