

**Senate Government Operations**  
**Secretary of State Jim Condos Overview**

January 15, 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with an overview of two divisions of the Secretary of State's Office: OPR and Elections.

Most people do not know what the Secretary of State's office does beyond elections... and are surprised to learn that we provide so much value to VTers for a small agency.

As a former State Senator and chair of this Senate Government Operations committee, I fully understand and appreciate the important work within your jurisdiction.

As you know, we have many diverse responsibilities as an agency – four major divisions:

- **OPR**
- **Elections**
- **Corporations**
- **VSARA**

We have transformed the SoS office from an out-dated paper driven process to a modern digital environment – 2011, 0% on-line, 2018, +97% on-line.

This has allowed us to provide a more customer-oriented focus, with increased transparency and improved accuracy.

In addition, we have several other major programs:

- **Municipal Assistance** (Over 1200 calls per year)
- **Safe at Home** (Over 150 participants)
- **Temporary Officiants** (Over 1500 Participants)
- **APA Rules and Legislative Clerk**

And I am thankful we have worked together over the years to get to a point where we have some of the best systems in the country and **are looked upon as national leaders.**

I'm not just exaggerating when I say that:

- I am currently President of National Association of Secretaries of State
- And, Co-Chair of the CSG Overseas & Military Voting Initiative
- VT is also considered a leader and well ahead of the curve in the area of cybersecurity, specifically elections cybersecurity.
  - March 2018 – Testified to US Senate Select Committee on Intelligence
  - June 2018 – Testified before the US Senate Rules Committee

- VT OPR is a national model for right-sized regulation
  - VT was awarded a \$450K 3-year USDOL grant for its work, and
  - Asked to assist other states in doing things the VT way (NCSL/CSG)
- VT Elections earned the coveted #1 in the US spot in MIT's Elections Performance Index ranking this year. ( 2012 – 38<sup>th</sup>, 2014 – 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 - #1)
  - Things like ballot access, voter registration, and voting technology factor into that analysis and we scored well enough to be the best in the nation.
- VT State Archivist Tanya Marshall – was President of the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA)
- VT SoS rec'd COSA National Award for Archive Advocacy
- IACA Achievement Award - new on-line efficiency/paperless - Corps

I know that everyone on this committee has some familiarity with the Secretary of State's Office and has served on Gov Ops before, so this will be a very high level overview and I would invite you to ask questions as we go if you have any.

### **OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION (OPR)**

- OPR Serves 50 professions and ~70,000 licensees:
  - Protects the public from unethical, incompetent and unprofessional behavior by licensed practitioners – using right-fit regulation as a basis;
  - Sets and enforces standards for licensure and for practice once licensed;
  - Ensures equity in licensing, regulation & discipline;
  - Fairly and responsibly administers the rules and statutes pertaining to these professions/occupations; and
  - Serves the public, employers and licensees in all aspects of our lives every day, from accountants to cosmetologists to nurses to veterinarians.
- Continued improvements in technology allowed for increased online renewals for every profession at 100%
- ALL license types now online for initial applications, reducing processing times dramatically.
- Intense work on building our own next generation licensing platform as a possible enterprise solution for other state agencies to use at significant savings
- Recent years - onboarding of new professions: DEC, Foresters, LADC, Notaries
- OPR well positioned to take on new licensing from other agencies where it makes sense
- Considered a National Leader in occupational and professional licensing reform

- Sunrise and Sunset process
  - SoS team are desired speakers in other states – NCSL, CSG
  - Cutting red tape to improve access to jobs without sacrificing public protection
  - LADCs, cosmetology, barbering, funeral, pharmacy, and more, with the help of this committee
  - Awarded a DOL grant to continue leading the way
  - 2019 Agenda:
    - OPR housekeeping bill
    - Home Improvement contractors (a Senate committee bill?)
    - Fee bill
  - Increased staffing needed – we have maxed out
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## **ELECTIONS**

- The Elections division protects the integrity of campaigning and elections in VT.
- Administers VT’s elections, oversees campaign finance reporting, lobbyist disclosure laws, and encourages civic participation.
- Our elections staff work to;
  - Preserve the integrity of campaigns and elections;
  - Provide a customer friendly environment to educate and train citizens, voters, candidates, lobbyists and public officials by:
    - Administering federal and state law relating to elections
    - Promoting voter registration
    - Overseeing and assisting in the conduct of elections
    - Provide on-line campaign finance disclosure;
    - Administer on-line lobbyist disclosure; and
    - Provide ongoing training, support, & guidance to 248 town/city clerks.
- Vermont elections were ranked 1<sup>st</sup> overall in the nation last year on the **Election Performance Index conducted by MIT’s Election Data & Science Center**
- Considered a national leader on Elections Cybersecurity
  - VT ahead of the curve – because we focused on it beginning in 2013
  - Cybersecurity is like a race without a finish line
  - Testified before Congress:
    - March 2018 – Senate Select Committee on Intelligence
    - June 2018 – Senate Rules Committee
- Instrumental in working with Senator Leahy to appropriate \$380M of leftover “hanging chad” money to the states – VT Share \$3M

- As President of NASS – bringing VTs best practices to the national stage
- VT Secretary of State as a member of DHS Elections Critical Infrastructure designation
  - Member of the GCC
  - Participation with MS-ISAC
  - Communication/coordination with DHS, FBI, DOJ, and state authorities
- Continued support/education for municipal officials and Vermonters about election issues, including issues related to cybersecurity training
- 2018 Elections Administration:
  - Implemented Same Day Voter Registration
  - Implemented Automatic Voter Registration
  - Town Meeting, August Primary, November General
- # of completed voter registrations (VR) between 1/1/18 – 12/31/18
  - Total: 52,250
    - Mail In = 768
    - Other Agencies = 289
    - Town Office = 10,288
    - Voter Registration Drive = 778
    - OLVR = 12,321
    - DMV = 19,584
    - Election Day Registrations: 8,222
  - 11/5/2018 = 1,874 VR processed
  - 11/7/2016 = 100 VR Processed
  - 11/1 – 11/5/2018 = 3,494 VR processed
  - 11/1 – 11/5/2018 = 14,429 Absentee voted in office
  - 11/5/2018 = 6,792 Absentee voted in office (Day before Election)
  - 11/7/2016 = 7,575 Absentee voted in office (Day before Election)
- Development and Implementation of new ADA Accessible Voting System
- Continued successful management - online campaign finance/lobbyist disclosures
- Protected Voter Checklist from nefarious federal intrusion
- Agenda for 2019:
  - Elections housekeeping bill
  - Other elections, campaign finance and issues as they arise

We want to thank you again for your service. We would not be successful without the support of this committee. We look forward to working with you in this biennium.