



SHIRLEY N. WEBER, Ph.D.

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE

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October 15, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Skinner Chair
Joint Legislative Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 553
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting, Vice Chair
Joint Legislative Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 553
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Anthony J. Portantino, Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2206
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez, Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Chairpersons Skinner, Ting, Portantino, and Gonzalez:

Attached is the Secretary of State's quarterly status report on the progress of the CAL-ACCESS Replacement System Project, in accordance with Government Code section 84602(c). Previous reports are posted on the Secretary of State's office website at www.sos.ca.gov/administration/agency-reports/cal-access-replacement-project-cars-agency-reports. If you have any questions about this report, please feel free to contact Lisa Martin, Chief Deputy Secretary of State, at (916) 695-1638 or Erric Garris, Deputy Secretary of State, Legislative Affairs, at (916) 695-1686.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shirley N. Weber".

Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.
Secretary of State

Attachment

Introduction

Senate Bill 1349 (*Hertzberg – Ch. 845, Stat. of 2016*) requires the Secretary of State (SOS), in consultation with the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC), to develop and certify for public use an online filing and disclosure system for campaign statements and reports that provides public disclosure of campaign finance and lobbying information in a user-friendly, easily understandable format.

During this past quarter (July 2021 – September 2021), the CARS Project has been in a “pause and evaluate” mode to allow time to resolve and improve certain system components that will greatly benefit the filing and processing of political campaigns and lobbying disclosures. For the ongoing project development tasks, efforts have focused on the transformation and movement of data in the legacy system to CARS. Communications with external stakeholders have continued, and a lessons learned exercise is underway to capture past process shortcomings and transform them into effective processes for future use.

The SOS is partnering with the California Department of Technology (CDT) in a technical assessment effort to assist in the readiness and timing of full system certification for public use.

Following is a more detailed discussion on the Project’s status.

Progress July 2021 through September 2021

The CARS Project made the following progress this past quarter:

- The SOS Executive Team partnered with the CDT to perform a technical assessment of the CARS project related to the suitability of the selected platform, quality of the implementation effort, and quality of the system integration.
 - The independent assessment effort started on September 1, 2021.
 - The assessment effort includes a documentation review, interviews of key project staff, and an analysis of the CARS system.
 - The final Independent Assessment report is due to the SOS in December.
 - An update was provided to the following select stakeholders:
 - FPPC
 - Stakeholder Interest Group (SIG) comprised of California Political Treasurers and California Political Attorneys representatives
- An effort to update the project charter has started and will capture activities to occur during the pause and evaluate period.
- The project team developed thirty-five (35) data migration validation plans to ensure the data converts, transforms, and loads properly into the new system.
- The project team continued accessibility testing to ensure compliance with the requirements of system accessibility.
- A Lessons Learned exercise has gathered information from all project team members and has identified opportunities for future improvement.

Scope, Schedule and Budget

Scope: The scope has not changed during this reporting period. The outcome and recommendations of the independent assessment will influence any future scope changes.

Schedule: The schedule has not changed during this reporting period. The outcome and recommendations of the independent assessment will influence any future schedule changes.

Budget: The project repurposed \$10M for FY 21/22 Maintenance and Operations to continue with the ongoing data migration and project related activities. Pending the outcome of the independent assessment and development of a remediation plan, the project estimates that the budget may require supplemental funding.

Project Risks and Concerns

Data migration: The project is concerned and is taking steps to ensure data migration is a complete transformation and load of the legacy data. For example, contribution and expenditure filing requirements have changed over the course of many years. This creates challenges to preserving data integrity during migration. Some of the FPPC forms filed in prior decades had different data fields than the current FPPC forms. The project is working through this challenge because the new system is not designed to capture data fields that no longer appear on the FPPC forms. As forms were eliminated or as new data fields were added to existing forms (e.g. emails), the project has collaborated with FPPC and the stakeholders to address the data issues.

Pause for Assessment: The project is currently paused for an independent assessment effort to assist in assessing the readiness and timing of full system certification for public use. Key activities related to data migration, the user portal, and Application Programming Interface (API) are still underway. All other significant activities have been paused which will extend the schedule for system certification.

Funding: Additional funding will likely be required. The SOS will be better situated to estimate the budget for the remaining activities after the Independent Assessment provides the SOS with recommendations to prepare for system readiness and certification.