FY-15 Investment Brief

**I. Project Identification**

Election Infrastructure: Improving Voter Service at Polling Places

**Project Title:**

**Agency Name Agency Business Unit**

Elections Division

Secretary of the State (SOTS)

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**II. Project Details**

1. **Project Dates**

**Proposed Start Date** (MM/DD/YYYY) **Expected Completion Date** (MM/DD/YYYY) **Project Duration** (in months)

19

05/01/2015 12/31

12/31/2016

1. **Project Description -** This information will be used for listings and report to the Governor and  
    General Assembly on capital funded projects.

The project will improve the voting process at polling locations by implementing the use of electronic poll books and purchasing a new voting system for voters with disabilities.

1. **Summary.**

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| **Summary - Describe the high level summary of this project in plain English without technical jargon** |
| Electronic pollbooks provide the means for checking and managing voter registration records at the polling locations on Election Day. Currently the check-in system is completed manually with paper and pen and requires several pollworkers to administer. Voters are divided into two or more lines based on their residential street name. At peak voting times, and during high turn out elections, this is an inefficient and sometimes confusing process that perpetuates long wait times, which, in turn will cause many to leave without voting. An unfortunate experience such as long wait times will also factor into the individual’s likelihood of voting in the future. Electronic pollbooks will improve the speed of service to voters, without the need to separate voters in lines by street name because each pollworker involved in the check in process will have access to the entire voting list for the district. The poll books will also improve the speed and accuracy of post election data reports such as turnout percentages and voter history. Currently that process is done manually and is quite laborious for the Registrars of Voters and pollworkers.  The Help America Vote Act (HAVA), a federal law passed in 2002, requires that every voting location provide accessible voting machines to accommodate voters with disabilities, so that they may fully participate in the elections just as any other citizen would. Replacing the voting system for the disabled has been a long-held goal of the agency and the disability community. Currently there is a vote by phone system in place to serve those who cannot cast a paper ballot in the typical manner. Since it was adopted the current system both the local election officials and the voters the systems serves have been dissatisfied. |
| **Purpose – Describe the purpose of the project** |
| The purpose of the project is to improve the efficiency of the voter check-in process and to enhance the voting experience for persons with disabilities.  Our current pen and paper system requires the polling place’s list of voters to be divided up by section of alphabet, and voters are to stand in the line corresponding to their street name. Pollbooks would allow a voter to be checked in by any of the pollwokers. This adaptability will make pollworkers more efficient and reduce long lines. It will also automate some of the required information for post election reporting related to turnout percentages, and fully automate the entry of voter history into the Centralized Voter Registration System.  The new voting systems to serve the disabled will be much more adaptable and easier for local officials to manage. It will also provide more privacy for voters. In the current vote by phone system those citizens using it often complain that their right to a secret ballot is compromised because the ballot that the system produces is unable to be read by the optical scanner The new generation of systems involve a tablet with a touchscreen, a telephone-style keyboard and other accessibility components that allow the system to serve voters with a wider range of disabilities than just visual impairment. The agency will prioritize models that can print ballots that can be run through the tabulator machine just like all other ballots. And, because it uses a hot spot, a dedicated, hardwired phone line will no longer be needed resulting in savings to the towns and more portability of the system. |
| **Importance – Describe why this project is important** |
| Negative experiences at polling locations will factor into whether an individual is likely to vote again, and whether he or she has faith and trust in those responsible for election administration. Implementing these new technologies will improve the service voters receive at every polling location, in every town, for every voter participating on Election Day. For those voters with disabilities using the new system, we believe they will feel as if they are finally equally integrated with the same rights and protections as others.  The cost of administering elections falls to the municipalities. It is undoubtably one of their most important responsibilities and yet it is a process that has changed very little in the past hundred years. Our ability to strengthen our elections depends on adding new technologies to offer better service, and capture new efficiencies. Currently, municipalities budget less than one half of one percent for elections. Not only are they unlikely to purchase these technologies on their own, but they have been dissuaded and even prevented from doing so. This is because the state has a compelling interest in the uniformity of a statewide system and in the establishment of standards and protocols to protect the integrity and security of the centralized voter registration system. |
| **Outcomes – What are the expected outcomes of this project** |
| Local election officals will be provided with valuable new technologies. Voters appearing at their polling place on Election Day will see improved service. Voters with disabilities will have an improved system that offers more accessibility to different types of disability conditions. The agency will prioritize acquiring a system that can print ballots that are able to be run through the tabulator machines, which will offer those voters the full protection of secrecy. Since the All voters will have quicker lines due to a more flexible check-in system using electronic pollbooks. |
| **Approach and Success Evaluation – Provide details of how the success of the project will be evaluated** |
| The project will be evaluated by soliciting feedback from voters, elections officials and a disabled community through proactive outreach. |

1. **Business Goals**. List up to 10 key business goals you have for this project, when (FY) the goal  
   is expected to be achieved, and how you will measure achievement, Must have at least one.  
   Please use action phrases beginning with a verb to state each goal. Example: "Reduce the  
   Permitting process by 50%". In the Expected Result column, please explain what data you will use to  
   demonstrate the goal is being achieved and any current metrics.

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| **Business Goal (Action Phase)** | **Target FY for Goal** | **Current Condition** | **Expected Result** |
| Improve speed of service to voters at polling places | 2016 | Pen and paper system | Voters will have less wait time |
| Improve accuracy of voter history | 2016 | Manual data entry of up to tens of thousands records | Uploading data will prevent data entry error, voter turnout statistics will be quicker |
| Safeguard secrecy of ballot for disabled voters | 2016 | Handcounting of ballots because they can’t be read by tabulator compromises the secrecy of voters choices | Ballot will be run through tabulator like all other ballots |
| Improved quality of service to disabled voters | 2016 | Users of the current system feel their right to secret ballot is compromised | New system will allow for the ballots to be inserted into tabulator not hand counted |
| Town election officials will realize cost savings and streamline election day preparations | 2016 | Hardware will be purchased for towns. Disabled voting system will not require costs of installing/activiating hardwired phonelines. | Uniform technology in all towns. Pollbooks will be only from preapproved SOTS list, which will prevent the statewide voter file from being compromised |

1. **Technology Goals**. From a technical perspective, following the above example, list up to 10 key technology goals you have for this project and in which Fiscal Year (FY) the goal is expected to be achieved. Please use action phrases beginning with a verb to state each goal. Example: “Improve transaction response time by 10%".

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| **Technology Goal** | **Target FY for Goal** | **Current Condition** | **Expected Result** |
| Transition from pen and paper system to electronic process | 2016 | Pen/paper system requires voters to be in line by name of street. | Increases speed of voters because voters can be served by any pollworker |
| Automation of capturing voter history and calculation of turnout statistics | 2016 | Manual data entry of individual voters’ history; manual process of turnout statistics | Data upload will instantly create record of voter history |
| Upgrade voting system for disabled persons | 2016 | Awkward vote by phone system requires hardwired phone line and can’t generate ballot that can be read by tabulator machine | New system will have tablet and components and use wifi instead of hardwired phoneline. Models that can generate a ballot able to be read by tabulator will be prioritized |

1. **Priority Alignment.** The criteria in this table, in concert with other factors, will be used to determine project  
    priorities in the capital funding approval process. Briefly describe how the proposed projects will align with each criterion.

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| **Priority Criterion** | **Y/N** | **Explanation** |
| Is this project aligned with the Governor’s Key Priorities? | Yes | The Governor has repeatedly demonstrated his commitments to improving voting in Connecticut. |
| Is this project aligned with business and IT goals of your agency? | Yes | The project improves service to voters and offers valuable assets to local election officials |
| Does this project reduce or prevent future increases to the agency’s operating budget? | N/A | N/A |
| Will this project result in shared capabilities? | N/A | N/A |
| Is this project being Co-developed through participation of multiple agencies? | Yes | SOTS is collaborating with the Center for Voting Technology Research at UConnto establish mandatory and preferred requirements for the certification of any electronic poll book used in this state.. |
| Has the agency demonstrated readiness to manage project of this size and scope? | Yes | SOTS was responsible for implementing optical scanner voting equipment in the 2000’s. |
| Is the agency ready to deliver the business value proposed? | Yes | SOTS historically has coordinated the roll-out of new voting technology and infrastructure. |

1. **Organizational Preparedness**. Is your agency prepared to undertake this project? Is senior management committed, willing to participate, and willing to allocate the necessary time, energy and staffing resources? How will the project be managed and/or governed and who will make the key project decisions?

Peggy Reeves, Director of the Elections Division will be the manager overseeing the project. Vendors will be required to provide installation, training and support to local election officials.

1. **Project Ramp Up**. If capital funds are awarded for this project, how long will it take to ramp up? What are the key ramp-up requirements and have any off these already been started? For example, has a project manager been identified? Has an RFI been issued? Is a major procurement required such as an RFP?

The cost of UConn’s review and certification of pollbooks has already been allocated in the 2014-15 biennial budget and will be dispersed before June 30, 2015. UCONN has developed specifications for pollbooks and is soliciting models for review/certification.

1. **Organizational Skills**. Do you have the experienced staff with the proper training to sustain this initiative once it’s a production system? Do you anticipate having to hire additional staff to sustain this? What training efforts are expected to be needed to maintain this system?

Training to use the system will be required in advance of implementation and the vendor selected will be responsible for delivering that training, for which SOTS will set the standards . Thereafter, training will be needed for any new Registrars of Voters. The initial purchase of machines will include service agreements. The future maintenance of those agreements will be the responsibility of the municipality.

1. **Financial Estimates.** From IT Capital Investment Fund Financial Spreadsheet

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| **Estimated Total Development Cost** | **Estimated total Capital Funding Request** | **Estimated Annual Operating Cost** | **One Time Financial Benefit** | **Recurring Annual Financial Benefit** |
| 4,550,000 | 4,550,000 | 0 | 7000 (additional savings for municipalities) | 7000 |
| **Explanation of Estimates** | | | | |
| Generally speaking there are few vendors in the marketplace for government elections services, and so the information gathered for this estimate is based on conversations with other states’ government elections divisions rather than direct vendor conversations.  There are 750 polling place in the state. Voting locations are selected at the town level, so the total number of sites may fluctuate based on the types of elections occurring and the decisions of local officials. There is no statutes that dictate a minimum or maximum number of voters that can be served in a polling place. The proposal would supply 2 electronic pollbooks for every polling place. We estimate that each pollbook costs $2,500. Two units for each of the 750 polling place is estimated to cost $3,750,000.  Every polling place is also required to have a voting system for the disabled. The proposal also includes an additional 169 to that they can be installed also at Election Day Registration locations. We estimate this product would cost $800,000. | | | | |
| **Assumptions: Please list key assumptions you are using to estimate project development and implementation costs** | | | | |
| The agency will use funds to purchase 1 model of disabled voting systems that the towns will be required to use in place of the current vote-by-phone system. The quantity will supply equipment to each polling places and all Election Day registration locations. Connecticut’s disabled voting technology is used by very few other states and the Secretary of the State has recently responded to an inquiry from the Department of Justice regarding this technology and wether it provides sufficient service to disabled voters.  The agency will also use funds to purchase electronic pollbooks in a quantity that will allow for 2 in each of the state’s polling places. The Secretary of the State estimates that each electronic poll book costs roughly $2,500. Funds woud be used to purchase 2 units for each polling place. There are 750 polling places in the state. Towns may decline these pollbooks if they choose and we will reallocate them to other towns who are interested in them. The vendors will be required to distribute the technology, and train the registrars of voters to use them. | | | | |
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III. **Expanded Business Case**

1. **Project Impact.** Beyond the top business goals identified in Section II, 1) What impacts will this project  
    have, if any, in the targeted areas below, 2) What would be the impact of not doing this project, 3) How will the project demonstrate benefits are achieved.

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| **(1) Impact Area (Vision)** | **Y/N** | **Description of Project Impact** |
| Will this project provide efficient and easily accessible services for all constituents? | Y | All voters visiting the polls on Election Day will see an increase in service. |
| Will this project promote open and transparent government with the citizens of the state? | Y | All data related to elections is public information and this project will improve the timeliness of its availability. |
| Will this project establish efficient and modern business processes? | Y | The current process is a rudimentary, manual process. Technology such as these are used by many other states who have demonstrated its success. |
| Will this project increase accuracy and timeliness of data for policy making, service delivery and results evaluation? | Y | This new technology will help to improve the speed of serving voters, the speed of gathering results and will improve the accuracy and timely updates to voter history. |

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| 2) What is the expected impact of NOT doing this project? |
| Maintence of the status quo. The public, policymakers and media outlets have frequently voiced their desire for improvements. Advocates for disabled voters may try to challenge whether the current system sufficiently protects their rights. |

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| (3) How will you demonstrate achievement of benefits? |
| Through feedback from voters, election administrators and through observation and reporting by the media. |

1. **Statutory/Regulatory Mandates.**  1) Cite and describe federal and state mandates that this project in intended to address. 2) What would be the impact of non-compliance?

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| 1. Statutory / Regulatory Mandates: |
| Help America Vote Act (HAVA) PL 107-252. C.G.S. Sect 9-168d: Accessibility of poling places to physically disabled voters; C.G.S. Sect 9236b Voter’s bill of rights; C.G.S. Sect 9-247 Preparation of tabulators; C.G.S. Sect 9-261 Process of voting; C.G.S. Sect 9261c Electronic devices used to check names of electors.  While the current system technically complies with state and federal mandates, it does not adequately serve the needs of voters generally and the disabled community in particular. |

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| 1. Impact of non-compliance: |
| It’s not only important to protect the constitutional right to vote, but also to ensure that no one group of voter has greater or lesser rights and priveledges than another. It is therefore essential that all voting locations have the same equipment to serve disabled voters. The current system is insufficient and it compromises their right to a secret ballot.  The Electronic pollbooks will ultimately upload data into the Centralized Voter Registration System (CVRS)--- the backbone of our election system. Without the state reviewing/approving/certifying specific models of pollbooks we risk local election offiicals acting on their own initiative without regard to how that might corrupt the CVRS. |

1. **Primary Beneficiaries.**  Who will benefit from this project (citizens businesses, municipalities, other  
   state agencies, staff in your agency, other stakeholders) and in what way?

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| All citizens of the state who vote at their designated polling place on Election Day will benefit with improved service. Voters with disabilitieswill have the choice of using a system with greater convenience, speed, and enhanced privacy of their secret ballot. Municipalities gain new technological assets that will allow them to be more efficient. Candidates, media and the general public are better served by improving the accuracy and timeliness of public information for post Election Day analysis, such as turnout percentages and voter history. |

**Important:**

* **If you have any questions or need assistance completing the form please contact Jim Hadfield or John Vittner**
* **Once you have completed the form and the** [IT Capital Investment Fund Financial Spreadsheet](http://www.ct.gov/opm/lib/opm/finance/itim/investment_brief_financial_spreadsheets_fy13_v4_0.xlsx) **please e-mail them to Jim Hadfield and John Vittner**

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