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CTG Testifies at New York State Assembly Hearing on State IT Governance and Procurement

The New York State Assembly Standing Committee on Governmental Operations held a hearing on November 10th to examine New York's information technology structures regarding purchasing and managing technology products and services. CTG deputy director, Anthony Cresswell, presented testimony based on lessons learned from CTG's recently completed 18 month project in collaboration with the NY State CIO and other government officials to develop recommendations for enhanced enterprise IT governance for NY state government. Read further for a few highlights from Cresswell's testimony, or [click here](#) for the full testimony.

The Committee put forth numerous questions regarding both governance and procurement. In the area of governance, the committee asked for testimony to address the value of formalizing NY's IT governance structure through statute, the respective roles that policy makers, CIO/OFT, and state agencies should play in such a structure, and mechanisms for doing so.

In response to this set of questions, Cresswell testified, "One key challenge highlighted in our report is the lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities and checks and balances. Participants in our study identified many concerns related to unclear roles and formal authority. Others spoke of a lack of confidence that policies and procedures were followed. The general lack of clarity makes it difficult to resolve issues of enterprise boundaries and responsibility for sorting issues and strategy questions to the appropriate venue. A statute that provides this needed clarity would be an improvement over the current situation."

In respect to roles, Cresswell further testified, "The governance structure recommended in our report includes several oversight bodies put in place to clarify the locations for decision making and information sharing. We used a structure based on checks and balances to allow all stakeholders to have an appropriate role in the process. We believe this structure has a workable arrangement of roles and responsibilities to resolve many of the current issues of authority and enterprise identity."

Another set of questions from the Committee sought testimony as to the advantages and disadvantages in pursuing enterprise-wide IT purchasing, agency-driven purchasing, and IT purchasing on centralized contracts.

Cresswell's testified, "Governance arrangements for procurement should be agnostic with respect to central versus agency or cluster-based purchasing models. The structure should scrupulously avoid any built-in presumption in favor of aggregate or centralized purchasing. It should instead require a more detailed and comprehensive business case framework for all purchasing over a certain cost threshold. This new framework would require attention to these wider questions of cost and benefit. The business case requirement should apply to aggregate and enterprise-wide purchases as well as to agency-based investment."

More information on CTG's governance project and reports, can be found at: [Creating an Enterprise IT Governance Framework for New York State Government](#).