



HB 5027

165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106-1658

**An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations Concerning the
Elimination, Consolidation and Modification of Various Boards and Commissions**

**Government Administration & Elections Committee
March 2, 2012**

**Testimony of
Mark Raymond, Chief Information Officer**

Senator Slossberg, Representative Morin, Senator McLachlan, Representative Hwang, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in support of Governor Bill 5027, in particular, Section 47 - the establishment of the Commission for Technology Advancement. I believe the economic well-being of the state and future competitiveness of our citizenry on a global scale relies directly on our adoption of technology. This Commission will have an important role in making this vision a reality.

My hope for the Commission is that it contributes in a substantive way towards raising the technology profile of the state. The results would be greater workforce competitiveness, broader and deeper skills, efficiency in our infrastructure, greater collaboration across government lines, and more opportunities for public / private partnerships that benefit the public good.

The adoption of technology across the state has been in many ways a disconnected effort. Individual groups have grown in their technology use only as far as their resources and skills have allowed. Some organizations have demonstrated amazing results embracing technology. We only need to take a look at the complete remake of ESPN from a cable company to a full emersion technology company to see the results. However, the disparity in our ability to utilize technology certainly rivals our disparity in our education achievement. There are far too many have not's.

We need citizenry that is technology savvy, not for the sake of technology, but for the benefits it can provide. If most job opportunities are now available by applying online, how can we have a citizenry that is not prepared to seize that opportunity? If 30 and 40 year old

information systems are failing, how can we not have enough qualified workers to keep these systems in proper repair?

We can also not afford to waste the precious resources that we do invest in technology. We spend far too much time recreating technical solutions from town to town, and agency to agency. The Commission on Technology Advancement would help coordinate investments in technology by identifying and encouraging the reuse of common solutions. Our education system, both public and private, needs to be producing students prepared to identify and seize these opportunities. This Commission should also advise on the equitable allocation of the expenses associated with technology improvement. Nothing comes for free.

I understand there are many that still fear technology. They started a life during a time where no computers existed. Today they are battered with viruses, spam, tweets and emails. Technology, when not understood and embraced, can be dangerous. However, sharing technology innovation is not the same as sharing data about individuals. We can and should share technology in a way that keeps the data of our citizens safe and private.

The opportunity to harness the creativity, skill and resources of the state should not be passed by for lack of trying. With a vision and public commitment, a movement to embrace technology across the state could help restore the economic vitality of the state.

Thank you.