

From: [Cummings Bob](#)
To: [Ames Linda L](#)
Subject: Response to HIX IT Concerns.docx
Date: Monday, April 18, 2011 5:00:33 PM
Attachments: [HIX - Key Questions-V1.docx](#)
Response to HIX IT Concerns.docx
Importance: High

Linda:

John and I have been having an ongoing email dialogue on many of the concerns that I had in my original "coredump" of concerns that I provided you a couple of weeks ago. Attached is one of John's documents which attempts to respond to my questions and concerns. While this is helpful, it further corroborates some of my concerns, and many key foundational documents are indeed missing and it is very difficult to make an IT project successful when key elements are missing. DHS/OHA are skipping many steps and attempting to do many things in parallel. They are also trying to use preliminary work done elsewhere and leverage it on behalf of the HIX effort. Frankly, in many cases, this is more of a way of trying to show that they did some groundwork, when in fact, they really didn't do any.

It is clear to me, as it was to KPMG (who audited them), that DHS has skipped numerous critical steps and is trying to stand up a very complex program with a very complex IT supporting infrastructure without a number of key documents and foundational work in place. Trying to do all of this in parallel does not make a lot of sense to me, as the risks are substantial. Attached you will find an additional set of questions that I think need to be asked relative to this project.

As you are aware, DHS does not have a super track record when it comes to big projects. While I know that you feel MMIS was at least partially successful, I do not share that opinion. The fact that HP/EDS finally got it to work, doesn't give me a lot of warm and fuzzies. I could list out 10 reasons why it failed without even mentioning cost overruns or many, many schedule over-runs. The fact that it required legislative oversight for two years after it officially went into production, does not speak well for how it was managed, implemented, and/or tracked. OR-Kids/SACWIS, isn't much better. It's been around for a long, long time, and only now does it look like it might be ready for production.

Given my recent experience with OWIN-1, OWIN-2, OWIN-3, and eCourt, I have developed a certain distrust for how well the state actually manages most of its large IT projects.

HIX has all the makings of a project that could fail big-time for dozens of reasons. John Koreski running the project is no guarantee of success. The attached questions (and the ones that I sent earlier this month) all are based upon my 43+ years of experience in managing large IT projects. There are dozens of danger signals already on this project, and they're actually just getting started. Many of my concerns may not register and cause the same level of concerns with everyone who isn't intimately familiar with major IT projects and what can go wrong on them. The problems that I am seeing are just the high-level major ones, and there are quite a number that would make me feel uncomfortable in saying that this project is on the right track.

I have re-checked my files on HIX and **not found most of the documents** that I think are needed to provide a sound foundation for what John is trying to do. John's attached document **confirms that a number of key documents are not in place**. It is my opinion that they are winging it some, and that they do not plan on completing this work, but rather plan on moving forward on a project for which there was no business case/option analysis that clearly justified why they are choosing to build from scratch something that they could get from the feds or other states, by merely waiting. As DHS/OHA typically chooses to pick COTS solutions, there must be a reason why they chose not to do so. Given the level of investment (regardless of the funding source), this is not a decision that should be made on the fly. That's what eCourt and OWIN have done for the past 3 years, and their success rate to date has been terrible.

This is why I have chosen to recommend to Rep Richardson that he get the key program and project directors in a room with you and Ken and other appropriate legislative decision-makers to review this program and its decision to take a \$48 million federal grant. The materials that DHS/OHA has provided you and I to date do not provide me with sufficient detail to make a solid recommendation (one which is actually based on something). I personally wouldn't run the HIX IT project without this key foundational documentation in place. The risks are too great, and DHS's track record on large projects is too poor to give me warm and fuzzies. Contrary to what DHS may tell others, it does not have a consistently followed project management methodology that it follows to consistently successful project conclusions. Their recent project failures and regular QA reports show major project management deficiencies.

This is why I told Rep Richardson that I felt he should get more info directly from the program and project directors before making a decision. As you are aware, he is not in favor of this project, and without more info from the agency, I suspect he would have voted to kill it.

Hope this helps explain my rationale.

Bob C.