

Submitter: Tim Nesbitt

On Behalf
Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On General
Government

Measure: HB5035

Committee Members:

I received an email solicitation from the Director of the Secretary of State's Corporation Division asking for my support of the Division's budget request (contained in HB 5035) to "invest in a new vision for the Division...a division that operates at the speed of business." I assume that this solicitation came to me in my capacity as the managing member of a limited liability company that has used the Division's online portal to register and renew our business registration and assumed business name.

My experience with this system is that it works well to process and update routine registrations of this kind. But when it comes to seeking answers to questions about registrations or renewals, I have been frustrated over the past several years by the Division's lack of response to voice mails and email requests for assistance. I have left numerous voice mails and sent several emails to the Division, to which I have never received a response of any kind.

This is not a "speed of business" issue, but one of basic competence, the lack of which undermines public confidence in the functioning of state government generally.

The Division's request may be warranted and the improvements it envisions in its technology may enhance its overall functioning, but there is something more basic that needs to be addressed in its systems so that what is gained in automated efficiencies does not come at the expense of responsiveness to the public.

Finally, as someone with prior experience in state government, I appreciate the need for public outreach from state agencies and for the use of mechanisms to solicit feedback from the public, but a solicitation to join in a lobbying effort for a budget request from a state agency based on vague generalities seems to me to be an attempt to turn the process of public input upside down -- to organize consumers of a service for investments whose purposes are being marketed to them rather than offered for their input and comment.

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