

Electronic Filing of Public Official and Legislative Financial Disclosure Statements and Lobbying Activity Reports **FY2004 Request: \$450,000**
Reference No: 37940

AP/AL: Appropriation **Project Type:** Information Systems
Category: General Government
Location: Statewide **Contact:** Annette Kreitzer
House District: Statewide (HD 1-40) **Contact Phone:** (907)465-4081
Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2003 - 06/30/2006

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

Funds will be used for consulting services for design, development and testing of a web-enabled filing system for the electronic filing of public official and legislative financial disclosure statements, and lobbying activity reports.

Funding:	<u>FY2004</u>	<u>FY2005</u>	<u>FY2006</u>	<u>FY2007</u>	<u>FY2008</u>	<u>FY2009</u>	<u>Total</u>
Gen Fund	\$450,000						\$450,000
Total:	\$450,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$450,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
Totals:	0	0

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

This project has received no prior year funding.

Project Description/Justification:

The Financial Disclosure Office's mission is to ensure the accountability to the public of candidates and public officials through Alaska's disclosure laws. A primary component in accomplishing this mission is making statutorily required information disclosed by filers available to the public.

Under Alaska statutes, hundreds of lobbyists and their employers, executive branch officials, legislators and municipal officials, candidates and political groups file thousands of pages of paper disclosing personal finances, campaign finances and lobbying expenditures. Over six thousand reports are filed in an election year.

The purpose of this project is to continue to automate our business processes: the filing of reports, managing of the disclosed information and providing user-friendly access to the information for the public's use. At its conclusion, reports under all four of the disclosure laws will be able to be filed on-line using instructional software. Electronically filed reports will automatically be uploaded to a transactional database and the public and staff will be able to access, search, sort and analyze the published data it needs to make informed decisions. The project will take two to three years to complete.

The office intends to expand its automation of business processes to include the other three disclosure laws: lobbying, public official financial disclosure and legislative financial disclosure. The goal is electronic filing of all disclosure reports, and automated capture and publication of the data for public and agency use. The result will be easier, more accurate filing for those required to file, less or no processing of paper filings and quicker, easier access to disclosed information.

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Beginning in 1997, with the help of ITG and using both operating and capital funds, Alaska Public Offices Commission developed an in-house database to track reports and capture data on campaign finances. Software was developed so candidates and political groups may voluntarily file required reports electronically. These reports are uploaded by staff to a database, avoiding time consuming data entry. Data from paper reports is hand entered. A third component of the existing system, an on-line database, allows publication of the campaign finance data and public access to it via the agency's web site.

The existing automated campaign finance system shows signs of reaching its limits. Their makers no longer support two pieces of integral software, Foxpro and Ixpress. The increasing size of the database and the demands placed upon the system are reducing its performance, making programming corrections more complicated and the system less stable. The first part of the project will be to merge the two existing campaign databases with one more robust, secure, on-line transactional database. This will provide the foundation to which the other disclosure laws filing, report processing and publication components will be added. The remainder of the project will be devoted to adding the components for lobbying and public official financial disclosure; developing, testing and implementing each component; and providing support to the filers as they transition to the new system.

Project cost:	Capital:			Annual O&M costs or savings
	Prior Years:	FY 2003:	FY 2004:	
General Funds			450.0	
General Fund Match				
General Fund Program Receipts				
I/A Receipts (dept. and fund source)				
Other Funds (name and fund number)				
Federal Funds				
Total			450.0	

The proposed project budget is as follows:

Labor – ITG Programming:	\$400.0
(Based on costs for ITG program development support)	
Hardware – Web Server:	\$ 30.0
Software, licensing:	\$ 20.0
Total:	\$450.0

When this project is completed State and Municipal public officials, legislators and legislative employees, board and commission members, lobbyists and lobbyist employers will find it easier to file accurate, timely disclosure statements. Filers will be able to view previously filed statements, file current statements, and calendar future filings. The public will have faster, easier, more convenient access to financial information disclosed by public officials, campaigns and lobbyists. As a result, staff will be able to analyze data, provide information to the public, answer questions, and provide assistance to filers and outreach programs to the public.

Although the project would not directly affect other public agencies, many other public agencies are likely seeking automation of both transactional and document-driven programs. Thus, creating these programs may well result in helping other agencies with their automation projects.