ND | Office of the State Auditor

TESTIMONY TO SENATE GOVERNMENT AND VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
HB 1094 – STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE
3/11/2021

Good afternoon, Chairman Vedaa, members of the committee, my name is Joshua Gallion, and I serve as North Dakota's State Auditor.

As you are aware, the State Auditor is a constitutional state official elected by North Dakota citizens. My job is to lead the way in providing truthful, objective, and independent information to you and the citizens of North Dakota. Our mission is to produce informative audits to improve government through our team who is committed to generating greater value for taxpayers.

HB 1094 would allow agencies headed up by elected officials to make the best choice for their agency regarding who can best provide desktop support services.

I believe in a government that is responsible and accountable to the citizens of North Dakota. During the 2019-2021 biennium, the State Auditor's Office has been paying nearly half a million dollars ($447,000) per biennium to the Information Technology Department (ITD) for services we are not fully receiving (see Appendix A). We are having to rely on our own information systems auditors to provide desktop support to our staff of 58.

It's also important to consider the separation of powers. Given the constitutional distribution of power within the executive branch — I strongly encourage you to allow individual agencies to select the IT solution that works best for them.

This concludes my testimony. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.

APPENDIX A: Examples of information technology support provided by our in-house staff and paid for through our monthly ITD bill.

1. Office 365 - Any issues with Microsoft Office 365 where the software does not load or is constantly crashing, we must go in and run the Office Repair to try and resolved the issue. Other times we must complete an uninstall or reinstall. Our team uses the software program Excel daily and if the program is not working, our auditors cannot be productive. Waiting several days days for a resolution is not acceptable.

2. Computer Issues - We have had multiple issues with docking stations, monitors, and laptops that are not working or they do not recognize the docking station or monitors. We must go in manually to make sure that all the drivers are up to date on the computer and docking stations. Additionally, our own IT team replaces cables on monitors and adapters.

3. Printer Issues – If users are not able to printer to our printer, our IT team must verify users are connected to the correct printer and if the correct drivers are installed for that specific printer.

4. Windows Profile Issues – Computer specific error messages that happen on our teams computer require solutions that are rebuilding user profiles from scratch. All files need to be backed up and saved, the profile must be deleted, and we start from scratch to create the new profile and configure settings.

5. RedSky Download – These cloud-based E911 software programs and updates are not always pushed to every computer. Our IT team must manually configure downloads for many of our computer systems.

6. Global Protect Download/Upgrade – These software programs and updates are not always pushed to every user's computer. Our IT team must go and manually configure the downloads.

7. Avaya Software/One X Communicator – These software programs and updates are not always pushed to every user's computer. We must manually configure the download in many instances.

8. Phone Issues – If users need to manually configure their Avaya phone password, ITD is not able to reset team members passwords. This is a challenge because presently our IT staff does not have the ability to retrieve those passwords and no one is able to help our staff to retrieve their phone messages.

9. MFA Setup – Support for the multifactor authentication is severely lacking from ITD. Our IT team has had to help our team members with this critical set-up as we can't wait for several days for ITD to get back to us to simply access our computer.

10. Mobile Phone Support – Support for any type of mobile phone service is practically nonexistent. This leaves our IT staff to support mobile phone inquiries.

11. Intune Company Portal - We have not had adequate support for this system. It has always been up to our IT staff to assist with getting users set up and understand what these programs do and how they work.

12. Outlook Mobile App – The assistance for this is severely lacking. Our IT team has had to support staff with understanding of the program functions.

13. Adobe Pro – While the license is through the state contract, users still require assistance with installation on their computer.

14. Conference Room Video Equipment – User can experience issues with not be able to share their computer screen on the TV, or they cannot hear each other in conferences. Depending on the software used for the meeting, the user can run into issues with being able to log-in to meeting or not having the correct software to connect.

15. Password Unlocks – With users being at home and passwords expiring, we had to work with user to get their password changed without being connected to the VPN.