

**CITIZENS'  
ECONOMY  
EFFICIENCY  
COMMISSION**  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
1964-2002

November 7, 2002

*Chairman*

Robert H. Philibosian

*Vice Chair*

Tony Lucente

Supervisor, Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman  
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

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*Executive Director*

Bruce J. Staniforth

Dear Chairman Yaroslavsky:

Recently the Economy and Efficiency Commission received a briefing from the Chief Information Office on the Los Angeles County Administrative Systems (LACAS) Project. Based upon the information received during our lengthy briefing it is evident that the project begins a major long-term commitment to use the power of information systems technology to modernize both the County's business model and financial and administrative systems. We fully support and advocate this project's conceptual approach and its overall objectives of improving the management of the County's data assets and departmental operations.

Although the Commission was not involved in the development or evaluation of this project, and thus cannot comment upon the specifics of this undertaking, it does appear that the project team has conducted a thorough evaluation of the proposals and has considered both the requirements over the project's full life cycle and the risks that are being assumed.

This project is probably the most challenging and most complex IT initiative the County has ever undertaken. The Commission agrees with the Project's Executive Committee that "Decisive leadership and ongoing commitment from the Board" will be the critical component to its success.

We have noted and are encouraged by the plans of the project team to assist the Board in fulfilling your leadership function by providing periodic updates on the project status. Nevertheless, given the magnitude of the effort and the past failures of several high visibility and high cost systems within the state, the Commission feels that the most decisive element in fulfilling the Board's critical leadership responsibility is the continual, effective, and most importantly, independent oversight of how well the project is meeting the established milestones. It is extremely important that this independent source serves as a check and balance in the identification of any deviation from the implementation plan so that corrective



action can be immediately initiated. The specifics of this oversight, together with the ramifications for not meeting a milestone, should be emphasized and clearly set forth within the vendor's contract.

The Economy and Efficiency Commission remains available to provide any assistance that the Board might deem appropriate to assist in insuring the successful completion of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert H. Philibosian".

Robert H. Philibosian  
Chairman

Cc: Each Supervisor  
David Janssen, Chief Administrative Office  
Tyler McCauley, Auditor-Controller  
Michael Henry, Director, Department of Human Resources  
Joan Ouderkirk, Director, Internal Services Department  
Jon W. Fullinwider, Chief Information Officer