

# NASCIO CLC Conference Call Features Massachusetts CIO

Posted At : January 21, 2010 4:09 PM | Posted By : Sarah Lucas

Related Categories: Technology Trends, Green IT, Forecasts & Spending, State & Local, Transparency, Contract Opportunities, Procurement, Business Development Tools

The National Association of Chief Information Officers (**NASCIO**) held a Corporate Leadership Council call on January 20, 2010, featuring guest speaker, Massachusetts Chief Information Officer **Anne Margulies**. Margulies openly discussed the Massachusetts' **IT Strategic Plan**, and fielded questions regarding key projects and initiatives currently underway within the **Commonwealth**.

Within the IT Strategic Plan, Margulies highlighted the Commonwealth's 7+4 practice, in which of the 11 initiatives included in the plan, four have been prioritized. The first of these prioritized initiatives, and perhaps the most challenging as Margulies pointed out, is IT consolidation. Beginning in February 2009, the IT consolidation effort included a restructuring of governing authority in regards to IT endeavors, taking approximately 100 different IT groups and agencies and rolling them into 8 IT organizations, each reporting to a Secretary within the Governor's cabinet, and then to CIO Margulies. Coupled with consolidation in leadership, the initiative also includes an infrastructure consolidation. One of the key aspects of the infrastructure consolidation is the new data center to be built in Springfield, Massachusetts (GovWin Opportunity **59058**). Margulies proudly discussed the new data center's projected energy efficiency as she boasted it would be 40% more energy efficient than the existing data center. The new data center remains in the design phase, however a **wiki** has been dedicated to follow all coverage regarding the extensive project.

Margulies briefly touched on other initiatives included in the Strategic Plan, such as the Commonwealth's efforts in security, network architecture, and an enhanced procurement process. Margulies also mentioned in her discussion the Commonwealth's **Open Government** initiative, which though slowly developing, allows for citizens to not only access important information regarding their government, but also provides an outlet for citizens to provide feedback and assistance. Margulies hinted at high hopes for the initiative as she mentioned the Commonwealth's efforts to collaborate with local governments for further development.

Perhaps a more unique topic, Margulies brought up the Commonwealth's IT Capital Plan for which Governor Patrick filed an IT bond bill in 2007 to fund a five-year investment plan for technology. The plan includes roughly \$450 million of Capital funds to cover a five-year span and to provide for 34 new systems and system upgrades. Large systems and projects supported by the Capital Plan include a new tax system, child support system, public safety network, and insurance system (GovWin Opportunities **47378**, **41388**, **58728**, and **60110** respectively). With the Capital funding, Margulies brought up the addition of greater oversight for the funded projects, which includes a monthly review to make sure Commonwealth funds are spent wisely. Such oversight was included to reassure legislative leaders who were reluctant to allocate funds for perceived risky technological developments. A question was posed to Margulies as to why other states do not allow for Capital funding for IT initiatives. Though Margulies was unable to provide an answer – however pointing out the reluctance by legislative leaders even within the Commonwealth – she was all praise for how the long-term investment has thus far proven beneficial in Massachusetts.

From Margulies' updates, it seems clear the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has made big steps and still has bigger steps ahead of them to improve their overall IT infrastructure. Vendors should remain on the look-out for an increase in IT activity as major initiatives will likely generate smaller projects, all of which will be required to facilitate the achievement of the Commonwealth's Strategic Plan.