



**Washington State Auditor**  
**Brian Sonntag**

November 19, 2012

The Honorable Governor-Elect Jay Inslee  
State of Washington  
Legislative Building  
P.O. Box 40002  
Olympia WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor-Elect Inslee:

Jay

Congratulations on your election as the next Governor of the state of Washington.

We know recruitment of cabinet leaders is one of your top priorities as you organize your administration. We also know reform is a key plank in your platform for state government, which we wholeheartedly support. You will need strong financial leadership and systems to get this very important job done and to manage efficiently and effectively into the future.

I'm writing today to urge you to carefully consider the future role of the Office of Financial Management. The state is a large and complicated organization. Comparing it to the private sector, its revenues fall in between those of Microsoft and Amazon.com. Yet, state government operates without the benefit of clear, strong financial management. It is at a crossroads. It needs strong enterprise-wide financial management, but that is not part of our current culture or way of doing business. The Office of Financial Management sees itself as an agency supporting individual agencies, programs and activities.

The United States and Canadian Comptrollers General have researched what it takes to have world class financial management. Financial stewardship is an initial building block. The state has this in place. The opportunity lies in moving financial management to a more mature level that effectively engages citizens in developing a state strategic plan and long-term financial plan to support budget decisions and sustainable delivery of programs and services. The role the Office of Financial Management plays is critical to building world-class financial management for the state.

I'm attaching a short research paper we prepared to address the opportunity that awaits you. We also will be issuing a performance audit report during 2013 that focuses on the risks and costs associated with trying to maintain the state's outdated and inadequate information technology legacy systems related to financial management. Even though I leave office after 20 years, the State Auditor's Office will continue its relevant, high quality audits.

Sincerely,

**BRIAN SONNTAG, CGFM**  
STATE AUDITOR

