



**STATE INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY
SERVICES DIVISION**

Department of Administration

John Lewis, Director

Tim Bottenfield, State Chief Information Officer

August 11, 2020

Montana Legislature
Legislative Finance Committee
State Capitol, PO Box 201706
Helena, MT 59620-1706

Re: Google Montana G Suite Opportunity Letter dated June 11, 2020

Dear Chairperson Dudik and Members of the Legislative Finance Committee:

The Department of Administration, State Information Technology Services Division (SITSD), has been working with Google Cloud to explore ways that Google services, including G Suite, could be incorporated on a statewide level to provide better service and reduce costs. Through the proof of concept study noted in Google's June 11, 2020 letter to the Committee, conversations with other states using Google Cloud products, and discussions with other state agencies, SITSD has thoroughly examined the possibility of transitioning from the current suite of enterprise office products used by state agencies to those offered by Google. While we are generally optimistic about the potential for leveraging more Google Cloud products in the future, the results of our analysis do not support making wholesale changes at this time.

Based on our cost analysis, over a four-year period, switching to Google would result in the state paying \$3.2 million more for services currently available under the state's office suite contract. Additionally, although we did not consider it in our analysis to allow a true like for like comparison, information we received from Google and other states that have transitioned to G Suite suggests there would be further indirect personnel costs associated with a conversion. Moreover, strictly from a technology standpoint, we believe we would not receive the same functionality if the state moved to G Suite because transitioning to G Suite would not allow the state to replace all the enterprise products used today, which are mostly bundled with our current office suite.

Although we have concluded that switching to G Suite is not in the state's best interest from a technological or financial perspective at this time, the Google Cloud team made a great initial impression, and SITSD will consider the potential of adding more Google products to the state's information technology portfolio in the future. Should any members of the Committee have questions regarding the specifics of our analysis or our current lineup of office products, we will gladly provide details. I appreciate the Committee's interest in information technology matters and the potential for IT to enhance citizen services and drive efficiency.

Sincerely,

Tim Bottenfield
State Chief Information Officer
