

## Digital Procurement Challenges and Recommendations

CT can deliver digital products faster, cheaper, and at higher quality.

Healthcare.gov was among the biggest challenges faced by the Obama Administration. States have similar issues with IT procurement that also make headlines:

- After spending half a billion dollars, [California pulled the plug](#) on a new case management system after projected price of the project ballooned to \$2 Billion.
- In Illinois an expensive new digital enrollment system [inadvertently kicked 40,000 families off of SNAP](#) benefits.
- Our neighbors in [Rhode Island](#) just spent \$492MM on a system didn't work as it should, resulting in long lines, loss of benefits for thousands and overpayments. As a result, RI has lost another [\\$100 million in federal funds](#) and is facing two Class action lawsuits by the ACLU.
- A prominent IT research firm found that [94 percent of large-scale federal IT](#) projects have been unsuccessful during the last decade. States may have a similar experience.
- These problems can largely be traced to the fact that Government procurement approaches, which are decades or more old, have not kept up with today's best practices of digital development.
- We end up relying on old-school waterfall development methods that require development of detailed & rigid specs before any design, development or user testing can take place.
- This approach, locked and our inflexible contracts, makes it very difficult to build an easy to use, effective system.

We recommend that experts independent of the big government contractors review CT's procurement approach.

President Obama's digital services (18F, USDS), have made great strides in reforming federal procurement - and we can learn from their example. CT should consider:

- Modular contracting approaches that reduce risk by breaking down big projects into bite-sized peices,

- adopting the new training certification in IT procurement,
- use of open source solutions where appropriate,
- Adopting agile blanket purchase agreements that make it easier to move from rigid, high risk waterfall approaches to flexible, responsive agile approaches

See resource links here:

- USDS "[Transforming Federal IT Procurement](#)"
- Justine Brown [Gov Tech article: "Bringing Innovation to Procurement"](#)
- 18F: [Agile Blanket Purchase Agreement](#)
- 18F on vendors: [Modular Contracting and Working in the Open](#)
- US TechFar: [Digital acquisition professional training & cert - good overview](#)

Adapting best practices like these and from private sector will allow CT to deliver digital products faster, cheaper, and at higher quality.