



January 26, 2026

The Honorable David C. Farnsworth, Chairman  
Joint Legislative Budget Committee  
Arizona State Senate  
1700 West Washington Street  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

The Honorable David Livingston, Vice-Chairman  
Joint Legislative Budget Committee  
Arizona House of Representatives  
1700 West Washington Street  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Dear Chairman Farnsworth and Vice-Chairman Livingston:

I am writing to follow up on the December 24, 2025 letter requesting that the Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC) review the Secretary of State's (SOS) proposal to transfer \$3,500,000 from the CD7 Special Election line item to the Operating Lump Sum (OLS) for FY2026 election readiness and county support activities. Over the past three years, the SOS and JLBC have worked constructively together on budget and transfer matters, and the Committee has provided positive reviews for each of the six JLBC review requests submitted by the Office during that period. We appreciate JLBC's past spirit of collaboration and engagement.

The agenda for JLBC's January 29, 2026 meeting, published on January 22, does not include my request submitted on December 24, 2025. Given the time-sensitive nature of the funding and the risks outlined in our submission—and in light of the productive working relationship and precedent established through prior reviews—we respectfully urge that this item be added to the agenda for consideration.

As described in detail in the attached request, the proposed transfer would allow the SOS to (1) reimburse counties for their FY2026 AVID obligations and (2) implement critical, one-time measures to reduce documented cyber, operational, and security risks ahead of the

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2026 election cycle. These risks were validated through independent cybersecurity assessments following the 2025 cyber incident and cannot be mitigated through existing base funding.

This request was structured as an integrated set of risk-reduction measures intended to strengthen the SOS's preparedness for the 2026 election cycle. While approval of the full request would not eliminate all cyber, operational, or security risks, it would materially improve the SOS's ability to manage those risks responsibly and in a timely manner. Absent full approval, the SOS would be limited in its ability to deploy several important protections before statutory election timelines begin, increasing operational strain and leaving less margin for error during a high-turnout election year.

Given the proximity of the 2026 election cycle, the lead time required to implement these safeguards, and the JLBC's established record of thoughtful review and approval of the Office's prior requests, we respectfully request that JLBC add this item to the agenda for its January 29, 2026 meeting so it may be considered consistent with past practice.

Thank you for your continued collaboration and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact Greg Ensell, Chief Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, at (480) 244-5130 or [gensell@azsos.gov](mailto:gensell@azsos.gov) if additional information would be helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink, appearing to read "Adrian Fontes". The signature is stylized and written over a light blue horizontal line.

Adrian Fontes  
Arizona Secretary of State

cc:

Legislative Leadership

JLBC Members

Richard Stavneak, Director, JLBC

Micaela Andrews, Assistant Director, JLBC

Ben Henderson, Director, OSPB