January 31, 2019

Chairwoman Nancy Todd and Committee Members
Joint Technology Committee
Colorado General Assembly

Dear Madame Chair and Committee Members,

For nearly 40 years, Metcalf Archaeological Consultants, Inc. (Metcalf) has provided comprehensive cultural resource management services in Colorado and 10 western states while serving industry and facilitating responsible development. During that time, technology began outpacing the long established “paper method” of data management. Today the vast majority of documentation and data transfer occur on mobile devices and with digital files. The clients we serve work only with digital data yet remain dependent on antiquated systems during the consultation process. Cultural resource consultants quickly learned to adapt internal workflows to meet digital needs and leverage new technology. Some agencies such as State Historic Preservation Offices, however, have unfortunately struggled to keep pace with the demanding change. These inefficient systems that still rely on hard copies and laborious data input increase the burden on industry in the form of both time and money.

As proposed by History Colorado, a new solution for the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation that integrates what are currently three separate systems would positively impact the programs and efforts led by the department. It would noticeably reduce the burden of time-consuming data input while reducing the overhead costs that come with printing, managing and archiving hard copies of information. Those efficiencies, along with others identified by the department, would facilitate timely Section 106 reviews, a welcome benefit to my clients who comply with Federal and State requirements to protect critical historic and cultural resources. More efficient reviews translate into well informed development and resource management strategies while also providing benefits to local communities that treasure their cultural heritage.

The move to modern, fully digital management systems is tipping nationwide. In this instance, History Colorado is asking the Joint Technology Committee to help them raise their bar and jump-start a new era in how the State approaches and administers historic preservation efforts while finding the most relevant means to serve the public. They have chosen a proven and sustainable means to modernize their management system in the form of a web application and cloud-based computing for archiving data. As the leader of a longstanding, employee-owned business in Colorado, I believe that the department’s funding request should be approved.

Sincerely,

/Nathan D. Boyless/
President and Chief Executive Officer