Testimony of Tom Speaker to the New York City Council Technology Committee on Proposed Cloud Computing Legislation (Vallone)

December 15, 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on this proposed legislation.

This bill would require the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DOITT) to assess the feasibility of storing city electronic data on cloud computing systems. After conducting its assessment, DOITT would have to submit a report to the Speaker of the City Council on the agency's findings, including but not limited to analyses of the transition's impact on software licenses, estimates of costs, recommendations on the standards that a cloud computing system provider must meet, and more.

Reinvent Albany welcomes City Council oversight on this topic and appreciates Councilmember Vallone's efforts to ensure that New York City's technology remains up to date. However, we do not believe the legislation is required at this time. In 2016, DOITT published New York City's official cloud services Policy, a document that already addresses many of the issues raised in the bill. Broadly, we believe the executive branch should have the discretion and flexibility to determine what kinds of digital storage to purchase. We note that the cost of cloud computing storage has been plummeting and that there are many types of cloud computing, including virtual clouds hosted on City or state servers and digital storage leased from commercial vendors like AWS, Microsoft or IBM – among others.

Therefore we request that the Council reconsider the need for this bill at this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. If you have any questions, please reach out to Tom Speaker at tom [at] reinventalbany.org.