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August 25, 2026

Request for Information (RFI #26-004) for California Business Connect (CBC) Online Modernization/Replacement

You are invited to respond to this Request for Information (RFI) titled "California Business Connect (CBC) Online Modernization/Replacement." The California Secretary of State (SOS) is seeking information from the vendor community via this RFI to gather market information regarding available software solutions and related support services for the replacement, enhancement, or modernization of California Business Connect.

Specifically, the SOS seeks information to:

- a. Understand available solution approaches, including COTS, Software-as-a-Service (SaaS), configurable platforms, and custom solutions;
- b. Review implementation and support models;
- c. Obtain rough order-of-magnitude information regarding costs, schedule, and risks; and
- d. Inform future planning, market research, and a possible future procurement.

The purpose of this RFI is to solicit information and suggestions from experienced sources, suppliers, and other qualified service providers as part of a market research effort being conducted by SOS. The collective information provided by vendors will be used to analyze alternatives for consideration and to estimate costs related to system acquisition for a proposed solution. In submitting your response, please comply with the instructions found herein. SOS cannot guarantee that any future business will result from the information provided. A detailed scope of work is not provided, and the information received from this RFI will be utilized in developing a scope of work for future use. A response to this RFI will not preclude or provide an advantage to any vendor from future bidding opportunities with the State.

This request is issued solely for informational and planning purposes only and does not constitute a competitive solicitation. In the opinion of the Secretary of State's Office, this RFI is complete and without need of explanation.

Responses and Questions

Responses should be sent to contractservices@sos.ca.gov. See Attachment 1 for details. If you have questions or need any clarifying information, the contact for this RFI is:

Contract Services
California Secretary of State
Email: contractservices@sos.ca.gov

IMPORTANT INFORMATION – PLEASE READ BEFORE RESPONDING TO THIS RFI

1. SOS will not reimburse respondents for any costs associated with responding to this RFI.
2. SOS has no obligation to buy or issue a solicitation to any respondent as a result of this RFI.
3. Information provided in response to this RFI will not be considered when evaluating bidders responding to any future CBC procurement.
4. Information provided in response to this RFI related to any costing should be estimated costs, only to be used by SOS for informational and planning purposes, and understood not to be represented as a bid from the respondent.

1. Key Action Dates

#	Key Action	Due Date
1.	Release of RFI	August 25, 2026
2.	Due Date for Response to RFI	September 28, 2026, 4:00pm

2. Background

The California Secretary of State (SOS) processes more than 3 million business filings each year and currently uses an online portal for filing, searching, and ordering business records, including limited liability company (LLC), limited partnership (LP), corporation (Corp), and Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) records.

Today, the online portal supports core SOS Business Programs Division (BPD) functions by:

- a. Registering business entities and updating business entity records;
- b. Supporting UCC filings;
- c. Providing public filing, search, and ordering capabilities;
- d. Routing submissions for automated or manual review;
- e. Supporting copy and certificate requests; and
- f. Providing reporting, audit, and document storage functions.

The SOS is exploring replacement and/or modernization options to re-evaluate the marketplace for commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) software and custom-developed solutions, and to identify software and support services that can meet current and future business and technical needs.

Business drivers for this effort include the need to:

- i. Maintain and improve online access to filing data;
- ii. Capture and validate data electronically;
- iii. Support timely response to Public Records Act requests;
- iv. Improve payment processing timeliness;
- v. Maintain or improve turnaround times for filings;
- vi. Strengthening backup, resilience, and security, including anti-fraud measures and account protection; and
- vii. Support integration, reporting, and ongoing system support needs.

In addition, the SOS seeks a solution capable of supporting high transaction volumes, concurrent internal and public users, workflow routing, search performance, auditability, document retention, and future growth in filing types and workload.

3. Business Objectives

The SOS seeks information on solutions that can support the following business outcomes:

- a. Improve online filing, search, and ordering services while continuing to support paper filing, search, and ordering services for business entities and UCC records;
- b. Streamline filing intake, review, approval, and records management processes;
- c. Reduce manual handling, duplicate entry, and paper-based processing where feasible;
- d. Improve data quality through validation, business rules, and cross-checking;

- e. Support secure, highly available, and resilient operations;
- f. Maintain or improve filing turnaround times of 5 business days or better;
- g. Improve reporting on workload, aging, productivity, fees, and operational performance;
- h. Support electronic notifications and customer communications and updates;
- i. Enable easier updates to accommodate statutory, policy, and business rule changes;
- j. Support integration with partner agencies and external systems;
- k. Preserve records and document images in accordance with retention requirements; and
- l. Improve transparency and public access to records where authorized.

4. Current Environment

4.1 Major Functions Supported by CBC

The current online environment supports:

- a. Public portal access for business filings;
- b. Public search for business entity and lien records;
- c. Application Programming Interface (API) access for bulk filers or bulk data retrieval;
- d. Secure identity management, including self-registration and password management;
- e. Back-office review and processing by SOS staff;
- f. User-enabled configuration of workflows and public-facing forms;
- g. Data exchanges with partners such as the Franchise Tax Board;
- h. Reporting and audit interfaces; and
- i. Storage and retrieval of records for LLCs, LPs, Corps, and UCC liens and related records.

The system receives filings primarily online, though some filings and requests are submitted by mail or in person. Paper submissions are sorted and scanned; online submissions may be automatically processed based on business rules or routed to work queues for manual review.

4.2 User Groups

User groups include:

- a. Public filers and search users;
- b. Businesses and consumers;
- c. Entities filing on behalf of businesses, including service companies, tax accountants, attorneys, etc.;
- d. Internal SOS/BPD staff processing filings and requests;
- e. Management and reporting users;
- f. Public agencies and partner entities that use records for tax, regulatory, and enforcement purposes; and
- g. Authorized bulk data customers and integration partners.

4.3 Existing Challenges

Current SOS concerns and challenges include:

- a. Continued modernization and software support;
- b. Manual handling of paper submissions and paper requests;
- c. Stronger workflow standardization and separation of duties;
- d. Improved high-volume search and transaction handling;
- e. Retention, preservation, reporting, and audit improvements;
- f. Support of future growth, modernization, and business rule changes; and
- g. Security and fraud prevention.

4.4 Known Interfaces and Dependencies

Known interfaces and dependencies include:

- a. Franchise Tax Board data exchanges;
- b. API portals for bulk filing and data retrieval;
- c. Identity management services;
- d. Payment acceptance and reconciliation functions;
- e. Reporting and internal direct database access;
- f. Email notifications; and
- g. File transfer or APIs for bulk data and image exchange.

4.5 Approximate Volumes and User Load

The SOS estimates approximately 3 million BPD document transactions are processed annually.

Potential replacement systems should support:

- a. Approximately 400 internal users;
- b. Up to 10,000 concurrent public users; and
- c. Millions of public search requests of record data.

4.6 Hosting Environment and Support Model

The desired solution should be a secure web-based system available 24/7, excluding scheduled maintenance, with backup and recovery capabilities. Ongoing software support is expected to include support access, issue handling, security and vulnerability mitigation, maintenance, enhancements, and modernization support.

5. Areas for Vendor Input

Vendors are requested to provide information on the following areas.

5.1 Functional Capabilities

Please describe how your solution supports:

- a. Business entity filings for LLCs, LPs, and Corps;
- b. UCC filings and related searches;
- c. Statements of Information (annual and biennial reporting filings);
- d. Initial filings, change filings, and other filing lifecycle events;
- e. Name reservations and name registrations;
- f. Search and retrieval of entity, UCC, and related record images;
- g. Status certificates, copies, certified copies, and ordering;
- h. Public access and self-service filing;
- i. Document management, imaging, indexing, QA, archival, retention, and destruction;
- j. Workflow management;
- k. Data validation, correction, and business rules;
- l. Customer profiles, subscriptions, and customer service functions;
- m. Payment processing, refunds, dishonored payments, prepaid and billable accounts;
- n. Notifications, acknowledgments, rejection notices, and correspondence;
- o. Reporting, ad hoc queries, and dashboard metrics;
- p. Role-based administration and user management;
- q. Audit trail visibility and records management; and
- r. Ability to support high-volume public transactions, records management, and audit requirements.

Vendors should also explain how their solution supports:

- i. Complex filing rules and validations;
- ii. Fee calculation;
- iii. Separation of duties between payment acceptance, processing, and reconciliation;
- iv. Historical records and document images; and
- v. High-volume public search and retrieval.

5.2 Technical Architecture

Please provide information regarding:

- a. Available deployment models, including SaaS, cloud-hosted, hybrid, or on-premises;
- b. Configurability versus customization;
- c. APIs, batch interfaces, file transfer, and data exchange capabilities;
- d. Support for bulk filing and bulk data/image extraction;
- e. Data conversion and migration approach from existing systems to your solution;
- f. Identity and access management capabilities;
- g. Logging, monitoring, and audit trail functionality;
- h. Disaster recovery, backup, and business continuity approach;
- i. Scalability and performance under high-volume public transaction loads;
- j. Browser-based printing and document generation;
- k. Ability to support future growth in workflow, filing types, and volumes; and
- l. Identify third-party products, tools, or other dependencies required or commonly used to support the solution.

5.3 Security and Compliance

Please describe your approach to:

- a. Alignment with State of California security expectations;
- b. Secure customer registration and login;
- c. Data protection against destruction, corruption, loss, alteration, and unauthorized access;
- d. Privacy controls;
- e. Fraud prevention;
- f. Role-based access controls;
- g. Encryption in transit and at rest;
- h. Fully automated audit trails;
- i. Vulnerability mitigation and reporting;
- j. Secure development and release practices;
- k. Records retention and disposition support;
- l. Legal hold or records preservation capabilities, if available;
- m. Accessibility compliance; and
- n. Security monitoring, backup, and recovery.

If your solution supports multilingual public services or advanced identity proofing, please describe those capabilities as well.

5.4 Implementation Approach

Please describe your proposal for:

- a. Delivery methodology including a rough order-of-magnitude implementation timeline for a product of this nature;
- b. Discovery and validation approach, including business process analysis and requirements mapping, and fit-gap analysis;
- c. Phasing options, including modular or staged implementation, including staffing model required for implementation and post-production support;
- d. Testing strategy, including functional, integration, performance, accessibility, and user acceptance testing;
- e. Training approach for public users, staff, administrators, and other applicable users;
- f. Organizational change management approach;
- g. Cutover and go-live support model; and
- h. Post-implementation support, maintenance, release management, and enhancement services.

5.5 Maintenance and Operations

Please describe your proposal for:

- a. Warranty period;
- b. Ongoing support;
- c. Solution lifecycle;
- d. Frequency of upgrades, updates, patches, and bug fixes; and
- e. Support of statutory and policy changes.

5.6 Vendor Qualifications

Please provide:

- a. Company overview and years in business;
- b. Relevant public-sector experience;
- c. Experience with Secretary of State, licensing, registration, filing, or comparable systems;
- d. Experience with high-volume public-facing transactional systems;
- e. References for similar implementations including client name, project description, scope, go-live date or current phase;
- f. Financial and organizational stability;
- g. Experience supporting ongoing statutory or policy-driven changes; and
- h. Experience with record-intensive, compliance-driven environments.

6. Response Format

Respondents should use the format provided in Attachment 1 – Response Form, with supplemental information clearly tied to the requested topics. Additional information has been provided in Appendix A – Summary of Annual Volumes by Filing Type and Appendix B – Applications Systems Matrix.

This RFI is for informational and planning purposes only and does not constitute a solicitation. Respondents should be aware of the following:

- i. Cost information should be provided only as estimates for planning purposes and not as a bid.
- ii. Responses to this RFI are subject to the California Public Records Act and may become public record. If a respondent believes portions of its response are proprietary, those portions must be clearly marked confidential and identify the basis for protection. The SOS will not accept submissions that label the entire response or large portions of it as proprietary.

California Business Connect (CBC) Request for Information (RFI) #26-004

Attachment 1 - Response Form

Vendor Response Section:	
Company Name	
Contact Person	
Title	
Phone Number	
Email Address	
Street Address	
City, State, Zip Code	
Years in Business	
Date Submitted	

1	Solution Overview: Provide a description of the products and services your organization offers that would meet the needs described in this Secretary of State (SOS) Request for Information (RFI). Include a full description of your product/solution's lifecycle, current version, and frequency of upgrades, updates and/or patch/bug fixes.	
2	Functional Response: Provide a description of how your organization will address the functional capabilities identified in Section 5.1 - Functional Capabilities of the RFI.	
3	Technical Response: Describe the architecture, hosting model, integration framework, security features, scalability, environment strategy, and monitoring and support capabilities identified in Section 5.2 Technical Architecture of the RFI.	
4	Security and Compliance Response: Please describe your approach for security and compliance as described in Section 5.3 Security and Compliance of the RFI.	
5	Implementation Approach Response: Include major phases, estimated duration by phase, state staffing assumptions, vendor staffing assumptions, key dependencies, and major risks and mitigation strategies identified in Section 5.4 Implementation Approach of the RFI.	

6	Maintenance and Operations: Provide your maintenance and operation support approach per Section 5.5 Maintenance and Operations in the RFI.	
7	Vendor Qualifications Response: Please provide your qualifications as a vendor as described in Section 5.6 Vendor Qualifications of the RFI.	
8	Estimated Cost Information: Provide a rough order-of-magnitude cost estimate for each item below.	
	Initial software licensing or subscription cost	
	Implementation services cost	
	Annual ongoing maintenance and operations cost	
	Annual ongoing licensing cost	
9	Additional comments	

You may include additional pages, as needed.

Appendix A

Summary of Annual Volumes by Filing Type

Fiscal Year 2024/25

Category	Docs Processed (Includes rejects and resubmissions)	Names Reserved	Certificates Issued
Corporation	1,151,137	26,651	100,320
Limited Liability Company (LLC)	1,301,524		95,703
Limited Partnership (LP)	17,114		
State of Information (corporations and LLCs)	1,717,840	N/A	N/A
Uniform Commercial Code (UCC)	691,173	N/A	N/A
Total Annual Volume	4,878,788	26,651	196,023

The number of UCC certificates issued includes search certificates w/copies, search certificates only, debtor and secured party name inquiries, copies only, view images, and file number inquiries.

Appendix B

Applications Systems Matrix

#	Business Unit - Primary User	Application Area	Filing Types Supported	Comments
1	Business Entities	Limited Partnerships (LP) /Limited Liability Companies (LLC) (Internal and Interagency Access)	Domestic and Foreign LP/LLC LLC Statements of Information	LP/LLC data also includes: - Online California Business Search - BE Imaging database - Bulk data files for authorized external customers - External agency interface for data exchange - Pre-paid customer accounts (for specific internal services only)
2	Business Entities	Corporations (Internal, Interagency and Direct Access)	Domestic and Foreign Corporation Corporation Statements of Information, Statements by Common Interest Development Association and Corporate Disclosure Statements	Corporation Data also includes: Online California Business Search Online Publicly Traded Disclosure Search Online Statement of Information E-file - BE Imaging database - Victims of Corporate Fraud Compensation Fund (VCFCF) suspension/revivor - Bulk data files for authorized external customers - External agency interface for data exchange - Pre-paid customer accounts (for specific internal services only)

3	Business Entities	Statement of Information E-file	Domestic and Foreign Corporation Statements of Information	Entity addresses, key principal's name and addresses (Secretary, Chief Financial Officer and Director(s) names and addresses), Agent for Service of Process and type of business
4	Business Entities	Corporate Disclosure	Domestic and Foreign Corporate Disclosure Statements	
5	Business Entities	Business Entities Imaging	Corporation Corporation Statements of Information, Statements by Common Interest Development Association and Corporate Disclosure Statements Domestic and Foreign LP/LLC LLC Statements of Information	Images are stored in a database as a binary data type and in cloud-based binary storage
6	Uniform Commercial Code (UCC)	UCC	UCC Financing Statements and Tax Liens	
7	UCC	UCC	UCC Financing Statements and Tax Liens	Images are stored in a database as a binary data type and in cloud-based binary storage