



**Office of the Secretary of the State**

State of Connecticut

165 Capitol Avenue, Suite 1000

P.O. Box 150470, Hartford, CT 06115-0470

**Stephanie Thomas**

Secretary of the State

**Jacqueline A. Kozin**

Deputy Secretary of the State

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**Appropriations Committee  
General Government A Subcommittee:**

**February 16, 2023**

**TESTIMONY OF  
SECRETARY OF THE STATE STEPHANIE THOMAS**

Good afternoon, Co-Chairs Anwar and Ryan, Ranking Members Berthel and Chaleski, and members of the subcommittee. Herein you will find the explanations and context for our office's budgetary requests for the Office of the Secretary of the State as well as attachments which provide a factual basis.

Over the last few years, the Office of the Secretary of the State has faced unprecedented challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic, national political trends, and animus towards government institutions, in addition to the lack of new federal funding from the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) have created both unfunded expenses and an inability to continue passing along grants to municipalities to help defray their election administration costs.

The Governor's budget includes several additions that mitigate the challenges our office faces and would greatly benefit the residents of our state. The budget supports modernizing the technology that supports Connecticut's elections. Included are appropriations to replace the Centralized Voter Registration System (CVRS) with a reliable and user-friendly interface. This will come as a welcomed improvement to all of the municipal officials, such as registrars of voters and town clerks, who rely on the system to complete their work.

The Governor's budget proposal also supports funding for the additional full-time Staff Attorney assigned to process FOIA requests to alleviate the pressure on our stretched thin legal staff. Over the last several years, our office has seen a significant increase in FOIA requests, amounting to a 92% increase in volume between 2018 and 2022. These public records requests are time consuming and have taken legal staff away from other critical duties.

The proposal also enables the continuation of voters of all abilities to cast a ballot easily and privately by appropriating funds to maintain the Accessible Voter Ballot Marking System, as required by federal law. In past years, our office utilized excess federal funding to comply with the accessibility recommendations of the Department of Justice, but that funding no longer exists today.

Additionally, the Governor's budget proposal includes inflationary adjustments for elections-related printing and technology expenses, allowing our office to continue providing the same degree of services even as costs rise.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Governor and his staff at the Office of Policy and Management for recognizing the evolving needs of our office in their budget proposal for this biennium. It is my hope that you too will recognize the importance of these items in your budget and consider including three other items.

First, I am asking you to again appropriate \$2 million each year for the upcoming biennium, provided through carryforward funds, so our office can conduct a robust public information program to fulfill one of the core missions of our agency. You will note in the Governor's budget book that the first requirement of our agency is "To educate and inform the public of services, programs and responsibilities of the office, and to advocate for issues, policies and programs which promote a healthy democracy and an active, engaged citizenry..." These funds would allow my office to do just that.

Beginning in 2020 and continuing through last year, our office was able to accomplish positive election experiences for Connecticut voters through a comprehensive public information campaign to explain how Connecticut elections are run, and what changes have gone into effect since they last voted. These campaigns allow us to speak directly to voters regarding the deadlines and mechanics of voting.

Although difficult to demonstrate the success of these programs, a look at the absentee ballot rejection rate before and after voters were provided with adequate information on the mechanics of voting is illustrative. In 2018, prior to the dissemination of any widespread instructional information about the proper way to complete the ballot envelope, the absentee ballot rejection rate was around 2%. In both the 2020 and 2022 election cycles, with the help of a robust public information push, these rates fell to around 1%, even with a significant increase in absentee ballot usage by voters.

I've also attached an executive summary of the results of last year's public information campaign that utilized the internet, analog and streaming radio, mobile gaming, and cable and network television. It is critical that we continue reaching voters through public information campaigns over the next two years given the multitude of electoral changes coming down the pike.

Second, I am requesting you appropriate \$40,000 to allow us to train and reclassify existing employees to the level of a licensing analyst within our business services division. These individuals would join a team tasked with investigating and levying fees against businesses that are operating in Connecticut without being properly registered. Through more proactive

and aggressive fee-collecting practices over the past few years, our office has been able to increase revenues from \$29.8 million in Fiscal Year 2018 to more than \$48 million in Fiscal Year 2022, which benefit the General Fund. An addition to the foreign investigations team would not only help protect Connecticut consumers by further cracking down on illegally operating businesses, but we estimate it will generate more than \$10 million in additional increased revenue for the state.

And lastly, I am requesting the appropriation of \$93,000 to hire a full-time Associate Fiscal Administrative Officer within my Management and Support Services team. As our office has doubled in revenue over the past decade, our financial management needs have changed. It is no longer sufficient for the division director to be the sole professional level staff member in the unit. To ensure proper workload management as well as succession planning for the future, our office requires an additional staff member with accounting experience and qualifications, which the existing clerical staff do not possess.

Despite the challenges we face, our office, which has been flat funded from the General Fund for the past two biennium, has continued to do more with less. Any minimal funding that has lapsed in past years has been due to administrative hold-ups or temporarily unfilled positions within the office. With these modest budget requests, we are committed to continue operating under conservative means without impacting any of the services we provide to the public.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to any questions you may have.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stephanie Thomas", is positioned above the printed name.

Stephanie Thomas  
Secretary of the State of Connecticut



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**REVENUE**

**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE**

<b>Account</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY 2019</b>	<b>FY 2020</b>	<b>FY 2021</b>	<b>FY 2022</b>	<b>FY 2023 (As of 1/30/23)</b>
42430-Notary Public Registr Licenses	60	(720)	60	60	-	
42430-Notary Public Registr Licenses	\$745,106	\$755,595	\$670,105	\$803,290	\$835,511	365,965.00
43357-Service or Process Fees	195,080	214,935	153,625	136,005	153,503	78,650.00
43437-Other Fees-Certificate/Copies	999,215	984,105	774,030	1,898,300	141,349	682,929.00
43501-Fees-Commercial Recording	27,865,594	29,531,958	28,518,074	43,440,829	47,349,169	25,332,505.80
43502-Fees-Trade/Service Marks	44,200	29,690	14,755	12,990	14,250	6,650.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$29,849,195</b>	<b>\$31,516,283</b>	<b>\$30,130,589</b>	<b>\$46,291,413</b>	<b>\$48,493,781</b>	<b>\$26,466,700</b>



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## STAFFING

### OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE

Year	Agency	Employee Headcount	Total Annual Base Salary	Average Annual Base Salary	Mid Annual Base Salary Range	Min Annual Base Salary Range	Max Annual Base Salary Range
2023	Secretary of State	67	6,320,864.58	94,341.26	117,239.63	44,996.14	189,483.12
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>67</b>	<b>6,320,864.58</b>	<b>94,341.26</b>	<b>117,239.63</b>	<b>44,996.14</b>	<b>189,483.12</b>
Year	Agency	Employee Headcount	Total Annual Base Salary	Average Annual Base Salary	Mid Annual Base Salary Range	Min Annual Base Salary Range	Max Annual Base Salary Range
2022	Secretary of State	67	5,780,546.45	86,276.81	109,894.57	42,681.07	177,108.08
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>67</b>	<b>5,780,546.45</b>	<b>86,276.81</b>	<b>109,894.57</b>	<b>42,681.07</b>	<b>177,108.08</b>
Year	Agency	Employee Headcount	Total Annual Base Salary	Average Annual Base Salary	Mid Annual Base Salary Range	Min Annual Base Salary Range	Max Annual Base Salary Range
2021	Secretary of State	69	5,719,611.83	82,892.93	99,831.06	43,815.11	155,847.02
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>69</b>	<b>5,719,611.83</b>	<b>82,892.93</b>	<b>99,831.06</b>	<b>43,815.11</b>	<b>155,847.02</b>
Year	Agency	Employee Headcount	Total Annual Base Salary	Average Annual Base Salary	Mid Annual Base Salary Range	Min Annual Base Salary Range	Max Annual Base Salary Range
2020	Secretary of State	66	5,227,017.91	79,197.24	96,901.08	37,955.14	155,847.02
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>66</b>	<b>5,227,017.91</b>	<b>79,197.24</b>	<b>96,901.08</b>	<b>37,955.14</b>	<b>155,847.02</b>



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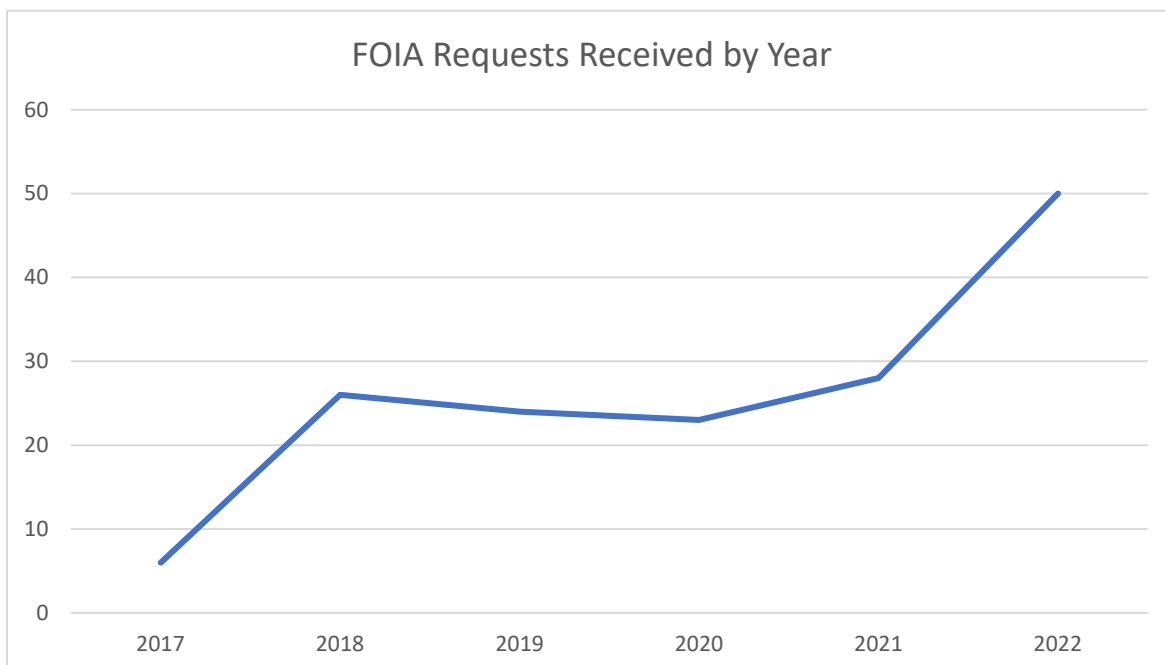
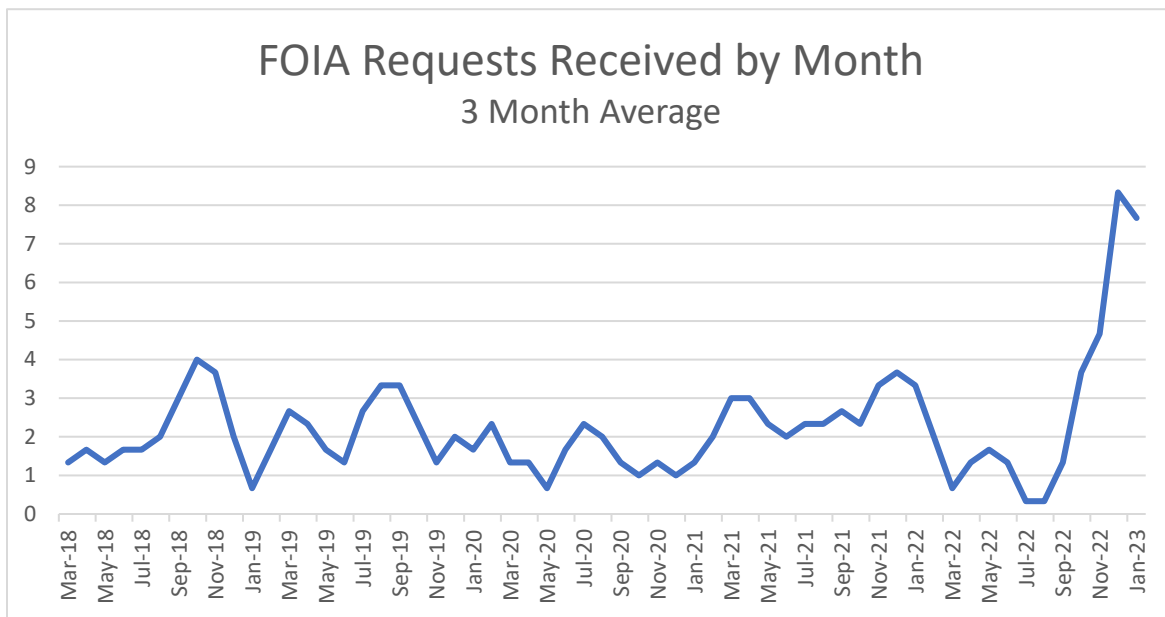
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## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE





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## BUSINESS REGISTRATION DATA OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE

ACTIVE AS OF 2/13/23

Business Type	Citizenship	Count
Non-Stock Corporation	Domestic	27,695
Non-Stock Corporation	Foreign	1,813
Stock Corporation	Domestic	37,032
Stock Corporation	Foreign	28,646
Unknown	Domestic	2,597
Benefit Corporation	Domestic	244
Limited Liability Partnership	Domestic	1,256
Limited Liability Partnership	Foreign	321
Limited Liability Company	Domestic	313,310
Limited Liability Company	Foreign	33,574
Statutory Trust	Domestic	1,047
Statutory Trust	Foreign	158
Limited Partnership	Domestic	8,477
Limited Partnership	Foreign	2,951
General Partnership	Domestic	11
Bank Non-Stock	Domestic	7
Bank Stock	Domestic	27
Credit Union Non-Stock	Domestic	21
Insurance Non-Stock	Domestic	6
Insurance Stock	Domestic	95
Cooperative Association	Domestic	5
Special Chartered	Domestic	1,020
Religious	Domestic	3,528
Cemetery	Domestic	11

Row Labels	# Count	% of Total
Domestic	396,389	85.46%
Foreign	67,463	14.54%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>463,852</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Row Labels	# Count	% of Total
Limited Liability Company	346,884	74.78%
Stock Corporation	65,678	14.16%
Non-Stock Corporation	29,508	6.36%
Limited Partnership	11,428	2.46%
Religious	3,528	0.76%
Unknown	2,597	0.56%
Limited Liability Partnership	1,577	0.34%
Statutory Trust	1,205	0.26%
Special Chartered	1,020	0.22%
Benefit Corporation	244	0.05%
Insurance Stock	95	0.02%
Bank Stock	27	0.01%
Credit Union Non-Stock	21	0.00%
Cemetery	11	0.00%
General Partnership	11	0.00%
Bank Non-Stock	7	0.00%
Insurance Non-Stock	6	0.00%
Cooperative Association	5	0.00%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>463,852</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## BUSINESSES STARTED IN CY2022

Business Type	Citizenship	Count	Per of Total
Limited Liability Company	Domestic	40,165	78.82%
Limited Liability Company	Foreign	4,244	8.33%
Stock Corporation	Foreign	2,606	5.11%
Stock Corporation	Domestic	1,971	3.87%
Non-Stock Corporation	Domestic	1,345	2.64%
Non-Stock Corporation	Foreign	173	0.34%
Limited Liability Partnership	Domestic	156	0.31%
Limited Partnership	Foreign	152	0.30%
Religious	Domestic	39	0.08%
Limited Liability Partnership	Foreign	32	0.06%
Limited Partnership	Domestic	25	0.05%
Statutory Trust	Domestic	22	0.04%
Statutory Trust	Foreign	15	0.03%
Benefit Corporation	Domestic	5	0.01%
General Partnership	Domestic	3	0.01%
Bank Stock	Domestic	1	0.00%
Cooperative Association	Domestic	1	0.00%
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>50,955</b>	



## DISSOLUTIONS IN CY2022

<b>Business Type</b>	<b>Citizenship</b>	<b># Administratively Forfeited</b>	<b># Voluntary Dissolutions</b>	<b>Total</b>
Non-Stock Corporation	Domestic	3,513	461	3,974
Non-Stock Corporation	Foreign	244	58	302
Stock Corporation	Domestic	8,085	1,640	9,725
Stock Corporation	Foreign	5,934	1,255	7,189
Benefit Corporation	Domestic	0	21	21
Limited Liability Partnership	Domestic	231	111	342
Limited Liability Partnership	Foreign	35	12	47
Limited Liability Company	Domestic	66,499	14,454	80,953
Limited Liability Company	Foreign	4,103	1,518	5,621
Statutory Trust	Domestic	0	12	12
Limited Partnership	Domestic	387	46	433
Limited Partnership	Foreign	273	46	319
General Partnership	Domestic	0	9	9
Bank Stock	Domestic	0	2	2
Religious	Domestic	0	10	10
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>89,304</b>	<b>19,655</b>	<b>108,959</b>

## BUSINESSES STARTED 2018 TO 2022

	Registration Year				
Citizenship	CY2018	CY2019	CY2020	CY2021	CY2022
Domestic	23,821	26,045	30,178	40,443	43,720
Year over Year Change	NA	9.34%	15.87%	34.01%	8.10%
Foreign	4,365	4,811	4,621	6,521	7,219
Year over Year Change	NA	10%	-4%	41%	11%

## BUSINESS DISSOLUTIONS 2018 TO 2022

		CY2018	CY2019	CY2020	CY2021	CY2022
Domestic	Administratively Forfeited	16	19,535	7,206	34,255	78,715
	Year over Year Change	NA	121993.75%	-63.11%	375.37%	129.79%
	Voluntary	11,826	15,082	11,037	13,941	16,765
	Year over Year Change	NA	27.53%	-26.82%	26.31%	20.26%
Foreign	Administratively Forfeited	3	3,552	1,041	4,616	10,589
	Year over Year Change	NA	118300.00%	-70.69%	343.42%	129.40%
	Voluntary	2,338	2,648	2,092	2,381	2,889
	Year over Year Change	NA	13.26%	-21.00%	13.81%	21.34%



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# 2022 PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGN DATA

## OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE



### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Total Social Impressions: 23,498,093
- Total Digital Impressions: 17,122,095
- Total TV Impressions: 61,810,426
- Total Radio Impressions: 25,540,862
- Total Print Impressions: 375,000
- Total Spanish Impressions: 3,931,100

**132,277,576**  
TOTAL CAMPAIGN  
IMPRESSIONS

**1,959,804**  
TOTAL  
ENGAGEMENT