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MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Administration Committee of the Legislative Council
FROM: Nicole Haatvedt, Legal Counsel
RE: Capitol Security Measures in Other States

Many states have begun evaluating security issues at their capitol buildings and other state buildings as a result of several bombing and shooting incidents at federal and other buildings in recent years. Several have conducted security analyses of state buildings and grounds and have begun implementing changes in security measures. The following are examples of security measures being employed by some states:

I. Creation of a Security Oversight Committee. Minnesota has recently created a Capitol Complex Security Oversight Committee which is to assume on-going responsibility for the conceptual and strategic operation of the Minnesota Capitol Security and for the development, implementation, and continued evaluation of the capitol complex system security plan.

II. Monitoring of Entrances to Buildings.

A. Limited Public Entrances. Many states limit the number of entrances which are available for public entrance to a state building. Some states post security officers, who may be sworn or nonsworn personnel, at the entrances to monitor people entering and exiting the building.

B. Universal Access and Control Systems. Several states use access cards or badges for entrances to nonpublic entrances or for after hours access to buildings.

C. Magnetometers and X-ray Machines. Some states place walk-through magnetometers and package/parcel x-ray machines at public entrances to state buildings. Security officers monitor and operate these machines.

III. Security Cameras. Many states have security cameras placed throughout their capitols and other state buildings, which are usually monitored by security officers in a control center of some sort. Some states have security cameras in House and Senate chambers to monitor activity in the galleries and on the floor.

Colorado recently revamped its video surveillance system by updating security cameras, implementing a fiber optic approach for the cameras, and improving its video recording equipment. Several of the new cameras are pan/tilt/zoom cameras with a 360 degree monitoring ability, including the cameras in the House and Senate chambers and on the exterior of the capitol building.

IV. X-ray of Mail. Several states X-ray mail coming into state buildings in order to identify suspicious parcels.

V. Duress Alarms and Personal Mobile Transmitters. Many states have duress/distress alarms located in offices, hearing rooms, and chambers which send signals to a control center monitored by security personnel. Colorado has also purchased 40 personal mobile transmitters (PTZs) which can be carried by employees. The PTZs can provide information to Colorado's state security command center regarding the identity and location of the person carrying the PTZ.

VI. Increased Security Staffing and a Centralized Control Center. Many states have added more security personnel in recent years to provide security 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and to increase security officers' presence in state buildings. Security is centralized in a control or command center where security officers provide video surveillance, dispatch officers, and monitor duress alarms. Often fire alarms and security alarms are also monitored from the control center.

VII. Other Security and Safety Measures.

A. Parking. An increasing number of states are limiting vehicle access around the perimeter of state buildings to persons with security access cards or remote controls.

B. Security Training for Legislative Employees. Many states provide extensive training for employees on bomb security precautions, identification of suspicious individuals and packages, and other security issues.

C. Health Emergencies. Some states have purchased the new defibrillators and have provided employees with training in the use of the machines. Nevada also provides incentives to legislative employees to become certified as emergency medical technicians.