

## A Time of Transition

Steve Towns | November 11, 2014

Among the many challenges facing public CIOs is the fact that your job often is tied to the political success of your boss. That's certainly true for many state CIOs, particularly as more of those positions have been elevated to cabinet-level posts.

In November, voters in 36 states cast ballots for governor. In about half of those states, incumbents were expected to coast to re-election. Administration changes were more likely in the rest — and CIO jobs and technology initiatives hung in the balance. Now, with the election results tabulated, here are a few states to watch.

In Pennsylvania, Democrat Tom Wolf defeated incumbent Republican Gov. Tom Corbett, potentially triggering changes for a state IT team that has boldly moved toward the cloud. In July, state CIO Tony Encinias announced a deal to unify seven state data centers into perhaps the largest hybrid cloud deployment in state government. The seven-year, \$681 million project, awarded to Unisys, is intended to provide true computing-on-demand services for state agencies. Now the questions are how strongly the new administration will support the move, and whether Encinias will be around to see it through.

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And in Hawaii, incumbent Gov. Neil Abercrombie didn't even survive the Democratic primary, where he was upset by state Sen. David Ige. Abercrombie had moved aggressively to shore up technology in the state, hiring Hawaii's first statewide CIO, backing multiyear plans to modernize government systems and launching efforts to expand broadband connectivity. But Ige, who ultimately was elected governor, has criticized the CIO's office and the results of Abercrombie's modernization efforts. Don't be surprised to see a shakeup there.

Changes like these come with the territory — and help explain why the average job tenure for public CIOs clocks in at something less than five years. Here's wishing everyone a smooth transition.

<http://www.govtech.com/state/A-Time-of-Transition.html>