



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: October 19, 2010

13

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT: EXPANDING INTERNET ACCESS TO ALL FAMILIES IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY (DISTRICT: ALL)

SUMMARY:

Overview

There are thousands of families throughout San Diego County who cannot go online to pay bills, look up information on health issues, apply for school, sign up for emergency response notifications, or even seek for a job. High-speed internet access, also known as “broadband,” is essential to our society in a digital world and global economy.

Every federal, state, and local government in the United States of America uses the Internet to communicate with its citizens. The County of San Diego is a leader among governments by harnessing the Internet to improve our ability to provide services to the public. In fact, the Center for Digital Government recognized the County of San Diego for creating the “Best Local Government Website” in the State in 2009.

The California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) provides statewide leadership to close the “digital divide” by accelerating the deployment and adoption of broadband to low income, unserved, and underserved communities and populations. CETF is sponsoring a statewide initiative titled “Get Connected!”

The overall goal of the “Get Connected!” initiative is to secure California’s fair share of broadband technology funds from the federal government, and to help communities that lack the telecommunications technology necessary to access high-speed Internet.

The time is approaching where members of the general public who do not have digital literacy will have trouble functioning in society. By approving this resolution the Board of Supervisors is officially on record as supporting CETF efforts to encourage adoption of broadband technology across California.

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Recommendation(s)

CHAIRWOMAN SLATER-PRICE AND SUPERVISOR ROBERTS

1. Adopt the attached resolution in support of the California Emerging Technology Fund's "Get Connected!" initiative to close the digital divide in California.
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to include in the County's Legislative Program support for legislation and legislative efforts to improve broadband accessibility in San Diego County and throughout California.
3. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to draft a letter for the Chair's signature to be sent to all 18 cities within the County of San Diego encouraging them to support the "Get Connected!" initiative. |

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with these recommendations.

Business Impact Statement

N/A

Advisory Board Statement

N/A

BACKGROUND:

The California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) has been established as a non-profit corporation pursuant to orders from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in approving the mergers of SBC-AT&T and Verizon-MCI in 2005.

One of CETF's primary goals is to increase the use of computers throughout California. Without computers and computer literacy, neither availability nor access to broadband will ensure use. Low use of computers is at the heart of the digital divide. CETF is responsible for fostering public/private partnerships to garner community support for broadband access improvements throughout California.

CETF is attempting to secure support from all 58 counties for its "Get Connected!" initiative. The following counties have so far endorsed the resolution: Alameda, Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Los Angeles, Mariposa, Mendocino, Mono, Nevada, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Shasta, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Tehama, Trinity and Tulare.

The overall goal of this initiative is to secure California's fair share of broadband technology funds from the federal government. This campaign is designed to help rural communities that lack the broadband infrastructure, aid the urban poor and disadvantaged communities that do not have the computers and affordable connections to the Internet, and assist disabled populations that lack technology accessibility.

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The San Diego Futures Foundation, a local non-profit that helps improve access to computers in San Diego, has endorsed the “Get Connected!” initiative, and has requested support from the Board of Supervisors. In early spring 2011, the San Diego Futures Foundation is hosting a “Get Connected!” fair for more than 1,000 low-income, disconnected residents. This fair will increase access to technology through multiple approaches including informing attendees of discounted connectivity, offering low-cost computers, and conducting informative workshops on Internet safety and training.

This Board has always been very supportive of improving services through technology. Most recently, at our respective requests, the Board has directed staff to expand the public’s ability to comment at our meetings through online means, and enhance the County’s emergency notification system by procuring an emergency alert system specifically designed for people with hearing impairments.

By approving this resolution the County is endorsing the efforts of the “Get Connected!” campaign and keeping in line with our vision to provide a County that is safe, healthy, and thriving.

Respectfully submitted,

PAM SLATER-PRICE
Chairwoman
San Diego County Board of Supervisors

RON ROBERTS
Supervisor
Fourth District

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

REQUIRES FOUR VOTES: Yes No

WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED
 Yes No

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:
N/A

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:
N/A

BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:
N/A

MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:
N/A

ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):
N/A

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: District 3 and District 4, Board of Supervisors

OTHER CONCURRENCE(S): N/A

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