County of Monterey

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Board Report

File #: 12-656, **Version:** 1

Adopt a Resolution supporting the County of Monterey's participation in *Get Connected!*, a program launched by the California Emerging Technology Fund that promotes digital literacy and high-speed internet connectivity for residents both in the home and at school.

RECOMMENDATION:
It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:
Adopt a resolution supporting the County of Monterey's participation in *Get Connected!*, a program launched by the California Emerging Technology Fund that promotes digital literacy and high-speed internet connectivity for residents both in the home and at school.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:
High-speed internet access is an essential 21st century infrastructure in a digital world and global economy. Although California is home to a wellspring of innovation that has given rise to the evolution of broadband and other information technologies, our state's adoption and use of broadband technology is only approximately equivalent to the national average. According to the most recent Wireline and Fixed Wireless Broadband Services data report submitted by the California Public Utilities Commission, the County of Monterey can be considered an unserved and underserved region for high-speed internet service (See Attachment 1).

Get Connected!, a program launched by the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) is a comprehensive statewide public awareness program to increase understanding about the economic and social benefits of broadband connectivity. *Get Connected!* proposes to incorporate digital literacy and high-speed internet connectivity for residents both in the home and at schools as learning tools which are essential in a digital world, global economy, and as a strategy to reduce our carbon footprint. This program also aims to break down barriers and misperceptions that perpetuate the Digital Divide that currently exists in many areas of California.

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors join in support of the CETF's *Get Connected!* program along with the Central Coast Broadband Consortium (CCBC), the Governor, Legislature, local governments, civic leaders, community organizations, employers, labor representatives, educators, and policymakers to encourage implementation of broadband technology. The adoption of this resolution will allow *Get Connected!* to reference the County of Monterey and the Board of Supervisors as supporters in CETF printed materials and websites and more importantly, allow our local schools and nonprofit organizations to reference this support in grant applications for closing the Digital Divide.

It is also recommended that the Board of Supervisors request brief reports from organizations working in this arena to learn about the impact of computer technology and Internet access on individuals and families, especially those from unserved and underserved communities in Monterey County. These reports should also include the strategic actions of the organizations that have helped to remove barriers to broadband access in our communities, how they promoted the deployment and adoption of computers and access to the Internet in the home among residents, customers, and recipients of public services, as well as the beneficial community impacts that can be attributed to the increase in broadband access.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:
Current participating agencies include California State University, Monterey Bay, Monterey Institute of International Studies, City of Gonzalez, La Clinica de Salud del Valle de Salinas, The Monterey County Business Council, University of California at Santa Cruz, City of Watsonville, City of Santa Cruz, San Benito County and the Economic Development Corporation of San Benito among others.

FINANCING:
There are no impacts on the County General Fund associated with this recommended action.

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Attachments:
Resolution