



SUPERVISOR LISA BARTLETT, FIFTH DISTRICT
DOUG CHAFFEE, VICE-CHAIR SUPERVISOR, FOURTH DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

HELPING SENIORS EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY AND STAY CONNECTED

Orange County Board of Supervisors Unanimously Approves allocating \$2.4 million of American Rescue Plan Act funds to Implement Technology Solutions and Help Seniors Stay Connected

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ORANGE COUNTY, CA (August 24, 2021) – Today, the Orange County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a proposal brought forward by Supervisor Lisa Bartlett and Vice-Chair Doug Chaffee, to allocate \$2.4 million for the implementation of a program that will help bridge the digital divide among seniors.

The action was taken in response to a report published by the Orange County Senior Citizens Advisory Council, an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors on senior related matters, outlining the challenges and needs of seniors when it comes to technology.

“I want to thank my colleagues for their support of this program, which, when fully developed, will help alleviate some of the challenges facing our older adults when it comes to accessing and utilizing technology,” said Supervisor Lisa Bartlett. “The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted our County’s systems for social support, communications, and healthcare, and illustrated that home-based internet and digital skills are, for many older adults, an essential lifeline,” she said.

While details of the program are yet to be determined, today’s action sets the wheels in motion to help bridge the digital divide, as highlighted by the California Master Plan for Aging, and address an already pressing need amplified by COVID-19.

“We need to help our senior citizens bridge the digital divide” said Supervisor Doug Chaffee. “Almost everything can now be accessed digitally. Sometimes even medical test results are available only online,” said Supervisor Doug Chaffee.

The goal of this program is to provide older adults, especially those who are high-risk, homebound or in residential care, with the necessary tools and knowledge to participate in virtual programs offered by senior centers, telehealth appointments, and online classes. The program would also help cultivate a tech-savvy older adult population, promote continuous learning, increase socialization and reduce loneliness and isolation.

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Supervisor Lisa Bartlett represents the Fifth Supervisorial District which includes the cities of Aliso Viejo, Dana Point, Irvine (portion of), Laguna Beach, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel, Laguna Woods, Lake Forest, Mission Viejo, Rancho Santa Margarita, San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano, as well as the unincorporated communities of Coto de Caza, Emerald Bay, Ladera Ranch, Las Flores, Rancho Mission Viejo, Stonecliffe and Wagon Wheel

Supervisor Doug Chaffee represents the Fourth Supervisorial District which includes the cities of Anaheim, Brea, Buena Park, Fullerton, La Habra and Placentia