



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION TO PROMOTE DIGITAL EQUITY THROUGH DONATION OF COOK COUNTY SALVAGE IT EQUIPMENT TO PCs FOR PEOPLE

WHEREAS, access to digital devices and the internet has become an essential component for full participation in society; and

WHEREAS, in today's society, high-speed and affordable internet and digital devices are essential infrastructure for job creation, education, health care, the enhancement of safe communities, civic engagement, and government responsiveness; and

WHEREAS, lack of digital infrastructure and devices is most acute among low-income communities, communities of color, and other underserved populations in Cook County; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has shifted more work and education to virtual settings, heightening the need for available, reliable, and affordable internet access for all residents; and

WHEREAS, "digital equity" refers to the condition in which all Cook County residents and communities have the information technology infrastructure and devices to fully participate in our society, and requires universal and affordable access to high-speed internet, digital devices, and technological literacy; and

WHEREAS, digital equity, including universal access to digital devices and high-speed internet for all Cook County residents, is a main concern for Cook County Government as our society becomes increasingly dependent upon technology and internet access for employment, education, health care, and other opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Cook County established the President's Council on Digital Equity (CODE) in 2020, to advance digital equity in the areas of digital infrastructure, digital proficiency, and digital accessibility; and

WHEREAS, the current cost of digital devices such as desktop and laptop computers is prohibitively expensive for many suburban Cook County residents and is preventing them from full participation in the modern world; and

WHEREAS, various Cook County agencies, including Offices Under the President, Sheriff's Office, State's Attorney's Office, Board of Review, Assessor's Office, Circuit Court Clerk's Office, County Clerk's Office, Public Defender's Office, and Assessor's Office prioritize environmental sustainability and desire to minimize the County's electronic waste footprint by putting their technology salvage to the best and highest use; and

WHEREAS, Cook County's technology salvage consists of technology that is at end-of-life and therefore of little to no value to other government entities or at public auction; and

WHEREAS, PCs for People is a not-for-profit whose mission is to provide technology access that offers employment and educational opportunities to low-income individuals, families with children, and those with disabilities by offering services including free end-of-life IT asset management and certified data sanitization, technology refurbishing,

computer distribution, computer repair, internet service, tech education, and free electronic recycling; and

WHEREAS, PCs for People has distributed over 155,000 refurbished computers, subscribed 165,000 families to low-cost internet, and recycled 8 million pounds of electronics since 1998; and

WHEREAS, PCs for People is now operating in Illinois, with a temporary location in Oak Forest and a commitment to establishing a permanent location in the South Suburbs and seeks to empower low-income families and not-for-profits in Cook County through access to technology and low-cost internet access, including by refurbishing donated technology salvage to provide free and low-cost computers; and

WHEREAS, Cook County Ordinance Article XVI- CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS PROGRAM, Sec. 2-1067 “Cook County Donation of Salvaged Property” provides in relevant part that when a “proposed donation would not benefit a Qualified Organization, United Fund or government entity, then authorization from the Cook County Board of Commissioners is required prior to such donation”; and

WHEREAS, “Qualified Organization” means an organization defined under 5 ILCS 340/3(b) that is authorized to accept Employee or Official donations under the Voluntary Payroll Deductions Act of 1983, 5 ILCS 340/1 et seq.; and

WHEREAS, PCs for People is not currently a “Qualified Organization” as defined above; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the President and the Cook County Board of Commissioners do hereby authorize Cook County government entities to donate information technology salvage to PCs for People.

Effective Date: This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.