



Legislation Text

File #: 18-1315, **Version:** 1

Supervisor Ranalli recommending Board receive and file presentation provided by representatives of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), National Homebuyers Fund, Inc., and iFoster on the distribution of laptops provided to local foster youth and former foster youth aged 6-12 in El Dorado County. These laptops are part of a statewide distribution of more than 1,100 laptop computers to all eligible foster youth and former foster youth aged 16-21 within RCRC's 35-member counties. (Est. Time: 15 Min.)

As part of National Foster Care Month in May of this year the the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), National Homebuyers Fund, Inc.(NHF), and iFoster have initiated the distribution of more than 1,100 laptop computers to all eligible foster youth and former foster youth aged 16-21 within RCRC's 35-member counties.

Late last year, RCRC and NHF's Boards of Directors each approved providing \$200,000 to support the 1 Laptop Program for Foster Youth. Through this one-time \$400,000 contribution, eligible foster youth and former foster youth in care within RCRC's 35 counties will be provided a laptop, complete with the iFoster Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Assistant, which includes a HIPAA compliant secure online digital locker, accessible anywhere, anytime. The laptop is fully integrated into iFoster's resource portal and programs, providing access to more than 500 needed resources, and improved youth support networks.

Owning a computer addresses additional challenges for foster youth, including accessing needed resources and the loss or misplacement of important life documents as youth move from placement to placement. A 2016 study of 730 youth across California who received iFoster computers found that only five percent of rural foster youth have consistent access to a computer in their homes, compared to 90 percent of all teens, and 79 percent of low-income teens (Pew Research Center, 2014). When provided with a computer, 98 percent of youth reported using it on a daily or weekly basis, and statistically significant improvements were found in academic performance, social connectiveness, and life satisfaction.

Distribution plans for each RCRC member county are currently underway, with the goal of providing a laptop to each eligible youth by October 2018.