County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
DISTRICT 3
File #: 24-030   Board Meeting Date: 1/23/2024

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Supervisor Ray Mueller, District 3

Subject: Resolution affirming the importance of maintaining county jobs during advancements in artificial intelligence

RECOMMENDATION:
Adopt a resolution affirming the importance of maintaining county jobs during advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) and directing the County Executive's Office to develop strategies to achieve this goal.

BACKGROUND:
Recent breakthroughs in artificial intelligence have the potential to significantly transform county work, offering numerous positive impacts but also raising concerns about potential job displacement. AI technologies may enable counties to streamline administrative tasks, enhance data analysis, and improve decision-making processes. For instance, machine learning algorithms can efficiently process vast amounts of data to identify patterns and trends, aiding in areas such as public health monitoring, resource allocation, and emergency response planning. However, the fear of job loss looms large, as the automation capabilities of AI may lead to the displacement of certain routine tasks traditionally performed by the workforce.

It is crucial for counties to address this concern by emphasizing the collaborative nature of AI, where technology works alongside humans to augment capabilities rather than replace jobs entirely. A thoughtful and inclusive approach to AI adoption involves reskilling and upskilling the workforce, ensuring that employees can adapt to new roles created by these technologies, and ultimately fostering a balanced integration that maximizes the benefits of AI while preserving job opportunities.

DISCUSSION:
Implementing a policy focused on retaining jobs while integrating AI technologies is a strategic move that can facilitate smoother technology adoption. By emphasizing the preservation of existing employment opportunities, organizations can minimize resistance from their workforce and reduce the likelihood of institutional pushback against the adoption of new technologies. This approach

fosters a positive environment for technological innovation, as employees are more likely to embrace AI when they perceive them as tools that enhance their current roles rather than replace them. Moreover, retaining jobs signals a commitment to the well-being of the workforce, creating a sense of security and trust among employees. This trust can, in turn, lead to increased cooperation and collaboration in the implementation of AI technologies, as employees become more receptive to learning and adapting to the evolving technological landscape. Overall, a policy that prioritizes job retention while embracing AI can pave the way for a harmonious and efficient integration of advanced technologies within an organization.

The proposed resolution affirming the importance of maintaining county jobs during advancements in artificial intelligence is a crucial step toward balancing technological progress with a commitment to valuing and sustaining the county's workforce. By adopting this resolution, the county demonstrates a forward-thinking approach that not only embraces the benefits of AI but also acknowledges the potential challenges it may pose to employment stability. Directing the County Executive's Office to develop strategies for achieving this goal underscores the commitment to inclusivity and proactive planning. This resolution aims to guide county departments in navigating the evolving landscape of technology while ensuring that the workforce remains a top priority. It is a positive stride toward fostering a harmonious relationship between humans and AI, emphasizing collaboration and the empowerment of employees in the face of technological advancements.

FISCAL IMPACT:
None.