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**County of Santa Clara Leads Local Government Coalition Supporting  
Legal Challenge to Block Trump Administration's Targeting of  
Immigrants in the 2020 Census**

*Local Governments Nationwide Oppose the Trump Administration's Unlawful Attempt to  
Exclude Undocumented Immigrants from Census Count*

**SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIF.** (November 20, 2020) — Yesterday, the County of Santa Clara led a nationwide coalition of local governments in filing an amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court to support a challenge to President Trump's Memorandum seeking to exclude undocumented immigrants from the census population count used to allocate congressional representation. The effect of the Memorandum would be to deny congressional seats to states like California that have a significant population of undocumented residents.

"For years, the County of Santa Clara has fought against the Trump administration's numerous attempts to undermine an accurate census count," said James R. Williams, County Counsel for the County of Santa Clara. "The Constitution is abundantly clear: Every person residing in the United States during the census, regardless of legal status, must be counted. This is yet another attempt by the Trump administration to erase and exclude our immigrant communities. We saw it when they tried to add a citizenship question to the census, and we saw it when they rushed to end census counting early while in the midst of a pandemic. The County of Santa Clara stands firmly on the side of our immigrant communities, and we will continue to reject the Trump administration's repeated attempts to illegally sabotage the census."

In the brief, Santa Clara and its local government partners detail the many ways that undocumented immigrants are an integral part of their communities, including as longtime residents, members of mixed-status households with U.S. citizen family members, and members of local labor forces. The brief, in particular, highlights the critical role undocumented workers play in essential businesses that support residents' health and safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. The brief further argues that by omitting undocumented immigrants from the population count, the Trump Memorandum would harm all community members by skewing congressional representation in a

way that does not accurately reflect states' population. As a result, residents in states like California will be underrepresented in Congress.

“Undocumented residents are valued members of our local community,” said Cindy Chavez, President of the County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors. “Despite being ineligible for federal relief during the pandemic, undocumented workers are overrepresented among essential workers on the frontlines in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. These individuals have deep familial, economic, and cultural ties in our community, and for many of them, it is the only place they've called home. The County serves and will continue to serve all its residents regardless of the Supreme Court's decision.”

“Everyone in Santa Clara County regardless of immigrant status should be counted in the 2020 Census,” said Supervisor Dave Cortese. “The federal government mandates that we serve all our residents. Leaving out a significant portion of our population means that the County will not get a fair return on the tax dollars that we send to Washington.”

The brief is available [here](#).

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### **About the Santa Clara County Counsel's Office**

The Office of the County Counsel serves as legal counsel to the County of Santa Clara, its Board of Supervisors and elected officials, every County department and agency, and the County's boards and commissions. With a staff of over 200, the Office is also responsible for all civil litigation involving the County and its officers. Through its Social Justice and Impact Litigation Section, the Office litigates high-impact cases, drafts innovative local ordinances, and develops policies and programs to advance social and economic justice.

### **About the County of Santa Clara, California**

The County of Santa Clara government serves a diverse, multi-cultural population of 1.9 million residents in Santa Clara County, California – more populous than 14 states. The County provides essential services to its residents, including public health protection, environmental stewardship, medical services through the County of Santa Clara Health System, child and adult protection services, homelessness prevention and solutions, roads, park services, libraries, emergency response to disasters, protection of minority communities and those under threat, access to a fair criminal justice system, and many other public benefits.

### **About the Social Justice and Impact Litigation Section**

The Social Justice and Impact Litigation Section within the Santa Clara County Counsel's Office litigates high-impact cases, drafts innovative local ordinances, and develops new policies and programs to advance the County's goal of achieving social and economic justice for all its residents. The Section also defends the County in select cases with the potential to significantly affect the County's ability to provide critical safety net services to vulnerable residents. The Section is part of a growing movement to use the power and unique perspective of local government to better serve the community and to drive long-lasting change at the local, state, and national levels.