



**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY COUNSEL  
COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA**

70 West Hedding Street  
East Wing, 9th Floor  
San José, California 95110-1770

**James R. Williams  
COUNTY COUNSEL**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact:**

María Leticia Gómez/Laurel Anderson  
Office of Communications and Public Affairs  
(408) 299-5119  
[sccpublicaffairs@ceo.sccgov.org](mailto:sccpublicaffairs@ceo.sccgov.org)

**Statement from Santa Clara County Counsel James R. Williams  
on Petition Filed Today with the FCC Seeking  
Reconsideration of Net Neutrality Rollback**

Santa Clara County, Calif. — Santa Clara County Counsel James R. Williams released the following statement today regarding the County’s petition filed with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) asking the FCC to reconsider its most recent decision to continue with its Net Neutrality Rollback despite the grave risks that poses to public safety. This step follows an October 2019 decision by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals—which agreed with Santa Clara County that the FCC violated its core mandate by failing to consider harms to public safety and ordered the FCC to squarely address the public safety implications of the repeal—and the County’s April 2020 comment explaining how the Net Neutrality Rollback hamstrings local governments’ ability to protect their residents. The County’s petition filed today asks the FCC to properly consider the public safety implications of the Net Neutrality rollback:

“As we have said from the beginning, in repealing the Net Neutrality rules, the Trump administration violated the law when it failed to consider the harm to public safety. The D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with the County that the FCC violated its core mandate by failing to consider harms to public safety and ordered the FCC to address the public safety implications of the repeal. But the FCC’s most recent order in the waning months of the Trump administration once again failed to recognize and appropriately weigh the public safety implications of the repeal. The FCC’s repeal of the Net Neutrality rules threatens the safety of our residents and undermines our ability to provide emergency services and efficient crisis response. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the County made clear to the FCC the vital importance of the internet as a matter of public safety; the importance of these rules now in the midst of the pandemic cannot seriously be questioned. We call on the FCC to undo the damage done by the Trump administration and to reinstate Net Neutrality rules.”

More information on the County's efforts to advance net neutrality principles, including a copy of the petition filed today, can be found at the County Counsel's website at <https://counsel.sccgov.org/high-profile-matters/net-neutrality>.

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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.