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**County of Santa Clara and Public Rights Project Lead Nationwide Coalition Opposing the
Trump Administration's Assault on the U.S. Postal Service**

SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIF. (September 8, 2020) — On Friday, the County of Santa Clara and Public Rights Project filed an *amicus curiae* brief on behalf of a nationwide coalition of local and tribal governments opposing recent U.S. Postal Service (USPS) changes that have slowed critically important mail delivery. The brief, filed by 32 local and tribal governments, urges courts in Washington D.C. and Pennsylvania to block the USPS changes, which impede the ability of localities to administer the November election and provide other core governmental services in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Starting in July 2020, U.S. Postmaster General Louis DeJoy implemented a number of changes at USPS that have slowed down mail delivery and will make it harder for vulnerable communities, such as the elderly and communities of color, to vote by mail and receive essential government services. The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted these same communities, and due to the changes, now face even greater hurdles in exercising their right to vote and receiving often life-saving services such as mail-delivered prescriptions.

“As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, granting women the right to vote, during the most significant pandemic since that time, I am proud that the County of Santa Clara is leading this coalition of local and tribal governments to clearly demonstrate how the recent USPS policy changes would interfere with our efforts to ensure that everyone can safely vote,” said Cindy Chavez, President of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors.

The amicus brief highlights how the USPS changes and resulting mail delays directly interfere with local and tribal government plans to administer the November election, including by delaying the delivery and receipt of ballots—posing a particular risk that ballots cast by members of the military overseas as well as elderly and disabled voters mailing their ballots will not be received in time to be counted. As a result, many local and tribal governments now must revamp

election plans and find the funds—a mere two months before the election—to increase voting hours, secure additional polling locations, and/or add ballot drop boxes to ensure their constituents can safely and reliably exercise their right to vote.

“The Trump Administration’s attempt to sabotage the USPS is an unlawful assault on our democracy,” said Santa Clara County Counsel James R. Williams. “The County of Santa Clara will continue to make every effort to ensure that its constituents are able to exercise their fundamental right to vote in a safe and reliable manner.”

The brief also details the ways that many local governments rely on the mail to provide their residents essential social services, such as mailing prescriptions and providing rental assistance. Delays in receiving these services are particularly high stakes for vulnerable communities, given the health and economic crisis across the nation.

“As the brief makes clear, the USPS provides the backbone to so many crucial government services delivered by local and tribal governments,” said Public Rights Project’s Legal Director Jonathan Miller. “This isn’t just about the upcoming election. The USPS’s changes undercut the ability of those on the front lines of government committed to serving their communities. They delay needed medications, delivery of test results, and crucial notices. These politically motivated and totally unnecessary changes harm people’s lives.”

A diverse coalition of local and tribal jurisdictions joined the County of Santa Clara and Public Rights Project in filing the amicus brief. Signatories include: Columbus, OH; Philadelphia, PA; Cook County, IL; Alameda City, CA; Cincinnati, OH; Atlanta, GA; Dayton, OH; Austin, TX; East Palo Alto, CA; Berkeley, CA; Flint, MI; Boston, MA; Gary, IN; Cambridge, MA; Houston, TX; Chicago, IL; Harris County, TX; Los Angeles County, CA; Pittsburgh, PA; Los Angeles City, CA; Portland, OR; Madison, WI; Saint Paul, MN; Marin County, CA; Santa Cruz, CA; Monterey County, CA; Seattle, WA; Oakland, CA; Somerville, MA; West Hollywood, CA; Yurok Tribe, CA.

The brief, which can be accessed at <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/cco/overview/impact/Pages/impact.aspx>, was filed in support of motions for preliminary injunctions filed in *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, et al. v. DeJoy et al.*, No. 2-20-cv-04096 (E.D. Pa.) and *State of New York, et al. v. Trump, et al.*, No. 1-20-cv-02340 (D.D.C.).

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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 Public Rights Project

Public Rights Project is a national non-profit, based in Oakland, that builds state and local governments' capacity to enforce their residents' rights. Their mission is to close the gap between the promise of our laws and the lived reality of our most vulnerable communities. They work to achieve this mission by training attorney fellows to catalyze the proactive work of government law offices; providing strategic support in legal strategy, research, partnerships and data analytics to help offices develop high-impact legal cases; and designing and spreading community outreach and organizing approaches that empower community residents and advocates to be active partners in an enforcement agenda rooted in equity.