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Court Grants County of Santa Clara and SEIU 521's Motion to Halt Trump Administration's Repeal of DACA

SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIF. – Today, U.S. District Court Judge William Alsup temporarily blocked the Trump Administration's repeal of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and restored protections to hundreds of thousands of deserving immigrants pending a final decision by the court. The ruling came in response to a motion filed jointly by the County of Santa Clara, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 521, individual DACA recipients, the states of California, Maine, Maryland, and Minnesota, the University of California, and the City of San José.

The County and SEIU Local 521 filed suit in October, shortly after the Trump Administration announced its decision to dismantle the DACA program. Under DACA, immigrants who were brought to this county as children are protected from deportation and receive authorization to work lawfully. The Trump Administration's decision to end the program placed hundreds of thousands of young people at risk of deportation.

"Today's ruling will protect thousands of hard-working county residents while the County and SEIU Local 521 continue the fight to preserve DACA," said Supervisor Dave Cortese of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. "The Trump Administration's decision to repeal DACA was unconscionable, and has already caused immense harm and fear in our community. We applaud the court's decision to halt this heartless and illegal action."

Santa Clara County is home to an estimated 23,000 DACA-eligible individuals. The County lawfully employs DACA recipients as employees in many critical roles, and SEIU Local 521 represents many of these County workers. In their motion for preliminary injunction, the County, SEIU Local 521, and the other plaintiffs argued that the Trump Administration acted arbitrarily and unlawfully in repealing DACA, and failed to consider the devastating consequences of the repeal – including the havoc it would wreak in the lives of DACA recipients, their families, their communities, and employers like the County.

“The court recognized the Trump Administration’s action for what it is – cruel, baseless, and unlawful,” said Santa Clara County Counsel James R. Williams. “There is no justification for forcing these deserving young people back into the shadows under the constant threat of deportation. We will fight as long as necessary to ensure these young people can pursue their dreams and serve their communities.”

“Today’s ruling recognizes that the government can’t promise DACA recipients a future in this country and then abruptly rip that future away,” said Riko Mendez, Chief Elected Officer of SEIU Local 521. “This victory will go a long way to prevent further harm to our workers and the community we serve in our jobs as we continue to fight to keep DACA alive.”

In addition to granting the plaintiffs’ request for a preliminary injunction, the court also denied the federal government’s motion to dismiss the five related DACA lawsuits.

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About the Santa Clara County Counsel’s Office

The County Counsel serves as legal counsel to the County, its Board of Supervisors and elected officials, every County department and agency, and the County’s boards and commissions. With a staff of 170 employees, including 85 attorneys, the Office of the County Counsel 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. With a \$6.5 billion annual budget, dozens of offices/departments, and over 18,000 employees, the County provides essential services to its residents, including public health protection, environmental stewardship, medical services through Santa Clara Valley Medical Center, 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 others, particularly for those in the greatest need. The County is the most populous in Northern California.

About Service Employees International Union Local 521

Service Employees International Union Local 521 represents 40,000 public, non-profit, and private-sector workers in the Central Bay Area region and in the Central Valley including 10,000 workers in Santa Clara County. As a union, we are committed to making sure the needs and vital services we provide our communities come first. We believe communities thrive when residents, leaders and workers recognize that we are all in this together when it comes to safety, health, and well-being.