

County of Santa Clara

Office of the County Executive

County Government Center, East Wing

70 West Hedding Street, 11th Floor

San Jose, CA 95110

(408) 299-5119

www.sccgov.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 22, 2009

Contact:

Gwendolyn Mitchell/Laurel Anderson

Office of Public Affairs

(408) 299-5119

County of Santa Clara County Counsel Ann Ravel to Head U.S. Department of Justice Torts Branch and Consumer Litigation

SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIF.—County Counsel Ann Ravel has been selected to head the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Division Torts Branch and Office of Consumer Litigation in Washington, D.C. As the new Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Ravel will oversee the Civil Division's Torts Branch which represents the government in lawsuits where monetary judgments are sought for damages resulting from alleged negligent or wrongful acts. The Torts Branch also handles actions involving injury or damage to government property. The Office of Consumer Litigation is responsible for criminal and civil litigation and related matters arising under federal statutes administered by the Federal Drug Administration, the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Federal Trade Commission and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

"It is an honor to take on this important responsibility for the federal government," said Ravel. "I will now have a chance to use the law to help protect the public and the public fisc on a broader scale."

In her new role as Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Ravel will be responsible for the oversight of consumer protection litigation. The Civil Division litigates both criminal and civil actions in the defense of consumer protection laws, including the representation of the Consumer Products Safety Commission and the Food and Drug Administration. She will also be responsible for the defense of the government and its officers and employees in lawsuits seeking damages from the U.S. Treasury, and to represent the interests of the United States in litigation.

"The US Department of Justice has a great leadership team," she continued. "It will be a great privilege to work with Attorney General Eric Holder and Assistant Attorney General Tony West."

-more-

Ravel to Head U.S. Department of Justice Torts Branch and Consumer Litigation – page 2 of 2

Ravel graduated from Hastings Law School in 1974, and has practiced civil law in various areas of the law since that time, with an emphasis in political law and ethics, labor and employment, and civil rights litigation. She has broadened the scope of the Santa Clara County Counsel's office to include the award-winning Elder Abuse litigation team, the Educational Rights Project, and Impact Litigation, plaintiff's litigation on behalf of the County and the citizens of the community to enforce their legal rights.

"The Obama Administration will be getting a very capable leader," said Supervisor Liz Kniss, President of the County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors. "Ann has provided energy, expertise and experience for 30 year at the County and she will be sorely missed."

Under Ravel's leadership, Santa Clara County was the first public entity to bring a case to remedy the affects of lead paint poisoning in the community. Ravel also represented the County on the statewide steering committee for tobacco litigation, which won a substantial settlement which benefits health needs in Santa Clara County.

Ravel was named a Woman of Influence in the Silicon Valley in 2008, and has received the 2007 Public Lawyer of the Year award from the California State Bar, the Circle of Service Achievement Award by the California State Association of Counties in 2004, the Unsung Hero Award by the Santa Clara County Bar Assn., the American Bar Assn. Award for State and Local Government Law Advocacy presented in 2002, the 2001 Professional Lawyer of the Year Award presented by the Santa Clara County Bar Assn., the Elizabeth Ent award for contributions to law and justice in 1995 and the Woman of Achievement Award - Professional Woman of the Year from the San Jose Mercury News and the Commission on the Status of Women in 1983.

Ravel was formerly a member of the Board of Governor of the State Bar of California and a member of the Judicial Council of the State of California. She is presently a professor at Santa Clara University School of Law.

"It was certainly a difficult choice to leave Santa Clara County," said Ravel who has worked for the County for more than 30 years. "I have a great team. The office is widely recognized as the best public law office in the state."

Ravel will assume her new post in July.

#