



THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF SAN MATEO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA
RESOLUTION HONORING AND COMMENDING

James M. Wagstaffe

On His Receiving the Chancellor's Alumni of Distinction Award from UC Law San Francisco

WHEREAS, James M. Wagstaffe was born in Redwood City, California to Gerard and Jean Wagstaffe and resided in Menlo Park, California; and

WHEREAS, James M. Wagstaffe continues to reside and raised his family in Burlingame of San Mateo County with his wife Karen; and

WHEREAS, James M. Wagstaffe received his Bachelor of Arts in communications, with distinction, from Stanford University in 1977, where he was a National Collegiate Speaking Champion and winner of the Medaille Voltaire, and his Juris Doctor from UC Law, San Francisco, again with national distinction, where he excelled in moot court and trial advocacy; and

WHEREAS, following law school, **James M. Wagstaffe** clerked for United States District Court Judge Spencer Williams and thereafter went on to build a distinguished career in private practice, becoming a partner and much sought-after leader in his field; and

WHEREAS, James M. Wagstaffe is an accomplished author, preeminent litigator, law professor, and expert on pretrial federal civil procedure, earning acclaimed recognition for his contributions to legal practice, education, and scholarship; and

WHEREAS, James M. Wagstaffe is a scholar and professor of law, having taught for over three decades at prestigious institutions including Hastings College of the Law (now UC Law San Francisco), San Francisco State University, and Stanford University, where he has influenced generations of undergraduates, law students, attorneys, and judges with his expertise in constitutional law, civil procedure, media law, and speech communication; and

WHEREAS, a communications law expert and scholar, **James M. Wagstaffe** has written extensively on telecommunications law and the public interest, particularly around access to mass media technology, significantly shaping the discourse in these fields; and

WHEREAS, James M. Wagstaffe is the author and co-author of several important legal publications, including *The Rutter Guide: Federal Civil Procedure Before Trial*, which has become an essential resource for federal practitioners nationwide, and *The Wagstaffe Group Practice Guide: Federal Civil Procedure Before Trial*, a comprehensive work relied upon by judges, attorneys, and scholars across the country; and

WHEREAS, as one of the nation's top authorities on federal civil procedure, **James M. Wagstaffe** has been responsible for the development and delivery of federal law education, regularly educating federal judges and their respective clerk staff, enhancing the competence and efficiency of the judiciary; and

WHEREAS, James M. Wagstaffe has served two terms as Chair of the Federal Judicial Center Foundation Board, a position appointed by the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, where he played a pivotal role in advancing educational initiatives for federal judges and the broader legal community; and

WHEREAS, James M. Wagstaffe handled a diverse range of litigation matters, including complex litigation, professional and governmental representation, will and trust disputes, legal ethics, and First Amendment law, earning a reputation as one of the most sought-after litigators in the country; and

WHEREAS, James M. Wagstaffe's reputation as a cutting-edge litigator is exemplified by his success in securing multimillion-dollar jury verdicts and handling high-profile cases in complex trials, arbitrations, and appellate proceedings in both state and federal courts; and

WHEREAS, James M. Wagstaffe has successfully represented clients in landmark cases and has been instrumental in representing media organizations, governmental entities, and individuals in significant First Amendment and constitutional cases; and

WHEREAS, James M. Wagstaffe has played a leading role in shaping the law through appellate advocacy, securing landmark victories in cases involving anti-SLAPP law, civil rights, digital privacy, and constitutional issues in both the California Supreme Court and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals; and

WHEREAS, James M. Wagstaffe's extensive work with the State Bar of California, handling its most complex and consequential cases, has resulted in major victories that have strengthened the integrity of the legal profession; and

WHEREAS, through his litigation, scholarship, teaching, and service, **James M. Wagstaffe** has exemplified the highest ideals of the legal profession and has made lasting contributions to the courts, the bar, and the broader community; and

WHEREAS, San Mateo County celebrates the accomplishments of **James M. Wagstaffe** on the occasion of his receiving the Chancellor's Alumni of Distinction Award from the UC Law San Francisco.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of the San Mateo County Board hereby honors **James M. Wagstaffe** for his decades of dedicated service to law, education, and community.

Dated: March 27, 2026

SUPERVISORS:

NOELIA CORZO, PRESIDENT

JACKIE SPEIER

RAY MUELLER

LISA GAUTHIER

DAVID J. CANEPA

ATTEST:

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS