



BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

RESOLUTION NO. 163-2026

On the motion of Supervisor: Hernandez
Duly seconded by Supervisor: De Serpa

The following resolution is adopted:

**RESOLUTION CALLING FOR AN ELECTION FOR THE PURPOSE OF
SUBMITTING TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ
A COUNTYWIDE MEASURE TO RAISE THE RETAIL TRANSACTIONS AND USE
TAX (SALES TAX) BY ONE-HALF CENT; DIRECTING THE COUNTY ELECTIONS
OFFICIAL TO CONDUCT THE ELECTION; AND DIRECTING CONSOLIDATION OF
THE ELECTION WITH THE REGULAR ELECTION OF NOVEMBER 3, 2026**

WHEREAS, the County of Santa Cruz administers essential healthcare, mental health and substance abuse, public health, human services, emergency medical, and other safety-net programs that protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of residents throughout the community; and

WHEREAS, over 80,000 Santa Cruz County residents rely on Medi-Cal and over 30,000 residents rely on CalFresh, mental health and substance abuse services, housing assistance, emergency medical services, and other public programs that help people meet basic needs and remain healthy, housed, and independent; and

WHEREAS, local hospitals, emergency departments, ambulance providers, community health centers, mental health and substance abuse providers, food banks, housing providers, and numerous community-based organizations together comprise an interconnected healthcare system and human services safety net that serves residents throughout Santa Cruz County; and

WHEREAS, recent federal actions and related State fiscal impacts reduce funding annually by over \$200 million for local healthcare and safety-net programs while shifting additional administrative responsibilities and costs to counties; and

WHEREAS, these federal actions are expected to increase demand for locally funded healthcare, emergency medical services, mental health and substance abuse services, food assistance, homelessness response, public health, and other essential County services while reducing the financial resources available to support those services; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors finds that these changes are expected to have significant fiscal impacts on the County and its community partners, including increased costs, reduced revenues, and additional administrative workload, resulting in substantial pressure on the County's General Fund and the long-term sustainability of essential public services; and

WHEREAS, over the next five years, the County estimates that federal actions could result in more than \$150 million in increased costs and reduced revenues; and

WHEREAS, reductions in healthcare coverage are expected to increase uncompensated care, place additional financial pressure on hospitals and emergency departments, increase demand for emergency medical services, and reduce timely access to healthcare throughout Santa Cruz County; and

WHEREAS, reductions in nutrition assistance are expected to increase food insecurity and place additional demand upon local food banks, school nutrition partners, and community organizations that provide food assistance to County residents; and

WHEREAS, reductions in federal and related State funding for housing and homelessness programs are expected to increase demand for homelessness prevention, outreach, shelter, housing stabilization, and other supportive services; and

WHEREAS, Santa Cruz County and its community partners have made meaningful progress in reducing homelessness, strengthening mental health and substance abuse services, improving coordination across the local system of care, and expanding access to healthcare, and the Board of Supervisors desires to protect that progress during a period of fiscal uncertainty; and

WHEREAS, maintaining a strong local healthcare system and human services safety net benefits all County residents by helping preserve emergency medical response, hospital capacity, public health infrastructure, mental health and substance abuse services, food security, housing stability, and other essential community services; and

WHEREAS, counties possess limited local revenue options available to respond to extraordinary reductions in federal and State funding affecting essential public services; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 762, currently pending before the California Legislature, would authorize various jurisdictions, including Santa Cruz County, to exceed the existing local transactions and use tax rate limitation by up to one-half of one percent, thereby providing additional local flexibility to address essential public service needs if enacted; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors finds that it is in the public interest to provide voters the opportunity to consider a temporary, locally controlled revenue measure intended to help stabilize essential County services during this period of fiscal instability via an increase to the County's Retail Transactions and Use Tax; and

WHEREAS, the proposed increase to the Retail Transactions and Use Tax is intended solely to raise revenue for the general governmental purposes of the County, and all proceeds shall be deposited into the County General Fund and appropriated through the County's annual budget process in accordance with applicable law; and

WHEREAS, subdivision (b) of Section 2 of Article XIII C of the California Constitution and Government Code section 53723 require that before the County may impose a general tax, the tax must be submitted to the voters and approved by a majority vote; and

WHEREAS, the proposed increase to the Retail Transactions and Use Tax would be accomplished by a majority of voters approving at an election an ordinance amending Chapter 4.22 of the Santa Cruz County Code to establish a temporary one-half cent (0.5%) transactions and use tax for a period of five years; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors is in the process of adopting an urgency ordinance to increase the Retail Transactions and Use Tax as set forth above that will be presented to the electorate for approval; and

WHEREAS, subdivision (b) of Section 2 of Article XIII C of the California Constitution further requires that such election be consolidated with a regularly scheduled election for members of the governing body; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Elections Code section 10400 et seq., the Board of Supervisors may consolidate this election with the statewide general election to be held on November 3, 2026;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED by the Board of Supervisors as follows:

- 1) A County election is hereby called to be held throughout the County on November 3, 2026, for the purpose of submitting to the qualified electors of the County of Santa Cruz the following measure, via which the qualified electors will be asked to approve the ordinance attached to this Resolution as Attachment A:

Measure _____

TEMPORARY EMERGENCY MEDICAL, HEALTHCARE, FOOD, HOUSING, AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES PROTECTION MEASURE. To keep local hospitals/emergency rooms open, protect ambulance response, sustain access to urgent healthcare, including reproductive and mental health care, support local food/housing assistance and other essential services, and partially restore critical lost federal funding, shall the County of Santa Cruz be authorized to collect a supplemental half-cent (0.5%) general sales tax for 5 years, providing \$27,000,000 annually in locally controlled funds?

YES _____ NO _____

- 2) Said County election shall be held and conducted, the votes received and canvassed, the returns thereof made, and the result thereof ascertained and determined in accordance with the law, including but not limited to the provisions of Section 10418 of the Elections Code.

- 3) Said special County election hereby called shall be and hereby is consolidated with any and all elections also called to be held throughout the County on November 3, 2026, in all respects as required by and pursuant to law, including but not limited to the provisions of Section 10418 of the Elections Code.
- 4) In accordance with the provisions of Section 9160 of the Elections Code, the County Counsel is hereby directed to prepare an impartial analysis of this measure.
- 5) In accordance with the provisions of Section 9160 of the Elections Code, the County Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector is hereby directed to prepare a fiscal impact statement of this measure.
- 6) Arguments for and against this measure may be submitted in conformance with Elections Code Section 9161, et seq.
- 7) The Clerk of the Board of Supervisors shall file a copy of this Resolution with the County Clerk.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED AND ORDERED THAT the Santa Cruz County Elections Department is requested to print the ordinance attached hereto as Attachment A in the County Voter Information Guide for the November 3, 2026 election.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz, State of California, this 4th day of August 2026, by the following vote:

AYES: SUPERVISORS Koenig, De Serpa, Cummings, Hernandez, and Martinez
 NOES: None
 ABSENT: None
 ABSTAIN: None

Signed by:

 34684D888835450... 8/5/2026

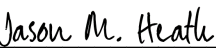
Monica Martinez
 Chair of the Board of Supervisors

DocuSigned by:

 466B074F3141450... 8/5/2026

Attest: Juliette Rezzato
 Chief Deputy Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Signed by:

 JASON M. HEATH
 County Counsel

ATTACHMENT A

ORDINANCE NO. _____

**URGENCY ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 4.22 OF THE SANTA CRUZ
COUNTY CODE TO ESTABLISH A TEMPORARY SUPPLEMENTAL ONE-HALF
CENT TRANSACTIONS AND USE TAX TO ADDRESS CONDITIONS OF
PERSISTENT FISCAL DISTRESS**

The Board of Supervisors of Santa Cruz County hereby finds and declares the following:

WHEREAS, the County of Santa Cruz provides essential public services that protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of residents, including healthcare, mental health and substance abuse, public health, emergency medical services, human services, public safety, housing and homelessness programs, infrastructure, elections, and other governmental services; and

WHEREAS, recent federal legislative and administrative actions, including H.R. 1, substantially reduce local funding for healthcare, nutrition assistance, mental health and substance abuse, housing, homelessness response, public health, and other safety-net programs while shifting additional fiscal responsibility and administrative workload to counties; and

WHEREAS, these federal actions and related State fiscal impacts reduce funding annually by over \$200 million for local healthcare and safety-net programs while shifting additional administrative responsibilities and costs to counties; and

WHEREAS, the County's Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget totals approximately \$1.29 billion, including an \$844 million General Fund, and reflects the most challenging fiscal environment the County has faced since the Great Recession; and

WHEREAS, these federal actions and related State fiscal impacts more than doubled the County's projected General Fund deficit from \$23.2 million to \$48.8 million, and absent corrective action that structural imbalance is projected to exceed \$67 million in future fiscal years; and

WHEREAS, the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget relies upon approximately \$43 million in one-time resources, including General Fund reserves and department trust funds, to maintain essential services and avoid layoffs, recognizing that these resources are not available on an ongoing basis and do not resolve the County's underlying structural imbalance; and

WHEREAS, the County has already implemented significant expenditure reductions, including a countywide hiring freeze on vacant General Fund positions, elimination of vacant positions across departments, reductions in operating expenditures, increased departmental restraint, and other cost containment measures while seeking to preserve core public services; and

WHEREAS, these fiscal conditions occur at a time when the County also faces continuing cost pressures associated with disaster recovery, inflation, aging and failing infrastructure, employee compensation, and other ongoing operational obligations; and

WHEREAS, counties possess limited revenue authority available to respond to extraordinary fiscal urgencies; and

WHEREAS, absent corrective action, the County will be required to make increasingly significant reductions in services, staffing, and community investments that would jeopardize the County's ability to fulfill its statutory responsibilities and maintain essential governmental services; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors finds that these combined circumstances constitute an extraordinary fiscal condition requiring immediate and sustained action to preserve the County's long-term fiscal stability and its ability to provide essential public services; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors is separately adopting a resolution on this day to declare that the County is experiencing a state of fiscal distress resulting from the combined effects of extraordinary federal funding reductions, structural budget imbalance, increasing service demands, and escalating operating costs; and

WHEREAS, said resolution directs the County Executive Officer to continue implementation of a comprehensive multi-year fiscal stabilization strategy, including expenditure reductions, organizational restructuring, operational efficiencies, revenue stabilization, long-term financial planning, and other actions necessary to restore ongoing structural balance; and

WHEREAS, said resolution documents the Board's commitment to implement fiscal stabilization measures in a manner that advances the County's Strategic Plan by protecting essential services; preserving access to basic needs; supporting healthy, safe, and resilient communities; maintaining County assets, infrastructure, and natural resources; fostering economic opportunity; and strengthening the County's long-term operational excellence and fiscal sustainability; and

WHEREAS, said resolution documents the Board's declaration of intent to pursue all lawful options available to stabilize County finances, including seeking state and federal assistance, advocating for legislative relief, pursuing operational efficiencies, evaluating organizational and workforce changes, considering locally controlled revenue options, and undertaking any additional actions necessary to maintain the County's long-term fiscal sustainability; and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that urgent action must be taken to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Santa Cruz County during this time of fiscal distress; and

WHEREAS, the Board believes that the adoption of a supplemental half-cent increase to the transactions and use tax (sales tax) for a period of five years is a necessary and appropriate action to address the fiscal challenges created by the federal actions described above;

NOW THEREFORE the Board of Supervisors of Santa Cruz County hereby ordains as follows:

SECTION I

Section 4.22.056 is hereby added to the Santa Cruz County Code to read as follows:

4.22.056 Temporary supplemental transactions tax rate.

For the privilege of selling tangible personal property at retail, a temporary supplemental tax is hereby imposed upon all retailers Countywide at the rate of one-half (0.5) percent of the gross receipts of any retailer from the sale of all tangible personal property sold at retail in said territory through and including the termination date set forth below in Section 4.22.160.

SECTION II

Section 4.22.076 is hereby added to the Santa Cruz County Code to read as follows:

4.22.076 Temporary supplemental use tax rate.

A temporary supplemental excise tax is hereby imposed on the storage, use, or other consumption in the County of tangible personal property purchased from any retailer for storage, use, or other consumption in said territory at the rate of one-half (0.5) percent of the sales price of the property, said tax to be imposed through and including the termination date set forth below in Section 4.22.160.

The sales price shall include delivery charges when such charges are subject to state sales or use tax regardless of the place to which delivery is made.

SECTION III

Section 4.22.160 of the Santa Cruz County Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

4.22.160 Termination date.

The authority to levy the tax imposed under Sections 4.22.050 and 4.22.070 shall expire twelve (12) years after the Operative Date. The authority to levy the additional tax imposed under Sections 4.22.055 and 4.22.075 shall continue until ended by voters. The authority to levy the temporary supplemental tax imposed under Sections 4.22.056 and 4.22.076 shall expire five (5) years after the first day of the first calendar quarter commencing more than 110 days after the ordinance codifying the amendment to add the temporary supplemental tax is approved by a simple majority of the voters voting on the question.

SECTION IV

Effective Date. This ordinance shall take effect immediately as an urgency ordinance. This is based on the Board of Supervisors finding that this ordinance is adopted in compliance with Government Code section 25123, that it is necessary for the protection of the public peace, health and safety for the reasons contained in the findings set forth at the beginning of this ordinance, which are incorporated by reference herein, and that adoption of this ordinance as an urgency measure is necessary to prevent the negative impacts to Santa Cruz County residents that this ordinance is designed to prevent.

SECTION V

Operative Date. This ordinance relates to the levying and collection of temporary supplemental transactions and use taxes and shall become operative (i.e., the tax will begin being collected) on the first day of the first calendar quarter commencing more than 110 days after the ordinance is approved by a simple majority of the voters voting on the question.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this ___ day of August 2026, by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz by the following vote:

AYES:	SUPERVISORS Koenig, De Serpa, Cummings, Hernandez and Martinez
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Monica Martinez
Chair of the Board of Supervisors

Attest: _____
Juliette Rezzato
Chief Deputy Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

JASON M. HEATH
County Counsel



Certificate Of Completion

Envelope Id: 81D9EAEA-1C36-85F0-82C3-2D5427415F1D
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701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Nicole.Coburn@santacruzcountyca.gov
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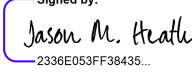
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Jason M. Heath
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County Counsel
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Juliette.Rezzato@santacruzcountyca.gov
Chief Deputy Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Cruz
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Envelope Summary Events

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If you decide to receive notices and disclosures from us electronically, you may at any time change your mind and tell us that thereafter you want to receive required notices and disclosures only in paper format. How you must inform us of your decision to receive future notices and disclosure in paper format and withdraw your consent to receive notices and disclosures electronically is described below.

Consequences of changing your mind

If you elect to receive required notices and disclosures only in paper format, it will slow the speed at which we can complete certain steps in transactions with you and delivering services to you because we will need first to send the required notices or disclosures to you in paper format, and then wait until we receive back from you your acknowledgment of your receipt of such paper notices or disclosures. Further, you will no longer be able to use the DocuSign system to receive required notices and consents electronically from us or to sign electronically documents from us.

All notices and disclosures will be sent to you electronically

Unless you tell us otherwise in accordance with the procedures described herein, we will provide electronically to you through the DocuSign system all required notices, disclosures, authorizations, acknowledgements, and other documents that are required to be provided or made available to you during the course of our relationship with you. To reduce the chance of you inadvertently not receiving any notice or disclosure, we prefer to provide all of the required notices and disclosures to you by the same method and to the same address that you have given us. Thus, you can receive all the disclosures and notices electronically or in paper format through the paper mail delivery system. If you do not agree with this process, please let us know as described below. Please also see the paragraph immediately above that describes the consequences of your electing not to receive delivery of the notices and disclosures electronically from us.

How to contact County of Santa Cruz:

You may contact us to let us know of your changes as to how we may contact you electronically, to request paper copies of certain information from us, and to withdraw your prior consent to receive notices and disclosures electronically as follows:

To contact us by email send messages to: nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us

To advise County of Santa Cruz of your new email address

To let us know of a change in your email address where we should send notices and disclosures electronically to you, you must send an email message to us at nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us and in the body of such request you must state: your previous email address, your new email address. We do not require any other information from you to change your email address.

If you created a DocuSign account, you may update it with your new email address through your account preferences.

To request paper copies from County of Santa Cruz

To request delivery from us of paper copies of the notices and disclosures previously provided by us to you electronically, you must send us an email to nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us and in the body of such request you must state your email address, full name, mailing address, and telephone number. We will bill you for any fees at that time, if any.

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- i. decline to sign a document from within your signing session, and on the subsequent page, select the check-box indicating you wish to withdraw your consent, or you may;
- ii. send us an email to nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us and in the body of such request you must state your email, full name, mailing address, and telephone number. We do not need any other information from you to withdraw consent.. The consequences of your withdrawing consent for online documents will be that transactions may take a longer time to process..

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Santa Cruz, CA 95060

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Monica Martinez

Monica.martinez@santacruzcountyca.gov

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Juliette Rezzato

Juliette.Rezzato@santacruzcountyca.gov

Chief Deputy Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Cruz

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County of Santa Cruz

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Intermediary Delivery Events

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Juliette Rezzato Juliette.Rezzato@santacruzcountyca.gov Chief Deputy Clerk of the Board of Supervisors County of Santa Cruz Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None) Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure: Accepted: 5/11/2022 7:47:21 AM ID: 050883f5-a40c-4427-bdbd-fa282a697a25	COPIED	Sent: 8/5/2026 4:01:28 PM
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All notices and disclosures will be sent to you electronically

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How to contact County of Santa Cruz:

You may contact us to let us know of your changes as to how we may contact you electronically, to request paper copies of certain information from us, and to withdraw your prior consent to receive notices and disclosures electronically as follows:

To contact us by email send messages to: nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us

To advise County of Santa Cruz of your new email address

To let us know of a change in your email address where we should send notices and disclosures electronically to you, you must send an email message to us at nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us and in the body of such request you must state: your previous email address, your new email address. We do not require any other information from you to change your email address.

If you created a DocuSign account, you may update it with your new email address through your account preferences.

To request paper copies from County of Santa Cruz

To request delivery from us of paper copies of the notices and disclosures previously provided by us to you electronically, you must send us an email to nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us and in the body of such request you must state your email address, full name, mailing address, and telephone number. We will bill you for any fees at that time, if any.

To withdraw your consent with County of Santa Cruz

To inform us that you no longer wish to receive future notices and disclosures in electronic format you may:

- i. decline to sign a document from within your signing session, and on the subsequent page, select the check-box indicating you wish to withdraw your consent, or you may;
- ii. send us an email to nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us and in the body of such request you must state your email, full name, mailing address, and telephone number. We do not need any other information from you to withdraw consent.. The consequences of your withdrawing consent for online documents will be that transactions may take a longer time to process..

Required hardware and software

The minimum system requirements for using the DocuSign system may change over time. The current system requirements are found here: <https://support.docusign.com/guides/signer-guide-signing-system-requirements>.

Acknowledging your access and consent to receive and sign documents electronically

To confirm to us that you can access this information electronically, which will be similar to other electronic notices and disclosures that we will provide to you, please confirm that you have read this ERSD, and (i) that you are able to print on paper or electronically save this ERSD for your future reference and access; or (ii) that you are able to email this ERSD to an email address where you will be able to print on paper or save it for your future reference and access. Further, if you consent to receiving notices and disclosures exclusively in electronic format as described herein, then select the check-box next to 'I agree to use electronic records and signatures' before clicking 'CONTINUE' within the DocuSign system.

By selecting the check-box next to 'I agree to use electronic records and signatures', you confirm that:

- You can access and read this Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure; and
- You can print on paper this Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure, or save or send this Electronic Record and Disclosure to a location where you can print it, for future reference and access; and
- Until or unless you notify County of Santa Cruz as described above, you consent to receive exclusively through electronic means all notices, disclosures, authorizations, acknowledgements, and other documents that are required to be provided or made available to you by County of Santa Cruz during the course of your relationship with County of Santa Cruz.