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**Verafirma Challenges San Mateo County's Decision to Reject Electronic Signatures on Initiative Petitions -
- New Technology Could Boost Grassroots Democracy in California and Beyond**

San Jose, CA – February 16, 2010 – Today, San Mateo's chief election officer rejected an electronic signature submitted for a statewide initiative. The company that designed the software - Verafirma - vows to defend the rights of California voters to use this technology and will file a lawsuit in San Mateo Superior Court by the end of the week.

"Our technology meets each and every requirement of the California Elections Code," said Michael Marubio, Verafirma co-founder. "Nothing in the election code requires citizens to adhere to 19th century technology."

Warren Slocum, San Mateo County's Chief Election Officer, said in his press release that he "believes that the courts must determine if a signature submitted electronically is 'personally affixed' by a voter."

The Elections Code does not specify that the signer of an initiative petition must use pen and paper. Rather, it requires only that a signature be affixed to the petition in a way that is verifiable against the signature and other information in the County Registrar's files. The Verafirma software affixes a voter's signature on a petition using "signature dynamics," an industry standard approved for use in every state and more than 50 countries.

"Signing on a touchscreen is an everyday occurrence for most Californians and it's time to use the technology to improve politics and government" said Jude Barry, one of Verafirma's co-founders. "We can make the initiative process cheaper and more secure, benefitting true grassroots efforts."

Slocum agrees about the potential benefit, despite his rejection of the electronic signature. In his press release, Slocum wrote: "The world has been using electronic signatures to transact business for almost 20 years. People are accustomed to it, trust it, and considerable resources have been spent to ensure its reliability. It's time for this technology to be applied to the practice of democracy."

About Verafirma (www.democracy.verafirma.com)

Verafirma is a Silicon Valley technology company. The Verafirma team has developed electronic signature solutions for major government and financial institutions. Our newest efforts, which we call the Democracy Project, will pioneer the use of electronic signatures for politics. For a complete discussion of how Verafirma's technology meets the California Elections Code requirements, please read the white paper authored by former Fair Political Practices Commission general counsel and Verafirma attorney Steve Churchwell (<http://democracy.verafirma.com/VFwhitepaper.pdf>).

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