

The Honorable James L. Robart

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

MICROSOFT CORPORATION,  
  
Plaintiff,

v.

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT  
OF JUSTICE, and LORETTA LYNCH,  
in her official capacity as Attorney  
General of the United States,  
  
Defendants.

No. 2:16-cv-00538-JLR

**STIPULATED MOTION FOR LEAVE  
TO FILE AMICUS BRIEF ON  
BEHALF OF FORMER LAW  
ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS IN  
SUPPORT OF MICROSOFT'S  
OPPOSITION TO MOTION TO  
DISMISS**

*Noted on Motion Calendar:*  
September 2, 2016

Amici Curiae Jeffrey Sullivan, John McKay, Kate Pflaumer, Mike McKay, and Charles Mandigo, all former federal law enforcement officials in the Western District of Washington, respectfully move the Court for leave to file the attached amicus brief in support of Microsoft's Opposition to the Government's Motion to Dismiss. Consistent with this Court's guidance in its Order (Dkt. 42, at 3 n.1), Amici state that both parties have consented to the filing of this proposed amicus brief.

1       **I. Identity and Interest of Amici**

2           The Amici Curiae are former federal law enforcement officials in the Western  
3 District of Washington with a combined 80 years of real-life experience fulfilling their  
4 obligation to keep the public safe while operating within the bounds of the Constitution.

5           Jeffrey Sullivan was the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Washington from  
6 2007 to 2009. Sullivan also served as the Yakima County Prosecuting Attorney for 27  
7 years.

8           John McKay was the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Washington from  
9 2001 to 2007.

10          Kate Pflaumer was the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Washington from  
11 1993 to 2001.

12          Mike McKay was the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Washington from  
13 1989 to 1993. McKay also served as a Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for King  
14 County for five years.

15          Charles Mandigo was the Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's office in Seattle  
16 from 1999 to 2003. Before retiring in 2003, he worked for the FBI for 28 years, including in  
17 New York, Chicago, and at FBI Headquarters.

18       **II. Reasons Why Motion Should be Granted**

19          “District courts may consider amicus briefs from non-parties ‘concerning legal  
20 issues that have potential ramifications beyond the parties directly involved or if the amicus  
21 has unique information or perspective that can help the court beyond the help the lawyers  
22 for the parties are able to provide.’” *Skohomish Indian Tribe v. Goldmark*, 2013 WL  
23 5720053, at \*1 (W.D. Wash. Oct. 21, 2013) (quoting *NGV Gaming, Ltd. v. Upstream Point*  
24 *Molate, LLC*, 355 F. Supp. 2d 1061, 1067 (N.D. Cal. 2005)). The Court has “broad  
25 discretion to appoint amicus curiae.” *Id.*; see also *In re Bayshore Ford Truck Sales, Inc.*,  
26 471 F.3d 1233, 1249 n.34 (11th Cir. 2006) (“[D]istrict courts possess the inherent authority

1 to appoint ‘friends of the court’ to assist in their proceedings.”); *Jin v. Ministry of State*  
2 *Security*, 557 F. Supp. 2d 131, 136 (D.D.C. 2008) (“District courts have inherent authority  
3 to appoint or deny amici which is derived from Rule 29 of the Federal Rules of Appellate  
4 Procedure.”) (quotations omitted).

5 Amici respectfully request that the Court exercise its discretion to allow them to file  
6 the attached amicus brief. As former law enforcement officials, they have a unique  
7 perspective on the balance between public safety and personal liberty, particularly with  
8 respect to government searches and seizures of private information. That includes their  
9 experience with delayed notice searches that require the government to make particularized  
10 showings of need, as well as to limit the period of delay. They respectfully offer their  
11 perspective in the hopes of assisting the Court understand that law enforcement can  
12 function effectively—even in the cloud—while following the Fourth Amendment’s  
13 requirement of notice to individuals whose private information has been searched.

14 **III. Conclusion**

15 For the foregoing reasons, Amici respectfully request that the Court grant this  
16 motion for leave to file the attached amicus brief.

17 DATED this 2nd day of September, 2016.

18 **YARMUTH WILSDON, PLLC**

19 By: s/ Kristina Silja Bennard

20 Kristina Silja Bennard, WSBA # 37291

21 1420 Fifth Avenue, Ste. 1400

22 Seattle, WA 98101

23 T: 206.516.3800

24 F: 206.516.8888

25 Email: [kbennard@yarmuth.com](mailto:kbennard@yarmuth.com)

26 *Attorneys for Amici Curiae Former Law  
Enforcement Officials*

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on September 2, 2016, I electronically filed the foregoing **MOTION FOR LEAVE TO FILE AMICUS BRIEF ON BEHALF OF FORMER LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS IN SUPPORT OF MICROSOFT'S OPPOSITION TO MOTION TO DISMISS** with the Clerk of the Court using the CM/ECF system, which will send notification of each filing to those attorneys of record registered on the CM/ECF system.

DATED this 2nd day of September, 2016.

**YARMUTH WILSDON, PLLC**

By: s/ Kristina Silja Bennard

Kristina Silja Bennard, WSBA # 37291

1420 Fifth Avenue, Ste. 1400

Seattle, WA 98101

T: 206.516.3800

F: 206.516.8888

Email: [kbennard@yarmuth.com](mailto:kbennard@yarmuth.com)

The Honorable James L. Robart

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

MICROSOFT CORPORATION,  
  
Plaintiff,

v.

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT  
OF JUSTICE, and LORETTA LYNCH,  
in her official capacity as Attorney  
General of the United States,  
  
Defendants.

No. 2:16-cv-00538-JLR

**AMICUS BRIEF ON BEHALF OF  
FORMER LAW ENFORCEMENT  
OFFICIALS IN SUPPORT OF  
MICROSOFT'S OPPOSITION TO  
MOTION TO DISMISS**

*Noted on Motion Calendar:*  
September 23, 2016

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26

IDENTITY AND INTEREST OF AMICI CURIAE..... 1

I. INTRODUCTION ..... 2

II. ARGUMENT..... 3

    A. An essential function of a warrant is to provide notice to the target of a government’s search which, in turn, serves important interests. .... 3

    B. Because covert searches raise serious constitutional concerns, they are allowed only when the facts of a particular case demand it and notice is delayed—not abandoned. .... 5

        1. Wiretaps and bugging equipment. .... 6

        2. “Sneak-and-Peek” warrants / delayed notice searches. .... 7

    C. Law enforcement officials can operate effectively within parameters that require particularized showings and eventual notice to search targets..... 9

III. CONCLUSION..... 11

**TABLE OF AUTHORITIES**

**Cases**

*Berger v. New York*,  
388 U.S. 41 (1967)..... 6

*Dalia v. United States*,  
441 U.S. 238 (1979)..... 5, 6

*In re Sealing and Non-Disclosure of Pen/Trap/2703(d) Orders*,  
562 F. Supp. 2d 876 (S.D. Tex. 2008)..... 4, 5

*Katz v. United States*,  
389 U.S. 347 (1967)..... 3

*Michigan v. Tyler*,  
436 U.S. 499 (1978)..... 3, 4

*United States v. Chadwick*,  
433 U.S. 1 (1977)..... 3

*United States v. Donovan*,  
429 U.S. 413 (1977)..... 6

*United States v. Freitas*,  
800 F.2d 1451 (9th Cir. 1986) ..... 3, 7, 8, 9

*United States v. Gantt*,  
194 F.3d 987 (9th Cir 1999) ..... 5

*United States v. Johns*,  
851 F.2d 1131 (9th Cir. 1988) ..... 8

*United States v. Johns*,  
948 F.2d 599 (9th Cir. 1991) ..... 7, 8

*United States v. Mikos*,  
539 F.3d 706 (7th Cir. 2008) ..... 7

*United States v. U.S. Dist. Court for E.D. Mich.*,  
407 U.S. 297 (1972)..... 2

*United States v. Warshak*,  
631 F.3d 266 (6th Cir. 2010) ..... 2

*United States v. Williamson*,  
439 F.3d 1125 (9th Cir. 2006) ..... 3

*Wolf v. Colorado*,  
338 U.S. 25 (1949)..... 2

1 **Statutes**

2 18 U.S.C. § 2518..... 6

3 18 U.S.C. § 2518(1) ..... 7

4 18 U.S.C. § 2518(8)(d) ..... 7

5 18 U.S.C. § 2705(b) ..... 5, 10

6 18 U.S.C. § 3103a..... 8, 10

7 18 U.S.C. § 3103a(b)(1)..... 9

8 18 U.S.C. § 3103a(b)(2)..... 9

9 18 U.S.C. § 3103a(b)(3)..... 9

10 18 U.S.C. § 3103a(c)..... 9

11 18 U.S.C. § 3103a(d)(1)..... 9

12 **Other**

13

14 Jonathan Witmer-Rich, *The Rapid Rise of Delayed Notice Searches,*  
 15 *and the Fourth Amendment “Rule Requiring Notice,”*  
 41 PEPP. L. REV. 509 (2014)..... 10, 11

16 Patrick Toomey & Brent Kaufman, *The Notice Paradox: Secret*  
 17 *Surveillance, Criminal Defendants, and the Right to Notice,*  
 54 SANTA CLARA L. REV. 843 (2014) ..... 4, 8

18 Report of the Director of Administrative Office of the United States  
 19 Courts on Applications for Delayed-Notice Search Warrants and Extensions, 2014,  
 20 *available at* [http://www.uscourts.gov/statistics-reports](http://www.uscourts.gov/statistics-reports/analysis-reports/delayed-notice-search-warrant-report)  
 /analysis-reports/delayed-notice-search-warrant-report. .... 10

21 Stephen Smith, *Gagged, Sealed & Delivered: Reforming*  
 22 *ECPA’s Secret Docket*, 6 HARV. L. & POL’Y REV. 313 (2012)..... 4

23 U.S. Dep’t of Justice, *Delayed Notice Search Warrants:*  
 24 *A Vital and Time-Honored Tool for Fighting Crime*, Sept. 2004,  
*available at* [https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files](https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/dag/legacy/2008/10/17/patriotact213report.pdf)  
 /dag/legacy/2008/10/17/patriotact213report.pdf..... 10

25 2 WAYNE R. LAFAYE, SEARCH AND SEIZURE: A TREATISE ON THE FOURTH  
 26 AMENDMENT § 4.7(c) (5th ed. 2012) ..... 8

**IDENTITY AND INTEREST OF AMICI CURIAE**

1  
2 The Amici Curiae are former federal law enforcement officials in the Western  
3 District of Washington with a combined 80 years of real-life experience fulfilling their  
4 obligation to keep the public safe while operating within the bounds of the Constitution.  
5 They have a unique perspective on how to achieve the balance between public safety and  
6 personal liberty, particularly with respect to government searches and seizures of private  
7 information. They respectfully offer that perspective in the hopes of assisting the Court  
8 understand that law enforcement can function effectively—even in the cloud—while  
9 following the Fourth Amendment’s requirement of notice to individuals whose private  
10 information has been searched.

11 Amici are cognizant of the increasing challenges to law enforcement in the digital  
12 age. They understand and agree that specific circumstances, like the safety of a witness or  
13 operational integrity, can justify and require delaying notice to targets of an investigation.  
14 But as discussed below, that should require a specific and meaningful showing that such an  
15 exigency exists, and the delay should be limited in duration.

16 Jeffrey Sullivan was the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Washington from  
17 2007 to 2009. Sullivan also served as the Yakima County Prosecuting Attorney for 27  
18 years.

19 John McKay was the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Washington from  
20 2001 to 2007.

21 Kate Pflaumer was the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Washington from  
22 1993 to 2001.

23 Mike McKay was the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Washington from  
24 1989 to 1993. McKay also served as a Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for King  
25 County for five years.  
26

1 Charles Mandigo was the Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's office in Seattle  
2 from 1999 to 2003. Before retiring in 2003, he worked for the FBI for 28 years, including in  
3 New York, Chicago, and at FBI Headquarters.

4 Both parties have consented to the filing of this amicus brief. Amici have also filed  
5 a motion for leave to file this brief, consistent with this Court's Order on the filing of  
6 amicus briefs (Dkt. 42).<sup>1</sup>

## 7 I. INTRODUCTION

8 The Fourth Amendment protects all of us from unreasonable searches and seizures  
9 of private information. "The security of one's privacy against arbitrary intrusion by the  
10 police—which is at the core of the Fourth Amendment—is basic to a free society." *Wolf v.*  
11 *Colorado*, 338 U.S. 25, 27 (1949). Law enforcement officials are charged with supporting  
12 and defending that right.

13 The balance between individual liberty and public safety in the context of emerging  
14 technologies is not new to the courts. What started with cameras, telephones, and recording  
15 devices has evolved into computers, smart phones, and the cloud. Each new technology  
16 requires an equivalent application of the bedrock Fourth Amendment principles that law  
17 enforcement officials have operated under for decades. The Fourth Amendment "must keep  
18 pace with the inexorable march of technological progress, or its guarantees will wither and  
19 perish." *United States v. Warshak*, 631 F.3d 266, 285 (6th Cir. 2010). The "broad and  
20 unsuspected governmental intrusions into conversational privacy which electronic  
21 surveillance entails necessitate the application of Fourth Amendment safeguards." *United*  
22 *States v. U.S. Dist. Court for E.D. Mich.*, 407 U.S. 297, 313 (1972) (footnote omitted).

---

23  
24  
25 <sup>1</sup> Amici state that neither a party nor a party's counsel authored this brief in whole or in part, and no person  
26 (including a party or its counsel), other than amici or their counsel, contributed money intended to fund  
preparing or submitting this brief. John McKay is a partner at Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, which is  
representing Microsoft in this matter. He joins this brief in his personal capacity as a former law enforcement  
official.

1 In the face of ever advancing technology, Amici respectfully submit that law  
 2 enforcement officials have functioned—and can continue to function—effectively under the  
 3 constitutional rule that the Fourth Amendment requires notice to the target of the  
 4 government’s search. There are narrow exceptions to that rule when the particular facts of  
 5 the case demand it. In those cases, notice to the target may be delayed for a reasonable  
 6 period, but not abandoned entirely. In the Ninth Circuit, for 30 years, the permissible delay  
 7 has been seven days, with longer periods of delay allowed, but only “upon a strong showing  
 8 of necessity.” *United States v. Freitas*, 800 F.2d 1451, 1456 (9th Cir. 1986). Law  
 9 enforcement officials are accustomed to making particularized showings to defer notice of  
 10 searches in both the physical and electronic world. They can continue to do so in the cloud.

## 11 II. ARGUMENT

### 12 A. An essential function of a warrant is to provide notice to the target of a 13 government’s search which, in turn, serves important interests.

14 The Fourth Amendment requires that government searches be reasonable. A  
 15 hallmark of reasonableness is law enforcement’s obtaining a warrant from a neutral  
 16 magistrate. “A conventional warrant ordinarily serves to notify the suspect of an intended  
 17 search.” *Katz v. United States*, 389 U.S. 347, 355 n.16 (1967). That notice is vital.  
 18 Obtaining a warrant, but not disclosing it, nullifies an essential function of the warrant,  
 19 which is to provide notice to the person who is the target of the search. Moreover, non-  
 20 disclosure of searches has a broader effect on the criminal justice system that undermines  
 21 the balance between public safety and personal liberty.

22 An “essential function of the warrant is to ‘assure *the individual whose property is*  
 23 *searched* or seized of the lawful authority of the executing officer, his need to search, and  
 24 the limits of his power to search.’” *United States v. Williamson*, 439 F.3d 1125, 1132 (9th  
 25 Cir. 2006) (quoting *United States v. Chadwick*, 433 U.S. 1, 9 (1977)) (emphasis added). A  
 26 “major function of the warrant is to provide *the property owner* with sufficient information

1 to reassure him of the entry’s legality.” *Michigan v. Tyler*, 436 U.S. 499, 508 (1978)  
2 (emphasis added).

3 For the individuals deprived of notice, they “will never know that [the government]  
4 chose not to provide notice to them,” and thus “have no opportunity to challenge the  
5 government’s failure to give notice, let alone the legality of the underlying search.” Patrick  
6 Toomey & Brett Kaufman, *The Notice Paradox: Secret Surveillance, Criminal Defendants,*  
7 *and the Right to Notice*, 54 SANTA CLARA L. REV. 843, 848 (2014). That not only erodes the  
8 public’s trust in law enforcement, it also deprives the judicial branch from serving as a  
9 check on executive power. As one commentator, who is also a magistrate judge and thus on  
10 the front lines of issuing warrants and electronic surveillance orders, has observed,  
11 “excessive secrecy effectively shields electronic surveillance orders from appellate review,  
12 thereby depriving the judiciary of its normal role in shaping, adapting, and updating  
13 legislation to fit changing factual (and technological) settings over time.” Stephen Smith,  
14 *Gagged, Sealed & Delivered: Reforming ECPA’s Secret Docket*, 6 HARV. L & POL’Y REV.  
15 313, 326 (2012).

16 He further explained, “[l]ack of appellate review is unhealthy for any regulatory  
17 scheme, especially one designed to check executive power. Every statute has its rough  
18 edges of ambiguity and gaps of uncertainty. These flaws are brought to light and repaired,  
19 day by day, case by case, through lower court rulings subject to review and correction by  
20 the courts of appeal, and, ultimately, by the Supreme Court.” *Id.* at 331.<sup>2</sup> Without that, the  
21 “careful balance between privacy and security set by Congress is inevitably washed away  
22 by a torrent of secret orders, unrestrained by the usual adversarial and appellate process.”  
23 *Id.*; see also *In re Sealing and Non-Disclosure of Pen/Trap/2703(d) Orders*, 562 F. Supp.

24 \_\_\_\_\_  
25 <sup>2</sup> None of that is to suggest that a facial challenge is inappropriate here. Rather, Microsoft is challenging—and  
26 Amici support its challenge—a statutory scheme that prevents individuals from receiving notice that would  
allow them to challenge the lawfulness of a government’s search, which, in turn, allows for the day by day,  
case by case review necessary for effective judicial oversight.

1 2d 876, 895 (S.D. Tex. 2008) (Smith, M.J.) (“As a rule, sealing and non-disclosure of  
 2 electronic surveillance orders must be neither permanent nor, what amounts to the same  
 3 thing, indefinite.”). Law enforcement officials—and the entire criminal justice system—  
 4 benefit from that judicial oversight and guidance, including the review provided by district  
 5 courts of orders by magistrate judges.

6 Finally, providing notice of a search also serves a fundamental goal of law  
 7 enforcement officials: maintaining the public’s faith in them. Giving notice helps “head off  
 8 breaches of the peace by dispelling any suspicion that the search is illegitimate.” *United*  
 9 *States v. Gantt*, 194 F.3d 987, 1002 (9th Cir 1999) (quotations omitted). Leaving the public  
 10 in the dark regarding governmental intrusion into individuals’ private effects and  
 11 communications, does not, in the long run, foster trust in the law enforcement community.  
 12 Rather, indefinite secrecy increases public suspicions that government searches are  
 13 illegitimate. Without the public’s confidence, law enforcement officials struggle with their  
 14 mission to keep order.<sup>3</sup>

15 **B. Because covert searches raise serious constitutional concerns, they are allowed**  
 16 **only when the facts of a particular case demand it and notice is delayed—not**  
 17 **abandoned.**

18 The Fourth Amendment does not prohibit *all* covert searches. *Dalia v. United*  
 19 *States*, 441 U.S. 238, 247 (1979). Effective law enforcement efforts often require some  
 20 measure of secrecy during an investigation to avoid alerting a target, who might destroy  
 21 evidence or flee. But covert searches raise significant constitutional concerns that Congress  
 22 and the courts recognize by establishing strict parameters and reasonable after-the-fact  
 23 notice requirements. The law enforcement community has operated effectively within those  
 24 parameters for decades. It can continue to do so in the cloud.

---

25 <sup>3</sup> Amici focus in this brief on the requirements of the Fourth Amendment. But they recognize the  
 26 compounding effect of the non-disclosure orders authorized by 18 U.S.C. § 2705(b), which creates a situation  
 in which the government need not provide notice of its search *and* can compel a provider like Microsoft to  
 stay silent about the search indefinitely.

1           **1. Wiretaps and bugging equipment.**

2           When the government wants to listen to a person’s conversations, it must obtain a  
3 warrant, although it may delay providing notice of the warrant and search to avoid alerting  
4 the targets. Two features of the federal statute authorizing the interception of wire, oral, or  
5 electronic communications (18 U.S.C. § 2518)—and key to its constitutionality—are a  
6 showing of special facts justifying the search and eventual notice to the target of the search.  
7 The Supreme Court struck down a state wiretapping statute because it had “no requirement  
8 for notice as do conventional warrants, nor does it overcome this defect by requiring some  
9 showing of special facts.” *Berger v. New York*, 388 U.S. 41, 60 (1967). A “showing of  
10 exigency, in order to avoid notice, would appear more important in eavesdropping, with its  
11 inherent dangers, than that required when conventional procedures of search and seizure are  
12 utilized.” *Id.*

13           In contrast, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the federal statute  
14 authorizing covert wiretapping because it “provided a constitutionally adequate substitute  
15 for advance notice by requiring that once the surveillance operation is completed, the  
16 authorizing judge must cause notice to be served on those subjected to surveillance.” *Dalia*,  
17 441 U.S. at 248 (citing *United States v. Donovan*, 429 U.S. 413, 429 n. 19 (1977)). The  
18 Court also upheld the constitutionality of covert entries into private premises to install  
19 electronic bugging equipment for recording conversations on the same grounds. *Id.* at 247-  
20 48. The Court recognized that “electronic surveillance can be a threat to the cherished  
21 privacy of law-abiding citizens unless it is subjected to the careful supervision prescribed  
22 by” the statute. *Id.* at 250 n.9. But that the “detailed restrictions” of the statute “guarantee  
23 that wiretapping or bugging occurs only when there is a genuine need for it and only to the  
24 extent that it is needed.” *Id.* at 250.

25           The statute requires the government to establish, among other things, that there is  
26 probable cause to believe that an individual has committed a crime; that particular

1 communications concerning that offense will be obtained through interception; and that  
 2 normal investigative procedures have been tried and have failed or reasonably appear to be  
 3 unlikely to succeed if tried or to be too dangerous. 18 U.S.C. § 2518(1). The statute provides  
 4 for notice of searches “[w]ithin a reasonable time but not later than ninety days.” *Id.*  
 5 § 2518(8)(d). And notice is not limited to the target of the search, but may also go to “other  
 6 parties to intercepted communications as the judge may determine ... is in the interest of  
 7 justice.” *Id.* The combination of the government’s showing a particularized need, plus  
 8 eventual notice of the search to the target, allow the statute to pass constitutional muster.

9 **2. “Sneak-and-Peek” warrants / delayed notice searches.**

10 Courts have also upheld the constitutionality of so-called “sneak-and-peek” warrants  
 11 that permit law enforcement to enter and examine an area, take an inventory, and then leave  
 12 without disturbing the contents or notifying the person whose effects were searched. “Lack  
 13 of seizure explains the ‘peek’ part of the name; the ‘sneak’ part comes from the fact that  
 14 agents need not notify the owner until later.” *United States v. Mikos*, 539 F.3d 706, 709 (7th  
 15 Cir. 2008). “Such warrants are designed to permit an investigation without tipping off the  
 16 suspect.” *Id.* They are also called “delayed notice” searches.

17 The Ninth Circuit has authorized delayed notices searches, but, at the same time,  
 18 recognized their dangers: “surreptitious searches and seizures of intangibles strike at the  
 19 very heart of the interests protected by the Fourth Amendment.” *United States v. Freitas*,  
 20 800 F.2d 1451, 1456 (9th Cir. 1986). Because of those risks, the Court imposed restrictions  
 21 on delayed notice searches, principle among them the requirement of prompt notice. “[T]he  
 22 Fourth Amendment requires that officers provide notice of searches within a reasonable, but  
 23 short, time after the surreptitious entry.” *United States v. Johns*, 948 F.2d 599, 605 n.4 (9th  
 24 Cir. 1991). Thus, the government may delay notice of a sneak-and-peek search, but the  
 25 delay “*should not exceed seven days except upon a strong showing of necessity.*” *Freitas*,  
 26 800 F.2d at 1456 (emphasis added).

1           In *Freitas*, the Court noted that the federal wiretapping statute, discussed above,  
2 “makes clear the constitutional importance of *both* the *necessity* for the surreptitious seizure  
3 *and* the *subsequent notice*.” 800 F.2d at 1456 (emphasis added). And while the Court  
4 suggested that a showing of necessity “could have strengthened the claim” that the sneak-  
5 and-peek search was constitutional, it was “clear that the absence of any notice requirement  
6 in the warrant cast[ed] strong doubt on its constitutional adequacy.” *Id.* As a noted  
7 commentator observed about *Freitas*, “[i]t is to be doubted ... that a showing of necessity  
8 for surreptitious entry would excuse a *total* failure to give the occupant a post-search notice  
9 of the warrant execution.” 2 WAYNE R. LAFAVE, SEARCH AND SEIZURE: A TREATISE ON THE  
10 FOURTH AMENDMENT § 4.7(c) (5th ed. 2012); *see also* Toomey & Kaufman, 54 SANTA  
11 CLARA L. REV. at 855 (under existing case law “the idea that notice of the search may be  
12 dispensed with altogether is simply off the table”). In other words, the Fourth Amendment  
13 allows delayed notice—not *abandoned* notice.

14           The Ninth Circuit re-affirmed its holding in *Freitas* and applied its notice  
15 requirement to sneak-and-peek searches of a person’s effects in an off-site storage facility.  
16 *United States v. Johns*, 851 F.2d 1131, 1134-35 (9th Cir. 1988); *Johns*, 948 F.2d at 605 n.4.  
17 In the *Johns* decisions, there was no indication that the government could have by-passed  
18 the Fourth Amendment simply by providing notice of the search to the owner of the storage  
19 facility. Those decisions have important implications for the government’s position in this  
20 matter regarding the adequacy of providing notice of the search to Microsoft, i.e., the owner  
21 of the off-site storage facility, not the person whose information has been searched.

22           In 2001, Congress codified delayed notice search warrants. 18 U.S.C. § 3103a.  
23 When applying for a warrant under the statute, the government may ask the court for  
24 permission to temporarily delay notice that a warrant has been executed upon a showing of  
25 “reasonable cause to believe that providing immediate notification of the execution of the  
26 warrant may have an adverse result,” and, in the case of a delayed notice seizure, a showing

1 of “reasonable necessity for the seizure.” *Id.* § 3103a(b)(1)&(2). Similar to earlier case law,  
2 the statute requires notice of the search, but allows notice to be delayed for a “reasonable  
3 period” of time specified *in the warrant* and “not to exceed 30 days after the date of its  
4 execution, or on a later date certain if the *facts of the case* justify a longer period of delay.”  
5 *Id.* § 3103a(b)(3) (emphasis added). No delay of notice beyond the time specified in the  
6 warrant is allowed without further court authorization, with good cause shown and upon  
7 “an *updated* showing of the need for further delay and that each additional delay should be  
8 limited to periods of 90 days or less, unless the *facts of the case* justify a longer period of  
9 delay.” *Id.* § 3103a(c) (emphasis added).

10 The statute also includes reporting requirements such that a court must report the  
11 issuance or denial for a delayed notice search warrant, including the offense specified in the  
12 warrant or application, the period of delay authorized, and the number and duration of any  
13 extensions. 18 U.S.C. § 3103a(d)(1). The reporting requirement provides information to  
14 policy makers and the public as to how often and for what purposes the government is  
15 conducting delayed notice searches. That, in turn, allows for transparency, at least in the  
16 aggregate, of law enforcement’s use of the statute’s procedures.

17 **C. Law enforcement officials can operate effectively within parameters that**  
18 **require particularized showings and eventual notice to search targets.**

19 Law enforcement officials have decades of experience operating within the  
20 parameters of making particularized showings and delaying—but not dispensing with—  
21 notice of searches. Congress enacted the wiretapping statute in 1968, which means law  
22 enforcement officials nationwide have functioned within its limits for almost 50 years.  
23 Further, law enforcement officials in the Ninth Circuit have operated effectively within the  
24 parameters of *Freitas*’s seven-day delayed notice default rule for 30 years. Longer periods  
25 of delay are allowed, but only “upon a strong showing of necessity.” *Freitas*, 800 F.2d at  
26 1456. A “strong showing of necessity” surely must be more than a rote recitation of the

1 statutory elements constituting an “adverse result,” and instead require a case-specific  
2 showing.

3 Section § 3103a provides for a 30-day delay of a search warrant, but any delays  
4 beyond 30 days must be justified with a particularized showing grounded in “facts of the  
5 case.” Congress did not do away with notice entirely. In a 2004 report to Congress, the U.S.  
6 Department of Justice emphasized how workable delayed notice warrants were—and that  
7 they were used “infrequently and judiciously.” U.S. Dep’t of Justice, *Delayed Notice*  
8 *Search Warrants: A Vital and Time-Honored Tool for Fighting Crime*, at 4, 8, Sept. 2004,  
9 available at [https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/dag/legacy/2008/10/17/  
10 patriotact213report.pdf](https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/dag/legacy/2008/10/17/patriotact213report.pdf).

11 The number of applications for delayed notice search warrants has increased since  
12 then. Over a one-year period ending September 2014, prosecutors made 7,627 delayed  
13 notice warrant requests and 5,243 requests for extensions. Report of the Director of  
14 Administrative Office of the United States Courts on Applications for Delayed-Notice  
15 Search Warrants and Extensions, at 1, 2014, available at [http://www.uscourts.gov/statistics-  
16 reports/analysis-reports/delayed-notice-search-warrant-report](http://www.uscourts.gov/statistics-reports/analysis-reports/delayed-notice-search-warrant-report). That averages to 81 delayed  
17 notice search warrants for each of the 94 federal district courts over a one-year period, or  
18 6.7 per month. The most frequently reported period of delay was 90 days. *Id.* at 2.<sup>4</sup> Of  
19 greater relevance, Microsoft here suggests that a review of orders it has received indicates  
20 that the standard practice in particular U.S. District Courts is to set definite time limits on  
21 the § 2705(b) orders that preclude it from notifying customers of a search. *See* Microsoft’s  
22 *Opp. to Government’s Mot. to Dismiss*, at 13 n.10 (Dkt. 44).

---

23 <sup>4</sup> The data include delayed notice searches not just of homes and businesses, but also cell phone location  
24 tracking, GPS tracking, and searching emails, which helps explain the increase in applications since 2004.  
25 Jonathan Witmer-Rich, *The Rapid Rise of Delayed Notice Searches, and the Fourth Amendment “Rule*  
26 *Requiring Notice*,” 41 PEPP. L. REV. 509, 542-44, 531, 539-49 (2014) (increasing judicial pressure on the  
government to use search warrants for searches that had previously been conducted without a warrant, like  
cell phone location tracking, GPS tracking, and email searches, has likely driven the increase in applications  
under § 3103a).

1 All that is meant to show that the law enforcement community has lived with  
 2 delayed notice searches, and the restraints around them, for decades. They can operate  
 3 effectively within those parameters in the cloud, too—not because it is easy, but because  
 4 the Fourth Amendment requires it.

### 5 III. CONCLUSION

6 Some commentators have warned of the risk of delayed notice searches, noting that  
 7 “[w]ith traditional searches, each person in the community knows when and if her home or  
 8 business has been searched by the government. ... The privacy intrusion of these searches is  
 9 deep but narrow—deep in the sense that one’s home has been searched, and narrow in the  
 10 sense that the invasion impacts only those few who are searched. With delayed notice  
 11 searches, however, every member of the community suffers a more indirect and uncertain  
 12 loss of privacy.” Witmer-Rich, 41 PEPP. L. REV. at 555-56. The Ninth Circuit recognized  
 13 those risks in *Freitas* and *Johns* and established a seven-day delay default rule. But  
 14 however great the perils of delayed notice searches are, the risks posed by no-notice  
 15 searches are greater. And for no good reason. Law enforcement officials have no practical  
 16 need to keep their searches secret indefinitely, except in the rarest of circumstances, which  
 17 must be supported by particularized need. For the foregoing reasons, Amici respectfully  
 18 request that the Court deny the government’s motion to dismiss Microsoft’s complaint.

19 DATED this 2nd day of September, 2016

20 **YARMUTH WILSDON, PLLC**

21 By: s/ Kristina Silja Bennard  
 22 Kristina Silja Bennard, WSBA # 37291  
 23 1420 Fifth Avenue, Ste. 1400  
 24 Seattle, WA 98101  
 25 T: 206.516.3800  
 26 F: 206.516.8888  
 Email: [kbennard@yarmuth.com](mailto:kbennard@yarmuth.com)

*Attorneys for Amici Curiae Former Law  
 Enforcement Officials*

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on September 2, 2016, I electronically filed the foregoing  
**AMICUS BRIEF ON BEHALF OF FORMER LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS IN  
SUPPORT OF MICROSOFT'S OPPOSITION TO MOTION TO DISMISS** with the  
Clerk of the Court using the CM/ECF system, which will send notification of each filing to  
those attorneys of record registered on the CM/ECF system.

DATED this 2nd day of September, 2016.

**YARMUTH WILSDON, PLLC**

By: s/ Kristina Silja Bennard

Kristina Silja Bennard, WSBA # 37291

1420 Fifth Avenue, Ste. 1400

Seattle, WA 98101

T: 206.516.3800

F: 206.516.8888

Email: [kbennard@yarmuth.com](mailto:kbennard@yarmuth.com)

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

MICROSOFT CORPORATION,

Plaintiff,

v.

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT  
OF JUSTICE, and LORETTA LYNCH,  
in her official capacity as Attorney  
General of the United States,

Defendants.

No. 2:16-cv-00538-JLR

**[PROPOSED] ORDER GRANTING  
MOTION FOR LEAVE TO FILE  
AMICUS BRIEF ON BEHALF OF  
FORMER LAW ENFORCEMENT  
OFFICIALS IN SUPPORT OF  
MICROSOFT’S OPPOSITION TO  
MOTION TO DISMISS**

*Noted on Motion Calendar:*  
September 2, 2016

**ORDER**

The Court has reviewed the unopposed Motion for Leave to File Amicus Brief on Behalf of Former Law Enforcement Officials in Support of Microsoft’s Opposition to the Government’s Motion to Dismiss. The Court ORDERS that the motion is granted. The Clerk shall accept for filing the Amicus Brief on Behalf of Former Law Enforcement Officials in Support of Microsoft’s Opposition to Motion to Dismiss.

Dated this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2016.

\_\_\_\_\_  
HON. JAMES L. ROBERT  
United States District Judge

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26

**Presented by:**

**YARMUTH WILSDON, PLLC**

By: s/ *Kristina Silja Bennard*

Kristina Silja Bennard, WSBA # 37291

1420 Fifth Avenue, Ste. 1400

Seattle, WA 98101

T: 206.516.3800

F: 206.516.8888

Email: [kbennard@yarmuth.com](mailto:kbennard@yarmuth.com)

*Attorneys for Amici Curiae Former Law  
Enforcement Officials*

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that on September 2, 2016, I electronically filed the foregoing **[PROPOSED] ORDER GRANTING MOTION FOR LEAVE TO FILE AMICUS BRIEF ON BEHALF OF FORMER LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS IN SUPPORT OF MICROSOFT’S OPPOSITION TO MOTION TO DISMISS** with the Clerk of the Court using the CM/ECF system, which will send notification of each filing to those attorneys of record registered on the CM/ECF system.

DATED this 2nd day of September, 2016.

**YARMUTH WILSDON, PLLC**

By: s/ Kristina Silja Bennard  
Kristina Silja Bennard, WSBA # 37291  
1420 Fifth Avenue, Ste. 1400  
Seattle, WA 98101  
T: 206.516.3800  
F: 206.516.8888  
Email: [kbennard@yarmuth.com](mailto:kbennard@yarmuth.com)