The Honorable Carol Fukunaga, Chair
and Members
Committee on Public Works, Infrastructure
and Sustainability
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street, Room 202
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Fukunaga and Councilmembers:

SUBJECT: Resolution 18-280, Approving the Revised 2018 Update to the City and County of Honolulu's Homeless Action Plan for all Council Districts

The Department of Community Services (DCS) supports Resolution 18-280 that approves the enforcement of Ordinance 18-34 and Ordinance 18-35.

The Administration transmitted an initial 2018 Updated Homeless Action Plan, Addendum #1, and Addendum #2, as well as responded to various questions raised during the November 5, 2018 meeting of the Public Works, Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee to address the ongoing efforts to support persons experiencing homelessness. Specifically, Addendum #2 provides additional information that demonstrates DCS' steadfast commitment to expanding the scope of programs and services for persons experiencing homelessness. The evolving Medicaid Waiver, Crisis Intervention Training and mobile navigation centers are examples of fluid and developing efforts to address the ever changing community needs within the fabric of our island community.

With the primary goal to serve people, with person-centered programs, we continue to evaluate what works for other cities to adapt to our requirements. More than anything else, we work to help those in need. The mission of DCS, and I believe the entire team of City employees, is to be “a community partner creating opportunities to improve the quality of life for the people of O'ahu.”

The biggest challenge in responding to your requests in Resolution 18-246, CD1 and the Memorandum of November 15, 2018 was two-fold:

○ Our programs are community wide and designed to be seamless throughout the City and County of Honolulu. Our goals are consistent with your goals of serving your
constituents, accordingly programs include all districts on a comprehensive level, rather than just on the specifics of a single district.

- As presented in the original October 11, 2018 Updated Homeless Action Plan (Updated Plan), the scope of the needs of the unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness is beyond the basic housing and social service programs of the City. The City needs to partner with the State of Hawaii, Departments of Health and Human Services, along with private health care entities to address the physical and mental well-being of persons who have “lived” on our streets and other public places - some for decades. The efforts of building relationships and identifying resources is a work in progress that is at the brink of implementation:

  - First, the Medicaid Waiver will address the higher acuity needs of Housing First clients with health care support along with supportive social services, and further leverage the housing resources of the City; and
  - Second, the Kuwili Street project will open by year end with O’ahu’s first urban rest stop. Next year, Kuwili Street programs will expand to address both the physical and mental well-being of unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness.

Please review in detail Exhibits A and B within Addendum #2, as they quantify the significant amount of resources and programs dedicated to addressing the social challenges related to homelessness.

At this time, we respectfully request your approval to commence with the enforcement of Ordinance 18-34 and Ordinance 18-35. The Updated Plan and related supporting documents demonstrate our unwavering commitment to continue the dialog with each of you and your respective communities to implement comprehensive, person-centered solutions to “improve the quality of life for the people of O‘ahu.”

We look forward to continued efforts to serve the people of our City. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 768-7760.

Sincerely,

Pamela A. Witty-Oakland
Director

APPROVED:

Roy K. Amemiya, Jr.
Managing Director