Good Morning Council President Gómez and city councilmembers,

My name is Chelsey Birgisdottir. I am a policy associate at the ACLU of San Diego & Imperial Counties and am here today speaking with the Coalition for Police Accountability and Transparency.

**During this time, it is especially important that people in our region are treated with fairness and compassion, and that individuals’ lives aren’t jeopardized by needless detainment or incarceration.**

We urge you to call on Chief Nisleit and City Attorney Elliott to save lives by deprioritizing low-level offenses, including bench warrants and parole violations; by decriminalizing homelessness and other poverty-related offenses – ending fines, fees and jail time – and lastly; by not requiring bail for misdemeanors.

**Public education should be prioritized over enforcement.** San Diego Police Department officers should speak with people to explain the rules they are expected to follow – such as practicing physical distancing or wearing face coverings in public – rather than arresting or citing people unnecessarily.

Additionally, the city should protect peoples’ right to privacy by not utilizing mass surveillance technology such as drones or streetlight cameras.

**We are counting on you, our elected representatives, to act responsibly in this unprecedented public health crisis.** We must acknowledge that COVID-19 is fundamentally a public health issue, not a law enforcement or criminal justice issue. This means that we must respond to this crisis in a manner that preserves San Diegans’ health and wellbeing.

Thank you for your time.