URGING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO REMOVE "WATCH FOR THE BLIND" TRAFFIC SIGNS ON BACHELOT STREET AND JUDD STREET.

WHEREAS, Ho'opono Services for the Blind ("HSB"), a branch of the Hawaii Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, provides comprehensive and specialized services that meet the varied needs of consumers across the State of Hawaii ("State") who are blind, both deaf and blind, or visually impaired; and

WHEREAS, HSB, espouses the philosophy that "Blindness is not a Barrier to Success," and works to achieve the goal of enabling visually impaired adults to attain maximum vocational and functional independence; and

WHEREAS, HSB is located at 1901 Bachelot Street in Honolulu, Hawaii, within two blocks of that street's intersection with Judd Street; and

WHEREAS, there are six yellow traffic signs reading "WATCH FOR THE BLIND" on the two blocks of Bachelot Street nearest to HSB; and

WHEREAS, there are also two "WATCH FOR THE BLIND" traffic signs on Judd Street, between Liliha Street and Nu'uanu Avenue; and

WHEREAS, there are no other "WATCH FOR THE BLIND" traffic signs in the City and County of Honolulu; and

WHEREAS, with proper training, individuals who are blind can learn how to cross streets safely and independently; and

WHEREAS, a properly trained blind pedestrian is equally as likely as his or her sighted counterpart to cross streets according to traffic laws; and

WHEREAS, drivers must be aware of all pedestrians, blind and sighted, who are crossing the streets in order to avoid collisions; and

WHEREAS, the services provided by HSB, especially in the New Visions Program, work to build confidence, independence, and feelings of equality in individuals who are blind; and
RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the message sent by the "WATCH FOR THE BLIND" traffic signs is that blind pedestrians are inept, which contradicts the work of HSB generally, and the New Visions Program in particular; and

WHEREAS, students in the New Visions Program and other clients of HSB do not deserve to receive inaccurate messages of inferiority as a consequence of their blindness; and

WHEREAS, students in the New Visions Program and other clients of HSB learn, as part of their adjustment to blindness, that they are responsible for monitoring themselves while crossing streets; and

WHEREAS, at its 56th Annual Statewide Convention in October 2016, the National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii adopted Resolution 2016-05, calling for the removal of "WATCH FOR THE BLIND" traffic signs in the State now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it urges the City Administration to remove immediately the "WATCH FOR THE BLIND" traffic signs on Bachelot Street and Judd Street; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Managing Director is requested to report to the Council on the City's removal of the signs no later than September 1, 2018; and
BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution will be transmitted to the Mayor, the Managing Director, the Director of Transportation Services, the Chief Engineer of the Department of Facility Maintenance, Ho'opono Services for the Blind, and National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii.

INTRODUCED BY:

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

MAR 9 2018
Honolulu, Hawaii

councilmembers