



DOWNTOWN DENVER PARTNERSHIP, INC.
DOWNTOWN DENVER, INC.
DENVER CIVIC VENTURES, INC.
DOWNTOWN DENVER EVENTS, INC.

511 16th Street, Suite 200
Denver, CO 80202-4250
Tel. 303.534.6161
Fax 303.534.2803
www.downtowndenver.com

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Dear Honorable Members of the House Local Government Committee:

On behalf of the Downtown Denver Partnership, we kindly ask that you defeat House Bill 16-1191, the proposed Bill of Rights for People Who are Homeless.

The Downtown Denver Partnership is a 60 year old non-profit, civic organization with a mission to create and maintain an economically vital and vibrant Downtown Denver. We represent over 700 Downtown business members, 400 commercial property owners and 120,000 employees in one of the largest business districts in the Rocky Mountain region.

The Partnership firmly believes that Downtown Denver is for everyone. However, we have long recognized that certain behaviors can cause severe impacts on the Downtown environment. The Partnership and the Downtown Denver Business Improvement District (BID) have worked closely with the City and County of Denver and service providers throughout the past several decades to enact local ordinances to address the types of behaviors that can threaten the health and safety of the City's residents, employees, visitors, as well as to the individuals who are committing the acts themselves.

The Partnership and the BID have exemplified a balanced approach to solving this challenge. While the ordinances that we have supported do not target at a specific group of people, we recognize they can have an impact on the existing homeless population. To that end, we have driven efforts to attempt to get these individuals the housing and services they need. For example, we worked with the City and County of Denver to include language in the 2012 Unauthorized Camping Ordinance that emphasized the connection of individuals to services as a first step before any formal citations or actions take place.

We also understand the complex nature of addressing homelessness and have partnered for many years with the City and County of Denver in its cause to end it. We have supported Denver's Road Home since its inception both financially, having raised millions of dollars over the past decade, and in actively participating on the boards and committees that are planning and executing short-term and long-term strategies to identify even more funding for additional housing and services.

Furthermore, since 2004, the BID has provided funding annually to hire social service outreach workers who are specifically hired to work with homeless individuals in the Downtown area.

Fostering a safe and humane environment in Downtown Denver requires both providing incentives and programs that allow and encourage individuals to connect to services while simultaneously providing consequences for individuals who refuse assistance and continue to engage in behaviors that threaten the public safety and health of the Downtown community.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We are happy to answer any questions you might have at tdoor@downtowndenver.com or 303-534-6161.

Sincerely,


Joe Vostrejs
Partnership Chairman


Tami Door
Partnership President and CEO