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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT MAYOR LIGHTFOOT'S 2022 BUDGET PASSAGE**

"To build a better city, we need to invest in our people, our families and our neighborhoods. This budget addresses the needs of our most underserved communities, through affordable housing, violence reduction, community developments, infrastructure improvements, and more."

**Chairman Pat Dowell, 3rd Ward**

"The 2022 budget is a progressive win for our most vulnerable communities. I look forward to working with my colleagues by continuing to prioritize these historic investments in violence prevention, mental health, affordable housing, and the like."

**Alderman Sophia King, 4<sup>th</sup> Ward**

"I'm proud to support and have played a vital role in this budget, which allocates an additional \$55 million dollars to our mental health funding, creating 29 new permanent positions and allowing us to serve tens of thousands of more residents. Also, this budget includes Mental Health services for children, who were previously left to fend for themselves. These issues don't exist on an island. Mental health and wraparound support is directly tied to violence prevention. We're building towards a better future. One where our communities are made whole and life expectancy in Chicago is no longer determined by one's skin color and zip code."

**Chairman Roderick Sawyer, 6<sup>th</sup> Ward**

"By incorporating an unprecedented high level of community engagement in the construction of this budget, we're prioritizing the needs of our residents. Based on their input, this budget includes a universal income pilot program and investments in mental health services, violence prevention, vacant lot clean up, and youth supports across the city."

**Chairman Susan Sadlowski Garza, 10th Ward**



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“This budget keeps our residents’ needs top of mind while being fiscally responsible and prudent. I’m happy to support this transformational budget and usher in a new era of safe and strong communities.”

**Chairman Jason Ervin, 28th Ward**

“I’m proud to prioritize safer communities, foster economic growth, and invest in the livelihoods of our residents through this budget “Leveraging the American Rescue Plan funding and the Chicago Works Capital Plan funding, we will increase and create investments for generations to come.”

**Chairman Chris Taliaferro, 29th Ward**

“I am excited to be part of a budget with such a historical step forward. I’m especially pleased that through this budget, for the first time in history, the City will be paying an actuarially based pension employer contribution for all four of the City’s Pension funds. This puts us on a sturdy path towards stability and strength.”

**Chairman Scott Waguespack, 32nd Ward**

“I am so grateful to be putting the fiscal challenges of the pandemic behind us and begin our true recovery. The investments outlined in this budget will help turn the page on that painful chapter and welcome a bright, resilient future.”

**Alderman Carrie Austin, 34th Ward**

“I am happy to approve this budget and transform the lives of our residents facing the most adversity and hardship. By investing in affordable housing, mental health, youth programming, violence prevention, and more we’re truly putting our money where our mouth is to uplift our city.”

**Alderman Emma Mitts, 37th Ward**

“I’m pleased this budget addresses our fiscal challenges and puts us on the path to true financial stability while also providing full funding for public safety. With its passage, Chicago’s financial condition is in a much stronger position than it has been for many years.”

**Chairman Michele Smith, 43rd Ward**

“I am proud to see a budget that incorporates accountability and transparency owed to our residents. The once-in-a-lifetime federal funds we received are being used responsibly and with additional committee oversight to ensure continued proper usage.”

**Alderman Matt Martin, 47th Ward**



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“This budget invests in Chicagoans most impacted by the pandemic and long-term disinvestment. It funds housing, mental health, violence prevention, youth support and homelessness prevention at levels that should be a new standard. The work to ensure these funds make a difference begins now.”

**Alderman Harry Osterman, 48<sup>th</sup> Ward**

“Every Chicago family deserves a safe and affordable place to call home, and I commend the Mayor and the 2022 budget for their significant investments to support both the creation and preservation of affordable housing across Chicago.”

**Angela Hurlock, Executive Director of Claretian Associates**

“The Mayor’s proposed Food Equity Initiative in this budget is a long needed and sustainable investment for Chicago’s neighborhoods. In particular, Black Chicago neighborhoods on the south and west sides are in need of every tool the public sector can bare to stabilize and catalyze economic activities. This investment will help our entire city grow with intentional parity. This proposed budget also comes with a serious commitment to removing barriers and sustainability to access city owned lands by those most impacted by the public health. This can be an innovative approach to foster more cooperative economic efforts in Chicago to address public violence. I look forward to working with the Mayor to ensure this investment directly addresses the social determinants of health that are acutely impacting certain residents in the city, and becomes a climate change strategy to improve the natural environment. This process can be based out of acknowledgement and a commitment of repair and atonement, and of investment in groups and ideas that will improve the health disparities gap.”

**Anton Seals Jr., Lead Steward, Grow Greater Englewood and Chair of Chicago Good Policy Action Council**

“Neighborspace applauds the City of Chicago on the passage of the 2022 budget and their commitment to driving improved environmental outcomes for local communities. We are excited to partner with the City on a new community compost pilot, and demonstrate the potential for community composting to divert organic material from the waste stream while providing valuable soil. By tapping into the human power of community gardens hundreds of households will be able to compost their food scraps while helping their neighborhood gardens bloom.”

**Ben Helphand, Executive Director, Neighborspace**

“Esperanza Health Centers applauds Mayor Lightfoot for making expanded and equitable access to mental health services a core component of her budget. Investing \$86 million in the mental health infrastructure of our city will help ensure that even more people are able to get the services they need from trusted, quality providers in the communities in which



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they live. We thank the Mayor for her leadership and for making mental health access a top priority of her administration.”

**Carmen Vergara, COO of Esperanza Health Centers**

“We are supportive of Mayor Lightfoot’s holistic approach to reducing violence. Her \$400 million investment to address root causes of community safety is vital to Chicago becoming a place where all residents can thrive.”

**Christa Hamilton, President and CEO, UCAN**

“I commend Mayor Lightfoot, Commissioner Knazze and the entire Chicago Department of Family and Support for their unwavering leadership and commitment to ending homelessness in Chicago. The Mayor’s budget is a testimony to preserving the safety net and ensuring the most vulnerable of Chicagoans have access to safe shelter, an array of permanent housing options and resources needed literally for their survival and well-being. Chicago leads the nation in taking care of our neediest and I am proud to partner with the City.”

**Christine Achre, CEO of Primo Center**

“Openlands applauds Mayor Lightfoot and the Chicago City Council for passing a budget that makes historic investments in the environment to support community resilience to climate change and environmental equity for better quality of life for all. Climate change does affect the most marginalized communities in Chicago and is not just an environmental issue - it affects our health, food and water, economy, and national security. Investing in innovative and necessary mitigations now is vital to ensure Chicago's ability to support its residents and compete with other global cities in the future. Openlands is proud to partner with community groups, other area nonprofits, researchers, philanthropy, and the Chicago Department of Public Health, on *Tree Equity*. The conservation of existing tree canopy along with the planting and long-term care of trees, is a baseline for all communities to have equitable access to health and economic benefits.”

**Daniella Pereira, Vice President of Community Conservation, Openlands**

“Mayor Lightfoot’s budget demonstrates her administration’s commitment to partnering with community-based providers to develop innovative yet pragmatic solutions to enduring problems. Her team listens with the intention to understand, leverage expertise, and create pathways to successful implementation. We are energized by this budget and look forward to partnering with the city to forge new solutions to old problems.”

**Ed Stellan, Executive Director, Heartland Alliance Health**

“This budget recognizes that violence prevention requires investment in programs that address the root causes that contribute to violence, including increased funding in mental



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health programs, the arts, youth services, jobs, housing, and community building. A comprehensive approach like this, addressing these baseline issues, is what the City has long needed.”

**Ghian Foreman, CEO of the Emerald South Economic Development Collaborative**

“The pandemic has hit businesses, families, and individuals hard, especially in communities of color, and the Asian American community was no exception. We saw that existing systems were not adequate to address the needs that have arisen. We applaud the Mayor for including increased funding to bolster the support systems. The additional funding that increase access to mental health services and the funding to expand community development initiatives will ensure that every community and every family gets what they need to thrive and to grow.”

**Grace Chan McKibben, Executive Director, Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community**

“Today, the Chicago City Council made history by passing what will be the nation’s largest publicly-funded direct cash program. In the wake of the pandemic, we have seen more clearly than ever before how close Chicagoans are to financial disaster, and how far a few more dollars can go in a household struggling to make ends meet. A guaranteed income can offer our neighbors the cash they need to weather this storm and prepare for their futures with hope and dignity. We applaud the Mayor for her leadership and our partners for continuing to fight to put cash in the hands of those who need it most.”

**Harish I. Patel, Director of Economic Security for Illinois**

“The Illinois Environmental Council supports Chicago’s 2022 budget for its historic commitment of nearly \$200 million for climate-related infrastructure. The calls for increased spending and resources for environmental issues in Chicago have been ignored for far too long, and this proposed budget is a sorely needed step in the right direction. We look forward to continuing to work with the City of Chicago to translate these investments into equitable improvements to the health and environment of all Chicago communities.”

**Iyana Simba, City Programs Director, Illinois Environmental Council**

“Mayor Lightfoot’s historic budget passage will provide much needed support for businesses coming out of the pandemic. We stand with the Mayor in staunch support and thank the city alderman for supporting this budget and making sure that Chicago businesses and Hispanic business owners can recover from the nearly last two years”

**Jaime Di Paulo, President & CEO of the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**

“La Casa Norte applauds the Mayor and her team for investing urgently needed resources to expand housing opportunities for individuals experiencing homelessness, to increase



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violence prevention efforts and to support youth in Chicago's most vulnerable communities. We look forward to seeing further budget details and working together, with the city, to ensure these increased resources make a significant impact in the black and brown communities we serve."

**José M. Muñoz, Executive Director, La Casa Norte**

"We are profoundly grateful that Mayor Lightfoot and the City Council have broken with the past by making a commitment to invest significant city resources in addressing gender-based violence. We know from our research and experience that few survivors go to the police, while many rely on organizations like ours as they work to rebuild their lives after trauma. To that end, the 2022 budget proposed by Mayor Lightfoot and approved by City Council is a significant step toward realistically meeting the needs of our community. This funding brings Chicago more in line with other major cities and marks an exciting sea change."

**Kaethe Morris Hoffer, Executive Director of the Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation (CAASE)**

"These investments will provide much needed resources to our most in need communities, including those without status. This budget will allow millions of dollars will flow to communities that have experienced deep inequities and finally allows for long-term stability and growth."

**Karina Ayala-Bermejo, President & CEO, Instituto del Progreso Latino**

"In a city with appropriate competing interests, Mayor Lightfoot and her team must be commended for a budget that reflects an investment in people. We see significant support for mental health, violence prevention, small business relief and environmental justice. This is the Chicago Urban League's bread and butter. We look forward to working with the city and others in the community to ensure that this budget serves the best interests of citizens."

**Karen Freeman-Wilson, President and CEO, Chicago Urban League**

"The investments in the FY22 budget that focus on prevention strategies like sexual health education and gender-based violence in Chicago are long overdue. These critical resources should be first of many for our communities to reduce gender-based violence for the next generation."

**Karla Altmayer and Sheerine Alemzadeh, Co-Directors of Healing to Action**

"We applaud the Mayor's inclusion of funds in this budget for hospitality, tourism, safety, and business recovery. The Magnificent Mile and the surrounding district play a critical role in Chicago's recovery, with 110,000 residents, 250,000 jobs, 24,000 hotel rooms, and



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some of Chicago's most iconic buildings, businesses, restaurants, and attractions. Support from this budget would help to maintain and attract new and dynamic retailers and operators to commercial corridors like Michigan Avenue and ensure that all who enjoy the district are safe and welcomed. We look forward to working with the Mayor and City Council on a full recovery of our magnificent district." **Kimberly Bares, President and CEO, The Magnificent Mile Association**

"Thanks to Mayor Lightfoot's leadership and the passage of the 2022 budget, dedicated service providers will have more resources to thoughtfully utilize in their mission to end homelessness. With these investments, everybody can have a place called home." **Melanie Anewishki, Executive Director of Featherfist**

"Our youth, communities and small businesses must have capital and resources, to not only survive but to thrive. Investing in youth helps keep them engaged in productive activities, thus elongating their own life expectancy, as well as the lives of members of their family and friends. Investing in the youth enables them to be able to provide for themselves, their families and emerge as motivators, instead of menaces, of their own communities. Plants need water to live. People need resources. We as a country have invested trillions in weapons, correctional institutions, defense funds, etc., and yet the diseases of crime and violence haven't been cured. The time has come to invest in ourselves and \$150 million, toward the wonderful youth of our city, is a great start!" **Messiah Equino, Executive Director of CHI-RISE**

"I definitely support all of the Mayor's efforts to better the current condition Chicago finds itself in. Her new budget proposal certainly displays she has her foot on the pulse of the true needs and what it will take to evoke real change. The budget is addressing the very root causes that have led to violence in ways the city hadn't seen before!" **Pamela Blackman, CEO and President of the Better Boys Foundation Family Services**

"We commend the Mayor's commitment to bring equity to neighborhoods in need. This budget will provide a lifeline for many Chicagoans, with significant investments across critical issues such as family cash assistance, affordable housing and essential community businesses." **Raul Raymundo, CEO of The Resurrection Project**

"The \$500 monthly payments to 5,000 Chicagoans included in this budget will change and save lives," said Richard Wallace, founder and director of Equity and Transformation, a group advocating with Economic Security for Illinois and its partners on the Illinois Cash Coalition for direct cash programs throughout Illinois. "A Chicago guaranteed income pilot offers a tangible step toward a more equitable city. It is Lincoln Park saying to West



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Garfield Park: I see you; I see the high rates of unemployment; I see the income gap; and I am going to do something about it.”

**Richard Wallace, Founder and Director of Equity and Transformation**

“This budget represents an important step forward by reinvesting in Chicago’s safety net public mental health services,” said. “It increases outreach to individuals in need of treatment, expands the number of communities served, and adds needed staff to ensure that these goals can be met. Because of this plan, more city residents will receive quality, trauma-informed care, without financial barriers or wait lists.”

**Roberta Lynch, Director of AFSCME Council 31**

“We commend Mayor Lightfoot for making key investments in the FY 2022 budget to support Chicago's business community and our workforce. Providing funding to bolster commercial corridors, enhance public safety, drive tourism, and spur job creation will strengthen our restaurant industry, which has been devastated by the pandemic. We look forward to working with the Mayor and City Council to further address the needs of hospitality businesses in every corner of the city moving forward.”

**Sam Toia, President & CEO, Illinois Restaurant Association**

“This budget starts Chicago on the right path to discard prejudiced assumptions that low-income families cannot be trusted to use their resources responsibly and instead design a system of social support based on trust, dignity, and respect. LIFT Chicago has offered cash assistance since 2016, and we know it works. That’s why our members and our partners are applauding the City of Chicago today for their vote to offer a year’s worth of \$500 monthly checks to 5,000 Chicagoans in need. We are proud to hail from the city that offers its residents a guaranteed income.”

**Sarah Spunt, Executive Director of LIFT Chicago**

“Mayor Lightfoot’s investments to expand violence reduction services are coming at a critical time for our city. We, along with our outreach partners, look forward to working with the Mayor and her team to ensure community needs are integrated into the rollout of these services.”

**Vaughn Bryant, Executive Director, Metropolitan Peace Initiatives**

“In order to create this investment, the Mayor created a group that was different. By that I mean that the voices of those directly impacted were not just in the room to say that there were impacted individuals in the room, but our expertise was appreciated, and I believe and felt it was valued. As we weighed in on topics that had directly affected our lives, those of us directly impacted were able to guide the development of this investment. If we don't invest in those returning to our communities from being involved in the criminal legal



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system than our streets will be overflowing with those struggling to reenter, and an entire class of individuals will be set up for failure, homelessness, unemployment and unable to access opportunities that could aid in their reentry. Success and the success of our city as a whole with those returning to our community is a group effort and the Mayor's office is the best starting point. This investment shows everyone that Chicago is a city that cares, and we are invested in all of our citizens success regardless of past mistakes.”

**Willette Benford, Decarceration Organizer at Live Free Chicago**