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HARRIS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
DEVON ANDERSON

November 5, 2015

Administrative Office of City Council
City Hall Annex
900 Bagby, Second Floor
Houston, Texas 77002

Re: Body worn cameras

Greetings:

In December of 2014, the District Attorney's Office made a commitment to spend \$1.9 million dollars in asset forfeiture funds to equip officers in the Houston Police Department and the Harris County Sheriff's Office with body worn cameras.

I authorized this expenditure because I believe that body worn cameras are an important innovation in the criminal justice system, documenting police encounters and investigations, deterring misconduct by officers and the public, and reducing false claims against law enforcement agencies. The Texas Legislature later reached the same conclusion when it passed Senate Bill 158 during its 2015 session, authorizing body-worn cameras.

It is now November of 2015. I understand and appreciate that selecting a vendor and drafting an effective body-worn camera policy can be a difficult process, requiring a great deal of care and consideration to ensure that the equipment selected is reliable and cost-effective, that the management system for the recordings is trustworthy and secure, and that the policy strikes the correct balance between transparency and privacy.

These are not insurmountable problems, however. It is time for the City to move forward.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Devon Anderson".

DEVON ANDERSON
District Attorney