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City Attorney Zach Klein's Porch Protection Program Begins Distributing Hundreds of Ring Doorbells to Improve Neighborhood Safety

More than 700 households in higher crime areas set to receive devices at community pickup events before the holidays

COLUMBUS, OH— Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein today announced that winners of the Porch Protection Program lottery have been notified and distribution of more than 700 camera-equipped doorbells has begun. Klein and his office began distributing cameras at the Hilltop Early Learning Center Thursday, where dozens of residents received their Ring cameras.

“The Porch Protection Program puts public safety into the hands of residents, empowering them to be part of the solution to make their neighborhoods safer,” said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein. **“I encourage everyone who has these cameras to work with law enforcement and look out for their neighbors to deter crime and hold individuals accountable when crime does occur.”**

The City Attorney's Office reported that nearly 4,000 eligible households entered the lottery, of which more than 70 percent were women and almost 30 percent were seniors. Households earning up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level that rent or own their home in the ten Columbus ZIP codes with the highest crime rates and police calls for service over the past year were eligible to enter the pilot program.

Klein's office contacted households randomly selected to receive a camera via email with a link to schedule a day, time and location to pick up their device. Applicants were advised to bring a photo ID to pickup events, and those who rent their homes will need to provide a letter from their landlord stating it is permissible to install the camera if they did not already upload an approval letter with their application.

“The enthusiasm for this program demonstrates a real need for creative solutions that can give families peace of mind, reduce theft and help police solve crimes. We hope that this program can continue, and we will work with Council and explore every option to

find funding sources to get these cameras into the hands of more residents and families across Columbus,” added City Attorney Klein.

The Porch Protection Program gives households the ability to capture video and/or photos of would-be criminal activity in real time, speak to package delivery drivers, and monitor entryway activity remotely all from a smartphone. While the program will distribute cameras free of charge, the cost of any additional, premium subscription-based services will be the responsibility of owners. City Attorney Klein has also noted that law enforcement will not have access to any real time or archived footage captured by the cameras.

The program is funded by the American Rescue Plan, which was signed into law by President Joe Biden in 2021.