

December 30, 2020

Mayor Johnston and  
Key West City Commission  
1300 White Street  
Key West, FL 33040

Dear Mayor Johnston and Commissioners:

I would first like to thank you for the support that the City of Key West has provided to our residents in light of the pandemic. As we all know, COVID-19 has deeply affected our community and affording basic needs such as rent, food and utilities has overwhelmed many local residents. Your efforts through supporting the food pantries, increased communication, outreach and more have helped alleviate this challenging situation.

However, as this crisis has continued these many months, United Way is very concerned as we are far from finished with the heightened needs faced by our residents with these significant challenges. In fact, many of the safety nets established through CARES and other means are now changing or ending, nearly simultaneously. This will likely leave many in our community struggling even more so. Even as future federal COVID-19 relief legislation is passed, there will likely still be delays or gaps.

Thus, I approach you to advocate on behalf of the most vulnerable in our community and the hundreds of residents needing support, some seeking assistance for the first time in their lives. There is still a need to focus on these very real challenges of our residents' most basic needs. **In the proposal submitted for the January 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, you will see highlights of a recent COVID-19 Needs Assessment Survey UWCK conducted of more than 15 local Health and Human Services organizations, as well as a proposed plan for how the City could help continue to serve these critical needs of rent, food, and utilities/essential needs in the amount of \$209,520.** This is part of a comprehensive plan supported by a community leaders including nonprofits, healthcare professionals, business advocates and faith-based colleagues.

United Way has helped our residents overcome life's challenges for more than 30 years, and we look forward to continuing to work alongside partners like the City and our network of nonprofits to be able to do so through this pandemic and beyond. If you would like to discuss the proposal or our concerns in more detail, please feel free to reach out.

Thank you for helping us all Live United in Key West.

Sincerely,



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