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SPEECH BY MS LOW YEN LING, MAYOR OF SOUTH WEST DISTRICT AT THE LAUNCH OF LAW AWARENESS WEEKS (LAWS) @ CDC 2019 ON WEDNESDAY, 04 SEPTEMBER 6.00 PM AT KEAT HONG COMMUNITY CLUB

Mr Edwin Tong, SC
Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Law and Health

Dr Teo Ho Pin
Mayor of North West District

Ms Denise Phua
Mayor of Central Singapore District

Mr Desmond Choo
Mayor of North East District

Ms Cheryl Chan
Grassroots Adviser to Fengshan Grassroots Organisations

Mr N Sreenivasan, SC
Board Member of Law Society Pro Bono Services

Mr Desmond Tan
Chief Executive Director of People's Association

Deans and Professors of IHLs

District Councillors and Community Leaders

Pro Bono Lawyers and Student Volunteers

Community Partners

Ladies and Gentlemen

INTRODUCTION

A very good evening to all of you. Thank you for joining us today for the Launch of Law Awareness Weeks (LAWs) @ CDC 2019.

STRONG TIES WITH LAW SOCIETY PRO BONO SERVICES OFFICE

2 The partnership between the Law Society Pro Bono Services Office (LSPBS) and the five (5) CDCs started in 2007 with the establishment of the Community Legal Clinics (CLCs) in the South East and North West Districts. In 2014, the CLCs were expanded to all five (5) districts with the clinics providing free legal advice to residents. In 2015, we introduced talks about the law to educate the residents and make legal information more accessible to the community.

3 This year, between January and May, the CLCs served 1,200 residents, mainly on matrimonial, employment and estate matters. This was possible as we had more pro bono lawyers and student volunteers coming on-board. Since 2014, the number of law firms registered with the CLCs has almost doubled to more than 170. The number of lawyers volunteering has increased by more than 50% to 2,300. Thank you very much for all your support!

4 In addition, law students from all the three (3) Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) – National University of Singapore (NUS), Singapore Management University (SMU) and Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) – also help at the CLCs and community legal talks. Through the CLCs, we are able to provide direct and targeted help to residents in need of legal advice. At the same time, we also

facilitate and encourage skills-based volunteering among lawyers and students.

LAW AWARENESS WEEKS @ CDC

5 This year, we saw a record number of close to 50 partners - from CCs to organisations from the community participate in the Law Awareness Weeks @ CDC. Recognising the growing need for basic legal knowledge in our residents, the CDCs worked with LSPBS to make legal information easier to understand by breaking down legal jargons into layman language. What started out as week-long community legal talks has since evolved into series of talks over six (6) weeks to cater to the wider interests of the community. The CDCs also played convened and brought together other community partners such as the Singapore Heart Foundation, Credit Counselling Singapore and Jamiyah Singapore to expand the range of topics covered to benefit more residents.

6 The South West CDC is delighted to host the 5th LAWs @ CDC 2019. We will kick off the six law awareness weeks with up to 70 legal talks held across five (5) districts, 40 community clubs and social service agencies. The talks will cover topics such as Syariah Law, Employment Matters, Community and Neighbour Disputes and Advance Legal Planning.

“HELPING YOU HELP OTHERS”

7 This year’s theme for LAWs @ CDC: “Helping You Help Others” aims to empower the community to help other residents in need. We encourage those who have benefitted from the talks can share their newfound knowledge with their loved ones, neighbours and friends.

CLOSING REMARKS

8 In conclusion, I would like to thank our pro bono lawyers and student volunteers for all your dedication and hard work. Thanks also to LSPBS, the IHLS, our Community Partners and Grassroots Organisations for working hand-in-hand to bring legal talks closer to our residents. Together we are building a caring community, serving those in need and supporting one another.

9 Thank you and have a pleasant evening.