A Statement from Council Member Sandesh Sadalge on Ongoing Efforts to Address Community Concerns Surrounding Private Detention Facilities and Immigration Enforcement

The intersection of local, state, and federal immigration laws is undeniably complex. As the City continues to navigate this legal landscape, my Council colleagues and I understand that questions can arise—and that misinformation sometimes circulates and has circulated—regarding where the City's authority begins and ends. My Council colleagues and I remain committed to sharing the facts.

This issue is not just policy to me; it is personal. With my own immigrant roots, I understand the anxiety and the urgent need to keep families together and safe. It is because of that shared experience that I have worked with my Council colleagues to take a thoughtful, proactive approach—one that focuses on what we can do to protect our neighbors, rather than offering false hope regarding federal jurisdictions we cannot control.

We hear the community's specific call to use the City's business licensing process to close the Northwest ICE Processing Center (NWIPC). We have thoroughly examined this option, but we must be transparent about the hard reality: **federal law strictly limits the City's authority to revoke this license.**

The courts have established a clear boundary that prevents the City from closing a federal facility through local licensing. Put simply, under the U.S. Constitution, federal operations take precedence over local regulations.

My Council colleagues and I have listened to the community's demands and, building on the work of the Tacoma City Council over the last decade, enacted the following:

- **Aligning with State Law:** Addressing a central call from community members to draw a hard line on enforcement, on February 25, 2025, we adopted Resolution 41627, strictly aligning Tacoma with the state's Keep Washington Working Act. This ensures our City resources are not used to do ICE's job.
- **Funding Legal Support:** We funded direct support by putting City budget dollars behind our values. With our adoption of Resolution 41757 on September 9, 2025, we allocated funds for the Welcome Center and legal defense aid. This was a direct response to advocates asking for help so detainees can access counsel and communicate with their families.

- **Protecting City Assets:** We strengthened protections through our adoption of Resolution 41817 on December 9, 2025, which strictly limited the use of City-owned property and public assets for federal immigration enforcement.

My Council colleagues and I care deeply about the health, safety and welfare of all community members in Tacoma. This is why we continue to work with our county, state, and federal partners on this issue.

While the broader legal fight for structural change continues at the state and federal levels, we will continue to explore ways to make Tacoma safer for all community members —in specific, concrete, and tangible ways.

Go to **tacoma.gov/immigrationresources** to learn more.