

California State Senate

SENATOR
DAVE MIN

THIRTY-SEVENTH SENATE DISTRICT



September 16, 2021

Orange City Council
300 E. Chapman Ave.
Orange, CA 92866

Dear Honorable Members of the Orange City Council,

I write to you today to express my strongest opposition to your planned eviction of Mary's Kitchen, a longstanding local institution that represents the best of Orange County's values in serving those who are most vulnerable. At a time when our community is still struggling to navigate through the public health, mental health, and economic challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, I find it unconscionable that the City of Orange would eliminate one of its major providers of services for the unhoused, effectively passing this responsibility on to its neighboring cities. Your decision will exacerbate our regional homelessness crisis, place greater strain on our frontline responders and healthcare workers, and harm and likely kill some of those affected.

As you well know, Mary's Kitchen provides a myriad of services for the local unhoused population, including clothing, meals, showers, and a mailing address that allows them to receive access to various State and Federal benefits such as veterans benefits, Social Security, and valid IDs. Your City has expressly acknowledged the importance of these benefits by including Mary's Kitchen in its 5th cycle Housing Element (2014-2021) as one of the City's few providers of mainstream services to homeless persons, including "shelter, food, and other supportive services." Should you proceed with closing Mary's Kitchen, rest assured that I will be working closely with the California Department of Housing and Community Development to ensure that the City's new Housing Element replaces these lost services and is in full compliance with State law.

We are facing a crisis of homelessness in Orange County. To successfully meet this challenge, we will need as many resources as possible. Closing down Mary's Kitchen in the midst of this crisis is taking us in the wrong direction, and I urge you to reconsider your decision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Min", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dave Min
State Senator, 37th District

DKM:jb