

Dream Center to Petition LA to Lift Ban on Feeding Homeless

The Dream Center, a Los Angeles-based, volunteer-driven organization, is in the process of creating a petition on to lift the recent 13-1238 motion filed by LA city council members Tom LaBonge and Mitch O'Farrell that will potentially restrict people and organizations from feeding homeless people in public spaces.

Similar laws and bans against feeding the homeless publicly have been enacted in several cities, including New York City. With the second-largest homeless population in the country (more than 57,000 homeless people accounted for in 2013), many residents in LA want the homeless out of their neighborhoods, while many charity groups want to retain the right to feed homeless people outside.

The Dream Center was founded in 1994 and currently serves more than 50,000 people through their various programs each month, including in LA's Skid Row. However, this recent motion would drastically and permanently restrict the organization's right to provide resources and hope among not only the homeless population, but also families in need.

"The last thing our city needs, in the midst of rising homeless, is to restrict the goodwill of people," says Matthew Barnett, founder of the Dream Center. "We have noticed that feeding people leads to encouragement, nourishment, permanent housing, education, jobs and personal growth. When we encounter people, the opportunity for change is always possible. We pray that the city of Los Angeles reconsiders this as they continue to push this reckless agenda further."

The Dream Center is rallying citizens and organizations to

sign its petition against motion 13-1238 on and is encouraging people to post the hashtag #DontRestrictPublicFeeding on all social media channels.

“Compassion is not something to be regulated but celebrated without harnessing the free will of citizens,” Barnett says. “We have great hope that our city leaders will change their course and support the freedom for people to ‘love their neighbors as themselves.’”