



IMPERIAL VALLEY **REGIONAL** CHAMBER *of* COMMERCE

May 1, 2024

The Honorable Dr. Raul Ruiz
Congressman California 25th District
2342 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Letter of Support for Federal Funding Appropriation for Demolition of Valley Centerpoint Buildings at 1198 N. Imperial Avenue, El Centro, CA 92243 (APN 064-470-109)

Dear Congressman Ruiz,

On behalf of the Imperial Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce (IVRCC), I am writing to express our strong support for the City of El Centro's efforts to secure funding for the demolition of the former strip mall, commonly known as the "old Mervyn's" site. The estimated cost for this demolition project is \$3.6 million, which is a significant financial burden for the City of El Centro.

Although our economy is on the rise, El Centro is still considered a "disadvantaged" community by California standards, largely due to its proximity to the US/Mexico border and the unique economic challenges that accompany it.

Funding for the demolition would be a transformative step toward revitalizing this key part of the city. Part of the mission statement of IVRCC is to serve Imperial Valley businesses and promote community prosperity through advocacy and economic development. By removing these blighted structures, we can unlock the potential for new development, attract businesses, create jobs, and expand our local economy. The positive ripple effects from this project would help rejuvenate the entire area, fostering a safer, more vibrant community.

Your support for this funding request would be a significant investment in the future of El Centro. It would signal to local residents and businesses that our community is worth revitalizing and would encourage further economic growth.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information at (760) 352-7413 should you have any additional questions. Thank you for your consideration and continued support.

Sincerely,

Sher Cowie
President/CEO

Cc: File