



# CITY OF MERCED

April 25, 2025

The Honorable Darshana R. Patel  
California State Assembly  
1021 O Street, Room 5140  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Assembly Bill 237 – Crimes: threats – SUPPORT (As Amended March 5, 2025)**

Dear Assemblymember Patel,

On behalf of the City of Merced, I write to express our support for Assembly Bill (AB) 237, which would strengthen California's penal code to address the growing threat of violent messages made toward public spaces such as schools, workplaces, houses of worship, and other community-serving locations.

As local governments work tirelessly to promote safe, inclusive, and resilient communities, the rise of threats—particularly those shared online or through other digital platforms—has had a destabilizing impact on public safety, mental health, and civic life. Whether or not the perpetrator intends to act on the threat, the fear and disruption caused can be profound and lasting. Unfortunately, current law does not always provide the tools necessary to respond effectively when these threats target community institutions.

AB 237 appropriately expands existing law by recognizing that threats made with reckless disregard for their impact—especially when aimed at vulnerable or high-traffic locations—deserve a strong legal response. The bill also acknowledges the evolving nature of communication, ensuring that threats made through digital or visual means are treated with the same seriousness as traditional verbal threats. This legislation would empower local law enforcement and prosecutors with clear statutory authority to act when individuals issue credible threats that instill sustained fear in residents and employees across critical spaces. As a city dedicated to protecting our residents, workers, students, and visitors, we see AB 237 as a timely and necessary measure to bolster public safety.

For these reasons, we are pleased to support AB 237 and thank you for your leadership on this most important issue. Should you have any questions, please contact our legislative advocate Sharon Gonsalves with California Public Policy Group at 916-974-9270.

Sincerely,

Matthew Serratto  
Mayor  
City of Merced

CC: Members and Staff of the Assembly Appropriations Committee  
The Honorable Esmeralda Soria, Assembly District 27