Earlier this spring, Mayor Lee delivered a meal to Charles, a 90-year-old widower who lives by himself in the outer Sunset. While Charles is doing amazingly well for a nonagenarian, he struggles to keep up with the day-to-day responsibilities of managing a household by himself. Meals on Wheels fills much of that void for him, and as a result, he can stay in his home, where he wants to be.

In delivering a meal to Charles, Mayor Lee kicked off March for Meals; a month-long campaign that celebrates President Nixon’s signing of the Older Americans Act in March of 1972. Locally, we received incredible support not just from Mayor Lee but also from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, the Police and Fire Chiefs, former Senator Mark Leno, Mikkel Svane (CEO of Mid-Market tech firm Zendesk), and Kara’s Cupcakes — to name a few.

Days after Mayor Lee kicked off our campaign, news of the President’s potentially devastating cuts to Meals on Wheels saturated the news cycle, bifurcating support at the local and federal level. For nearly 45 years, Meals on Wheels San Francisco, along with 5,000 programs around the country, has enjoyed bi-partisan support for aging Americans. The proposed budget at the federal level reverses this well-established priority, threatening resources that are already stretched to the bone.

The “skinny budget,” released on March 16, calls for an 18% cut to the Department of Health and Human Services, which — through the Older Americans Act — funds Meals on Wheels programs nationwide. Roughly 25% of MOWSF funding comes from federal sources, 25% from local tax payers, and 50% from private donations from individuals, foundations, and business. The real threat to us is the 25% of federal funds we receive. We remain hopeful that these proposed cuts will be blocked during the lengthy budget process. However, we can no longer assume that federal support is a sure thing. It’s more important than ever for us to speak out for seniors and the services they depend on — every single day — to survive.

You can speak out by visiting the website, mealsonwheelsamerica.org/advocacycenter. This site includes the most up-to-date information on the budget process as well as easy ways to get involved. Your response to these proposed cuts will make a critical difference to the 3,600 homebound seniors we serve, and to a generation of baby boomers who are just now aging into retirement. Together, we will ensure that San Francisco’s seniors are not hungry, forgotten, or left behind — today, tomorrow, and for generations to come.
FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friend,

In March, Meals on Wheels was swept up in the crosshairs of a national debate on funding services for homebound seniors. I am guessing many of you watched or read some of the news coverage we received. While the pace of the coverage was dizzying, it did afford us the opportunity to showcase our outcomes on a national stage; outcomes that keep 3,600 seniors across San Francisco in their homes, where they want to be.

As loyal friends of Meals on Wheels, I wanted to say ‘Thank You’ for standing up for us. Even without a reduction in funding levels, we are already stretched to meet the current and future needs of homebound seniors in San Francisco. The health and wellbeing of this vulnerable population hangs in the balance of maintaining and growing our public and private support, not cutting it.

Secondly, I want you to know that I will keep you informed of any major changes that may impact Meals on Wheels as the proposed budget moves from the White House to Congress. It is still very early in the process, and there are far more questions than answers at this point. I am working very closely with our teams in San Francisco and in Washington to ensure we communicate as clearly as possible the moral and economic imperative to keep seniors in their own homes for as long as it is safely possible.

Lastly, I invite you to join me in strengthening our collective resolve to honor the independence and dignity of homebound seniors. My commitment to this cause has never been greater. It moves me to think about the seniors we serve and the sacrifices they have made over the course of a lifetime to ensure we have the opportunities afforded to us today.

In this newsletter, you will read about what is happening on the ground level at Meals on Wheels. We will introduce you to Steve, one of many committed volunteers whose Herculean efforts make life easier for seniors across our city. You will see a list of prominent companies and sponsors of the 30th anniversary of our upcoming Star Chefs and Vintners Gala. Lastly, you will notice a unique opportunity to support Meals on Wheels in what is a routine part of your week: grocery shopping.

This spring has been a whirlwind of activity. Through all of the ups and downs, I am incredibly grateful to count you as one of our most loyal supporters. We couldn’t do this without you!

In March, we were swept up in a whirlwind of activity. Through all of the ups and downs, I am incredibly grateful to count you as one of our most loyal supporters. We couldn’t do this without you!

This spring has been a whirlwind of activity. Through all of the ups and downs, I am incredibly grateful to count you as one of our most loyal supporters. We couldn’t do this without you!

In March, we were swept up in a whirlwind of activity. Through all of the ups and downs, I am incredibly grateful to count you as one of our most loyal supporters. We couldn’t do this without you!

This spring has been a whirlwind of activity. Through all of the ups and downs, I am incredibly grateful to count you as one of our most loyal supporters. We couldn’t do this without you!

In March, we were swept up in a whirlwind of activity. Through all of the ups and downs, I am incredibly grateful to count you as one of our most loyal supporters. We couldn’t do this without you!