

# CHAPA'S 2021-2022 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Everyone in Massachusetts deserves the opportunity to live in a safe, healthy, and affordable home in the community they choose. By focusing on the **production** and **preservation** of affordable homes, equitable **planning** in all of our cities and towns, and **prosperity** of our neighbors and communities, we can begin to undo discriminatory policies and barriers that have perpetuated segregation and hindered generational wealth-building for decades. With these legislative priorities, we can help our state recover from the impacts of COVID-19 while moving forward on long-term solutions to the affordable housing challenges we faced before the pandemic.

## PRODUCTION & PRESERVATION

### **An Act relative to housing production (HD.3945/SD.2313)**

*Sponsors: Representatives Andy Vargas and Kevin Honan & Senator Brendan Crighton*

This legislation will increase the production of affordable homes, remove restrictive zoning barriers, and proposes innovative solutions for land use in Massachusetts by:

- Setting a statewide affordable housing production goal
- Requiring multi-family zoning around public transportation or other suitable locations in all municipalities
- Allowing inclusionary zoning bylaws to be enacted with a simple majority vote
- Allowing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to be built by-right in every municipality
- Examining how underutilized commercial properties can be used for housing
- Prioritizing state-owned land for affordable housing

### **An Act restoring the Commonwealth's public housing (HD.3891)**

### **An Act leveraging additional resources for local housing authorities (SD.2469)**

*Sponsors: Representative Kevin Honan & Senator Brendan Crighton*

Decades of underfunding has left Massachusetts at risk of losing our public housing. This legislation will help restore the state's public housing by allowing housing authorities to leverage new and additional resources for rehabilitation and redevelopment projects. This will help ensure that public housing will remain available for some of our most vulnerable residents.

### **An Act codifying the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (HD.3277)**

### **An Act relative to the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (SD.1899)**

*Sponsors: Representative Adrian Madaro & Senator Joan Lovely*

This legislation would strengthen the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) that currently serves almost 9,000 households. These bills would codify MRVP into state statute and make program improvements including reducing the tenant payment share, increasing administrative fees, requiring inspections, and improving data collection.

### **An Act providing for climate change adaptation infrastructure and affordable housing investments in the Commonwealth (HD.1252/SD.611)**

*Sponsors: Representative Nika Elugardo & Senator Jamie Eldridge*

Massachusetts is facing both an affordable housing crisis and a climate change crisis, unfortunately made worse by COVID-19. This legislation would double the deeds excise tax on the sale of real property and dedicate the estimated \$300 million in annual revenue towards affordable housing and climate sustainability. The deeds excise tax is not only directly linked to rising real estate prices but it's also an affordable and equitable way to generate revenue for the state of Massachusetts.

## **An Act reducing CPA recording fees for affordable housing (HD.1851)**

*Sponsors: Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante*

This bill would reduce Community Preservation Act (CPA) recording fees for affordable housing in those cities and towns that have enacted the CPA.

# **PLANNING & PROSPERITY**

## **An Act promoting fair housing by preventing discrimination against affordable housing (HD.1990/SD.2200)**

*Sponsors: Representative Christine Barber & Senator Sonia Chang-Díaz*

Massachusetts has high levels of residential segregation. Restrictive local zoning and permitting decisions have helped create and perpetuate these patterns based on race, socioeconomic status, and familial status. These bills would prohibit municipal and state discriminatory zoning bylaws, ordinances, and land use decisions.

## **An Act to affirmatively further fair housing (HD.3733/SD.1990)**

*Sponsors: Representatives Dave Rogers and Jon Santiago & Senator Joseph Boncore*

This legislation creates a state-level duty to affirmatively further fair housing to make sure that the state, cities, towns, local housing authorities, and other public entities do not discriminate in their programs. It also creates a commission to establish how to meet this duty to create diverse, inclusive communities with access to good jobs, schools, health care, transportation, and housing.

## **An Act establishing a fair housing disparate impact standard (HD.3669) An Act prohibiting discriminatory effects in housing & community development (SD.1765)**

*Sponsors: Representative Dave Rogers & Senator Joseph Boncore*

This legislation creates a state fair housing disparate impact standard to protect against housing discrimination. This will allow people to challenge a housing policy or program that has a discriminatory impact on them because of their race, sex, gender identity, disability, family status, or other protected class – even if the policy or program appears on its face to apply to everyone equally. This will protect against policies and practices that – whether intentionally or unintentionally – keep some people from homes they can afford simply because of who they are.

## **An Act promoting housing stability and homelessness prevention in Massachusetts (HD.2441/SD.1906)**

*Sponsors: Representatives Michael Day and Dave Rogers & Senator Sal DiDomenico*

Recognizing the housing emergency exacerbated by COVID-19 and the severe public health risks associated with displacement, this legislation would prevent evictions and promote housing stability during the pandemic and over the long-term. The bills provide legal representation for tenants and owner-occupants with low incomes in eviction proceedings.

## **An Act promoting housing opportunity & mobility through eviction sealing (HOMES) (HD.1889/SD.798)**

*Sponsors: Representative Michael Moran & Senator Joseph Boncore*

As soon as an eviction case is filed, a tenant has an eviction record that can impact people's ability to obtain housing, credit, and employment. These eviction records are publicly available forever, regardless of the outcome. This legislation will protect tenants from being unfairly branded with an eviction record if they don't have a judgment against them, if they weren't actually evicted, or if they didn't do anything wrong.