[Date]

The Honorable John Keenan The Honorable James Arciero

Senate Chair House Chair

Joint Committee on Housing Joint Committee on Housing

**Re: Testimony Supporting Bills to Prohibit Discriminatory Zoning (H.1373/S.867) and Enable Transfer Fees (H.1377/S.868)**

Dear Chair Arciero, Chair Keenan, and Distinguished Members of the Joint Committee on Housing,

I am writing in support of legislation that will prohibit discriminatory zoning in Massachusetts and allow cities and towns to create resources for affordable housing through transfer fees. I urge the members of the Housing Committee to favorably report out:

* **H.1373**, *An Act promoting fair housing by preventing discrimination against affordable housing*, & **S.867**, *An Act promoting fair housing by preventing discrimination against affordable housing*.
* **H.1377 & S.868**, *An Act empowering cities and towns to support affordable housing with a fee on certain real estate transactions.*

H.1373/S.867 would prohibit discriminatory zoning against affordable housing or housing for families with children or for other protected classes in Massachusetts.

Restrictive local zoning and permitting decisions that decide who gets to live where have created and perpetuated segregation based on race, socioeconomic status, and familial status in Massachusetts. Too often, families with children, people with low incomes, and people of color are intentionally excluded when new housing is created by limiting housing type and affordability. By creating only studio apartments or only age-restricted homes in new development, for example, communities are furthering segregation and perpetuating exclusion.

H.1373/S.867 will strengthen our fair housing laws and foster more inclusive communities by prohibiting municipal and state discriminatory zoning bylaws, ordinances, and land use decisions.

H.1377/S.868 would allow Massachusetts cities and towns to enact a small fee on high-value real estate sales, in order to create and support affordable housing. Transfer fees are proven to be an effective, efficient, and equitable tool for raising millions in revenue to create and support affordable housing. This revenue would make a major positive impact on the lives of Massachusetts residents struggling to find affordable housing, without hurting the real estate market.

[Your personal additions - why protecting our public housing is important for Massachusetts]

Thank you,

[your name]