



Citizens' Housing and  
Planning Association, Inc.

## CHAPA's 2017–2018 Legislative Priorities

CHAPA's legislative agenda includes proposals that help produce, preserve, and plan for more housing that is affordable for households with low and moderate incomes in the Commonwealth. This package of legislation addresses challenges that impede working families, persons with disabilities, and seniors from affording the high cost of housing. If enacted, these bills will reduce homelessness and housing instability; help persons with disabilities afford accessible, community-based housing; create jobs; and strengthen our communities.

### **An Act Financing the Production & Preservation of Housing for Low & Moderate Income Residents (H.675)**

*Sponsored by Rep. Kevin Honan & Sen. Linda Dorcena Forry*

This legislation invests \$1.7 billion through the capital budget in affordable housing over five years, providing critical funding to produce, preserve, and modernize public and affordable housing in communities across the Commonwealth. The bill also extends the state Low Income Housing Tax Credit and expands its annual authorization by \$5 million to preserve affordable housing at risk of being lost due to expiring affordability restrictions.

### **An Act Relative to Housing Production (H.673 / S.723)**

*Sponsored by Rep. Kevin Honan & Sen. Linda Dorcena Forry*

This legislation provides financial incentives and new tools to meet the Commonwealth's housing needs. The bill requires cities and towns to allow multifamily housing in smart growth locations, accessory dwelling units, and open space residential developments as of right. It also presents new tools and strategies for regionalization and interagency collaboration to plan for the housing Massachusetts residents want and need.

### **An Act Building for the Future of the Commonwealth (H.2420)**

*Sponsored by Reps. Stephen Kulik & Sarah Peake*

These bills reform our state's planning, zoning, and permitting laws to support communities that work for families and seniors; create healthy, walkable neighborhoods; produce new housing in sensible locations; and preserve open space.

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### **An Act Promoting Housing and Sustainable Development (S.81)**

*Sponsored by Sen. Harriette Chandler*

### **An Act Relative to Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (H.1536 / S.1531)**

*Sponsored by Rep. Kevin Honan & Sen. Linda Dorcena Forry*

The state Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) is a critical financing tool to develop and preserve affordable housing. Unfortunately, many affordability restrictions are due to expire over the next two to three years. This legislation increases the state LIHTC annual authorization by \$5 million for the purpose of preserving affordable housing. The bill would also allow the tax credit to be taken in one year instead of over five years.

### **An Act Relative to Smart Growth Multifamily Housing Production (H.1095 / S.93)**

*Sponsored by Rep. Kevin Honan & Sen. Linda Dorcena Forry*

These bills require cities and towns to designate zoning districts where multifamily housing can be built as of right and without the need of a special permit in smart growth locations. This will help meet our housing need of building nearly 17,000 new homes a year to keep pace with demand.

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### **An Act to Address Equal Access to Housing through Local Zoning (H.2237)**

*Sponsored by Rep. Christine Barber*

**An Act Relative to Preventing Discriminatory Land Use and Permitting Decisions (H.3024 / S.1120)**

*Sponsored by Rep. Christine Barber & Sen. Sonia Chang-Diaz*

This legislation makes it an unlawful discriminatory practice for government entities to reject an affordable housing development simply on the basis that the development includes affordable housing or housing that is suitable for families with children. The legislation makes it clear that government entities are entitled to make land use decisions based on bona fide governmental interests. This type of unfair socio-economic discrimination has led to a shortage of affordable housing in Massachusetts.

**An Act Relative to Smart Growth Housing Production (H.128 / S.84)**

*Sponsored by Rep. Kevin Honan & Sen. Linda Dorcena Forry*

This legislation makes it easier for municipalities to adopt Chapter 40R Smart Growth Zoning Districts by lowering the adoption threshold from a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> supermajority to a simple majority of the local legislative body. 40R provides for greater density in transit areas. Municipalities are also eligible for state payments for each unit zoned and additional payments for each unit built. The Commonwealth also reimburses qualifying municipalities for increased school costs due to increased development in a 40R District.

**An Act to Sustain Community Preservation Revenue (H.2615 / S.1504)**

*Sponsored by Rep. Stephen Kulik, Rep. Kevin Honan, & Sen. Cynthia Creem*

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) creates housing, jobs, and economic development in 172 communities across the Commonwealth. The foundation of the CPA is the promise of a strong state/local partnership for funding the program. Each CPA community voted to add a small surcharge to local property taxes with the state committing to provide matching funds. The partnership is in jeopardy as the state match has declined as more communities enact the CPA. This legislation ensures that the CPA will remain an effective resource by increasing the program's dedicated funding component for the state match – recording fees at the state's Registries of Deeds – to provide a minimum 50% base match to CPA communities.

**An Act Relative to the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (S.719)**

*Sponsored by Sen. Jamie Eldridge*

This bill codifies the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) into the General Laws. Currently, MRVP is only authorized through the annual state budget. Codifying the program will create a more permanent authorization and allow for a more deliberative process to improve the program through legislation as MRVP grows to serve more households with permanent affordable housing solutions.

**An Act to Extend the Brownfields Tax Credit (S.1610)**

*Sponsored by Sen. Michael Rodrigues*

This bill extends the Brownfields Tax Credit through 2024. The credit is currently set to expire in 2018. The tax credit is an important resource used to help clean up polluted properties owned or leased for business purposes in economically distressed areas.

**An Act Relative to Interagency Efforts to Reduce and Prevent Homelessness (H.2245 / S.725)**

*Sponsored by Rep. Byron Rushing & Sen. Linda Dorcena Forry*

This legislation creates a Memorandum of Understanding among the Secretaries of Housing and Economic Development, Health and Human Services, Labor and Workforce Development, Education, and Administration and Finance to direct these agencies to work together in coordinating services and resources for households that are facing economic instability and homelessness.

**An Act Relative to the Economic Mobility and Stability Program (H.3020 / S.724)**

*Sponsored by Rep. Aaron Vega & Sen. Linda Dorcena Forry*

This legislation brings together stakeholders to study the many self-sufficiency programs that have been created to help households increase their incomes and build assets. This bill creates a commission to study these self-sufficiency programs that will help shape an economic mobility and financial stability program. The commission will also examine the impact of cliff effects and determine ways to adjust assistance in response to changes in income.