



July 23, 2015

The Honorable Robert A. DeLeo
Speaker of the House

The Honorable Stanley C. Rosenberg
President of the Senate
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Speaker DeLeo and Senate President Rosenberg:

Last week, we wrote to the members of the 2016 Budget Conference Committee, expressing our gratitude and support for their work. As the legislative leaders for the House and Senate, we wish to commend your leadership in reconciling the differences between budget proposals and leading the way to a robust FY 2016 budget that includes essential funding for many of the Commonwealth's important initiatives and programs, including the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program and the Small Business Technical Assistance program.

At this time, we want to express our opposition to a budget amendment proposed by Governor Baker following his review of the legislature's budget submission. In Outside Section 144, the legislature proposed \$11,500,000 funding for the Housing Preservation and Stabilization Trust Fund (HPSTF), through a combination of funds transferred from the General Fund and funds transferred from select accounts administered by MassHousing on behalf of the Commonwealth.

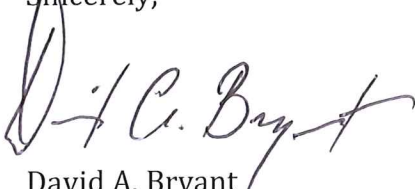
We support adequate resources for the HPSTF program to develop and preserve affordable housing and to provide additional services to families and individuals making a transition from homeless shelters to permanent housing. However, we are opposed to Governor Baker's proposed budget amendment to Section 144, and ask that the legislature reject this amendment to further reduce the proposed HPSTF funding by \$1,500,000 and, further, reduce the lead paint abatement account by \$5,000,000. MACDC did not address the transfer of \$2,500,000 from the lead paint abatement program specifically.

However, we all view the ongoing need for lead paint abatement as a compelling environmental justice challenge and a further impediment to access to fair housing across the state. The problem is concentrated in 18 of 351 cities and towns and seven high-risk communities (Boston, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, Malden, Somerville and Worcester). CDCs have initiated a dialogue with MassHousing and other advocates to examine means by which we can reform the existing program administration to distribute loans across the

Commonwealth more effectively and to improve health and safety for families in these communities.

Lead paint abatement and HPSTF are both vital programs, and we believe it is important for the legislature to sustain its commitment to HPSTF by drawing resources from the General Fund and by ensuring that housing, community development and public health advocates have time to work with MassHousing and others to reinvigorate the lead paint abatement program and to apply its remaining resources to the areas of greatest need across the commonwealth.

Sincerely,



David A. Bryant
Director of Advocacy
Mass Association of
Community Development Corporations (MACDC)

On behalf of:
Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA)
Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance (MAHA)

Cc: Hon. Brian Dempsey
Hon. Karen Spilka
Hon. Sal DiDomenico
Hon. Steve Kulik
Hon. Todd Smola
Hon. Vinny deMacedo