



October 23, 2015

His Excellency Charlie Baker
Governor of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts State House
Boston, MA 01233

Dear Governor Baker,

On behalf of MACDC, we respectfully request that you sign into law H.3673, An Act relative to the transfer of certain funds to be credited to the Housing Preservation and Stabilization Trust Fund (HPSTF) for fiscal year 2016, and, further, ask that you direct DHCD to hold a funding round for HPSTF projects.

Over the past few months, several of our members have expressed concern that the delay for available HPSTF funding has delayed the timely development of much-needed permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals and families in communities across the state.

HPSTF was created in 2014 to be a flexible tool for funding affordable housing for low-income families and individuals in the Commonwealth most at-risk for becoming homeless. The Fund has helped to build supportive housing for veterans, the elderly and disabled, and can be used to augment federal funds, which together help to alleviate homelessness. 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.

We believe the legislature is right to fund this program with a mix of sources as they have proposed, rather than taking \$5,000,000 from the Get the Lead Out program. MACDC and its members view the ongoing need for lead paint abatement as a compelling environmental justice challenge and the abatement funds are necessary to eliminate a serious health hazard for children and a key impediment to access to fair housing across the state. Reducing the GTLO account by \$2.5 million as the Legislature has done is already a 33% cut to the program. That is more than enough.

The lead poisoning 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 Mass Housing and other advocates to examine how we can reform the existing program to distribute loans across the Commonwealth more effectively given the realities of today's housing market. We know there is a need so the focus should be on how we can best meet it, rather than how we can redeploy the funds..

The bottom line is that lead-paint abatement and HPSTF are both vital programs, and we believe it is important for to sustain the 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Kriesberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent flourish at the end.

Joe Kriesberg
President & CEO