



November 19, 2015

Senator Eileen Donoghue
Co-Chair

Representative Joseph Wagner
Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Economic Development
and Emerging Technologies
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairwoman Donoghue and Chairman Wagner:

The Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations (MACDC) commends Secretary Jay Ash and his staff at the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED) for its draft comprehensive economic development plan, *Opportunities for All*. We appreciate the extensive outreach made by EOHED staff over several months to solicit data, information, and ideas through thousands of conversations with the Commonwealth's residents, businesses, academic institutions, community-based organizations, and state and local public officials.

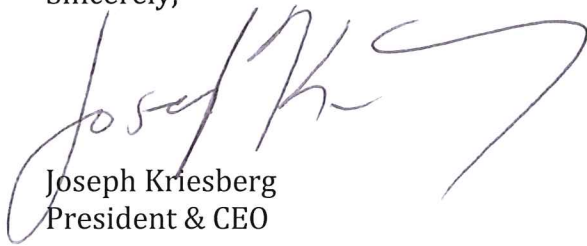
MACDC and its members were pleased to participate in several of the discussion and planning forums held across the state, and we are pleased that key policy concepts and areas of implementation and focus outlined in the draft are consistent with ideas CDCs have put forth. We are particularly pleased with the efforts to prepare low- and moderate-income communities for success by building the capacity of both local government and community-based organizations. We were also pleased to see the emphasis on promoting community-based entrepreneurship, access to capital for small businesses, adopting policies that support the production of more housing across a range of price points, preservation of existing affordable housing, comprehensive land use planning, and remediation of brownfields. We also heartily endorse the plans commitment to Smart Growth principles and incentives.

One area where we think the plan could be stronger is with regard to growing income and wealth inequality. While the plan acknowledges that this is a major weakness in our economy, it does not have a strong enough emphasis on reversing these trends. The EOHED draft plan makes modest mention of tackling intergenerational poverty through "expanding supportive educational, vocational and occupational services to residents of affordable housing communities," but broader efforts are needed to increase wages, to

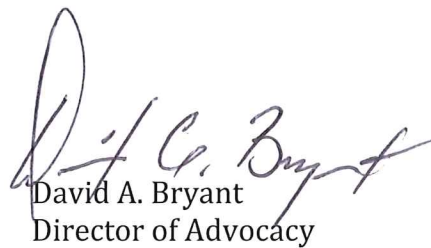
grow and protect wealth in low income communities, and to expand access to opportunity for everyone. As this process moves forward toward implementation, we would like to work with you and other civic partners to ensure that we examine the many intersectional interests that impact low- and moderate-income families and communities of color and work collaboratively to narrow the wealth opportunity divide.

MACDC sees this as an important point of emphasis for equitable economic development across the Commonwealth, and we are committed to working with your Committee, the Legislature, Secretary Ash, and the Baker Administration to realize these shared goals, and we look forward to providing detailed legislative, budgetary and programmatic recommendations at the appropriate time for your further consideration.

Sincerely,



Joseph Kriesberg
President & CEO



David A. Bryant
Director of Advocacy

Cc: Secretary Jay Ash