



Testimony in Support of the Need to Increase Boston's Linkage Fees to Support the
Neighborhood Housing and Jobs Trust (Docket #1244)

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to the
Boston City Council
Committee on Economic Development and Planning and Labor

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Chairman LaMattina, and Members of the Committee, my name is David Bryant, and I am the Director of Advocacy for the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations (MACDC). MACDC is an association of mission-driven community development organizations dedicated to working together and with others to create opportunities for people of diverse incomes and backgrounds to access housing that is affordable, benefit from economic opportunities, and fully participate in the civic life of their communities.

Massachusetts needs 17,000 new homes per year to meet housing demand and sustain our economy. Our members work with local residents to create and preserve housing that improves local neighborhoods and contributes to the state's overall need for more housing, in particular, more housing that is affordable for people of modest means.

On behalf of our member organizations, I am testifying in support of the proposal to increase Boston's Linkage Fees. The current linkage fees are \$8.34 for the Neighborhood Housing Trust, and \$1.67 for the Neighborhood Jobs Trust, levels that are inadequate to meet the housing and job training needs of Boston's families. We support an increase to \$12.00 and \$2.40 respectfully, which increases will better meet the needs for housing development and job training in the city of Boston.

In the 2014 Boston Housing Task Force report, "Housing a Changing City: Boston 2030," Mayor Walsh and his advisors outline a plan to produce 53,000 new units of housing to meet the projected 20 percent growth in Boston's households, generate \$21 billion in new development, and create 51,000 construction jobs through the year 2030. The Report establishes a goal to increase the amount of City-controlled affordable housing resources from \$31 million to \$51 million annually to meet our future housing needs. MACDC also concurs with the recommendations of Mayor Walsh's Task Force to increase the Inclusionary Development Program (IDP) fees and to adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA), which will provide complementary funding sources to meet the impending demand and housing production goals.

The proposal to increase Boston's Linkage Fees, filed by Councilor Flaherty, provides additional resources for housing development and job training that will help the City of Boston and our Commonwealth to meet its housing needs and will help CDCs to build more housing that is affordable for local families.

Our members stand poised to deliver more affordable housing. CDCs work collaboratively with local residents and local governments to identify community goals and develop projects with strong local support. Over the years, our members have developed more than 17,000 apartments and hundreds of homeownership units as well as dozens of commercial buildings and green spaces. In 2014 alone, MACDC members built or preserved 1,459 homes and provided 1,284 jobs to local workers in real estate construction projects. This represents 30 different projects and \$246 million of investment. With additional linkage fees for neighborhood housing development and job training opportunities, Boston's CDCs will be able to increase their local impact.

Our members appreciate the leadership of Mayor Walsh, Councilor Flaherty and the Boston City Council in supporting affordable housing. We urge the committee to act favorably on the proposal to increase Boston's Linkage Fees, so that all neighborhoods may benefit from the additional resources for housing development and job training that will come with passage, and we would welcome the opportunity to work with you and your staff to advance this initiative through the subsequent Home Rule Amendment process.

Respectfully submitted,

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