



Dear Senator:

On behalf of our 97 member organizations across the Commonwealth, we are writing to ask your support of key amendments to *S.3018, An act relating to economic growth and relief for the Commonwealth*.

MACDC is an association of mission-driven community development organizations dedicated to creating places of opportunity where all people can live with dignity while participating in and benefiting from our Commonwealth's economy. We are excited about many of the provisions in the bill, in particular the \$400 million investment in affordable housing. We also believe that if adopted, the following amendments will help to make a strong bill stronger and help create important opportunities to advance equity in our communities.

We ask that you please co-sponsor the following:

Top Priorities

- **Amendment #88, \$15 million for the Massachusetts Healthy Homes Initiative, by Senator John Keenan**

Massachusetts housing stock is among the oldest in the country and must be rehabilitated to protect the health of Massachusetts residents. The presence of lead, poor indoor air quality, and other substandard housing conditions lead to developmental delays in children, respiratory disease, accidents, and injuries, potential displacement when individuals become disabled, and spread of infectious disease, among other serious, preventable health consequences. The MA Healthy Homes Initiative would provide investments to improve housing quality and health across the Commonwealth by addressing issues such as lead paint abatement, indoor air quality, and other health and safety hazards, with a particular focus on Gateway Cities, lower income communities, rural communities, and other neighborhoods disproportionately impacted by COVID.

- **Amendment #439, \$3 million for Small Business Technical Assistance, filed by Senator Edwards**

This amendment would increase funding for the Small Business Technical Assistance program from \$7 million to \$10 million. We believe that more is needed to address the continuing crisis in our small business community, especially among those from underserved communities. Rising costs, supply disruptions, labor shortages and on-going concerns about the pandemic make this a challenging time for many small business owners. This program has demonstrated its value repeatedly during the pandemic by helping entrepreneurs overcome today's challenges, including the

structural obstacles faced by so many businesses owned by people of color, women, low-income people and others.

Additional Priorities

- **Amendment #18, HOMES Act Amendment, by Senator Lydia Edwards**

The HOMES Act provides urgently needed eviction record sealing protection for tenants. Currently, there is no recourse for tenants. Even if they win their case or satisfy a judgment, their eviction record is public, permanent, and has a lasting impact on their ability to find housing and jobs. This amendment would protect tenants from being unfairly marked with an eviction record and establish a fair process for tenants to petition the court on a case-by-case basis.

- **Massachusetts Food Trust Program**

The Massachusetts Food Trust Program (MFTP) provides flexible financing in the form of loans, grants, and business assistance to healthy food retailers and other food sector businesses to support them to overcome the barriers to entry, expansion, and success in low- and moderate-income communities underserved by healthy food retail.

- **Amendment #186, \$10 million Capital Bond Authorization, by Senator Michael Moore** - Authorizes a \$10M bond for the MFTP over 5 years. The 2016 economic development bill authorized a \$6 million bond for MFTP. This five-year authorization expired in 2021.
- **Amendment #320, \$200,000 for MFTP Operating Dollars, by Senator Jo Comerford** - Allocates \$200,000 to close a gap in operating dollars and level fund the MFTP for the coming year. The FY23 budget underfunded the MFTP by \$200,000. Adequate staffing is required to manage the ever-expanding program portfolio and provide pre- and post-loan technical assistance to funded projects.

- **Amendment #354, \$50M for the Equitable Developers' Financing Program, by Senator Adam Gomez**

This amendment would create an equitable developers' financing program to provide financial assistance to BIPOC and other emerging developers sponsoring projects to construct, rehabilitate or redevelop residential or mixed-use residential properties or redevelop blighted, abandoned, vacant or underutilized properties into new residential, commercial or light-industrial uses.

- **Amendment #512, Small Business Empowerment, by Senator Lydia Edwards**

This amendment would provide targeted support to build a stronger small business development eco-system that can reduce and eventually eliminate racial disparities in small business ownership.

- **Amendment #507, Promoting Inclusive Entrepreneurship and Economic Justice, by Senator Eric Lesser**

This amendment would require a comprehensive state plan for supporting businesses of color, micro enterprises and other socially and economically disadvantaged business owners, improve supplier diversity at anchor institutions, and diversify public boards.


- **Amendment #510, Receivership Authorization for Nonprofits, by Senator Eric Lesser**

This amendment to M.G.L. c. 111, section 127I would permit a court to allow the sale of a vacant receivership property to a nonprofit entity for the fair market value of the property “as is,” in order for the nonprofit entity to rehabilitate the property and sell it affordably to an income-eligible first-time homebuyer. In this way the amendment would leverage a municipality’s code enforcement work to create an inventory of affordable properties, thereby simultaneously reducing blight, promoting homeownership among low-and moderate-income households, and stabilizing neighborhoods.

Thank you for your consideration of these critical economic development and housing equity amendments.

Please do not hesitate to contact Kristina Kimani if you have any questions at kristinak@macdc.org or 781-603-6716.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JKS' in a stylized, cursive font.

Joseph Kriesberg
President & CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K.K. Kimani' in a stylized, cursive font.

Kristina Kimani
Director of Policy & Civic Engagement