



Mass Association of Community Development Corporations (MACDC) Commends and Endorses Ongoing Efforts to Stabilize and Secure Vital Small Businesses in the Commonwealth through “An Act Making Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2021 To Provide for Supplementing Certain Existing Appropriations and for Certain Other Activities and Projects,” H.5177.

MACDC and its members are grateful to the Baker Administration and the Massachusetts Legislature for its support of our community economic development priorities, which were included in the FY2021 budget. As we all struggle to transcend the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and absent timely action by federal policymakers in Washington, it has been encouraging to see the response by state officials to the extraordinary unmet needs of our neighbors and families across the Commonwealth.

The important resources provided for emergency rental assistance and support for housing stabilization, the additional resources for public housing maintenance and operating support, and the commitment of funding to community-based organizations for providing foreclosure prevention and eviction diversion counseling will ensure that more MA families can remain safe in their homes through what we all know is going to be a dangerous and difficult winter.

Around the start of the COVID-19 State of Emergency in March, MACDC began to convene a weekly (now bi-weekly) coordinating call with a network of CDCs and other community-based organizations – many are existing subgrantees of the MA Growth Capital Corporation. These organizations are experienced providers of small business technical assistance and support underserved businesses in low- and moderate-income communities. These businesses, in turn, provide essential services and employment opportunities to immigrants and communities of color in urban, suburban, and rural communities as well as Gateway Cities throughout the state. The facilitating organizations have proved to create a vital support network that has allowed vulnerable businesses to apply for newly established state programs and grants. Indeed, more than \$50 million of state and federal relief aid has been directed to these same businesses in a little under a month. That demand and the response have been outstanding – indeed, overwhelming – as nearly eight of ten eligible applicants could not receive grants before the initial funds were exhausted.

Therefore, we are pleased to support the Administration’s request of an additional \$46.3 million in H.5177, targeted to many of these community-based businesses, and our Coalition is poised to lend our voice to the urgent need and our support to the businesses that still seek relief in this pandemic moment. We also urgently support the Governor’s proposal for \$1 million in additional small business technical assistance funds that will help our state leverage more federal Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loans when those become available. We are all hopeful these additional state resources for FY2021 can carry these vital small businesses through the next few months and will augur well for a future commitment of federal support in the coming months and subsequent fiscal year. MACDC and its partners are committed to supporting the Administration and the Legislature in deploying these resources to meet, arguably, our greatest community and economic development challenges in a generation.