

October 11, 2023

Representative Mark Cusack
Chairman, Committee on Revenue
Room 34, State House
Boston, MA 02133

Senator Susan Moran
Chairwoman, Committee on Revenue
Room 506, State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairman Cusack and Chairwoman Moran:

I write in support of the following bills of significant interest:

- H. 2747 offered by Rep. Mike Connolly, “An Act granting a local option for a real estate transfer fee to fund affordable housing”
- H. 2788 offered by Rep. Dylan Fernandes, “An Act empowering cities and towns to impose a mansion fee to support affordable housing”
- S. 1771 offered by Sen. Joanne Comerford, “An Act granting a local option for a real estate transfer fee to fund affordable housing”

The need for affordable and attainable housing for communities across the Commonwealth is dire. Across Cape Cod, the Islands, and other resort communities, in Suffolk and Middlesex Counties, and suburban communities across the state, housing prices create hardships for employers to attract and keep employees in crucial jobs, and for workers to live within a reasonable distance of their work. This is particularly concerning in locations far away from areas with lower-cost housing, such as Martha’s Vineyard and Nantucket, where public safety, health care, education, small businesses and nonprofits feel the impact of the housing crisis in recruitment and retention of workers, and island families are forced to leave due to housing insecurity.

In 2022, Island voters overwhelmingly approved a bill for an Island-wide Housing Bank, to be funded by a transfer fee. Please advance these bills to enable us to realize this critical tool for preserving our year-round community. It will allow a regional authority to create affordable options, to repurpose existing housing stock, spur new year round housing for rent or purchase, and provide tools such as deed restrictions in order to preserve existing inventory. The transfer fee option is **only** for those communities who choose to use this tool; it is not a statewide mandate and can be tailored to a community’s needs.

We urge your quick support for these bills and ask you to send them to the floor for consideration.

Sincerely,



Michael R. Hebert, Chairman
Aquinnah Affordable Housing Committee