



Cronig's Market
P.O. Box 698
Vineyard Haven, MA 02568

2/16/2022

Senator John Keenan, Chair
Joint Committee on Housing
Massachusetts State House
24 Beacon St.
Room 413-F
Boston, MA 02133

Representative James Arciero, Chair
Joint Committee on Housing
Massachusetts State House
24 Beacon St.
Room 38
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chair Keenan and Chair Arciero,

I write to you today in support of **S868/H1377: An Act empowering cities and towns to impose a fee on certain real estate transactions to support affordable housing**. This bill would allow municipalities to create a small fee on certain real estate transactions for the purpose of funding affordable and workforce housing in their own communities.

As a business owner, I've seen the impact of a lack of affordable housing on our local economy. Cronig's Market is one of the only grocery stores on the island of Martha's Vineyard and we take pride in serving our community. Island workers - both year round and seasonal - are finding it extremely difficult to secure reliable housing. We employ **53** people, and as the housing crisis here intensifies year after year, it becomes increasingly difficult to staff properly.

If trends continue, it will be nearly impossible for working families and individuals to call Martha's Vineyard home. This will have a devastating effect on schools, businesses, and organizations around the island. A transfer fee would be a valuable mechanism to fund affordable housing options for our community.

I also endorse the Coalition to Create the Martha's Vineyard Housing Bank ([CCMVHB](#)), an organization working to create an Island-wide housing bank funded by a transfer fee. A housing bank on the island would be an essential step in securing housing for our yearround workforce. By advancing S868/H1377 you will be supporting the efforts of local coalitions like CCMVHB who have been working to find solutions to the housing crisis across the Commonwealth.

Without accessible and affordable workforce housing, our local economy will be unstable. I urge you to favorably report S868/H1377.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Bernier", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steve Bernier

Owner

Cronigs Market & Healthy Additions
Martha's Vineyard
508-693-6157