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23 February 2022

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

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

Dear Chair Keenan and Chair Arciero,

Please accept this letter 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 accessible and affordable housing in their own communities.

I also endorse the Coalition to Create the Martha's Vineyard Housing Bank (CCMVHB), which seeks to create an Island-wide housing bank, funded by a transfer fee, for the purpose of directly funding affordable, community, and attainable year-round housing efforts. By advancing S868/H1377 you will be supporting the efforts of local coalitions like CCMVHB that have been working to create housing solutions across the Commonwealth.

As a conservation nonprofit on Martha's Vineyard, the Village and Wilderness Project respectfully requests your support for S868 and H1377, in particular for two reasons. First, the greatest limitation to all Island nonprofits is affordable housing for staff. Second, because of its focus on previously-developed lands, the Housing Bank can complement the Village and Wilderness goal of undeveloping and reconnecting wild lands by securing affordable housing in climate-safe, smart-growth portions of traditional towns.

Sincerely,  
Tom Chase, CEO  
Village and Wilderness Project  
Resident of Oak Bluffs, Martha's Vineyard Island