# Affordable Homes Act Template Advocacy Letter

*On October 18th, 2023, Governor Healey filed The Affordable Homes Act, a $4.1 billion bond bill that includes 28 outside policy sections to support housing production, affordability, and access. The bill was subsequently debated and voted on in the House on June 5th, and in the Senate on June 27th. Each chamber included a number of MAPC's top priorities.*

*Now, the House and Senate have appointed a conference committee to negotiate the differences between each chamber's version of the bill and develop a final compromise version for a final vote in each chamber.*

*That means we need YOU to reach out to your Representative and Senator to ask that they reach out to conferees (members of the conference committee) to maintain the priority provisions included by each chamber.*

*You can read more about the legislation at the following links:*
Affordable Homes Act Overview
Affordable Homes Act Fact Sheet

## Instructions:

- **Step 1:** Copy and paste the below letter into an email. Please feel free to edit the draft to reflect your experiences, what you are most excited about, or remove things that do not feel as relevant to your community.
- **Step 2:** Find your Senator and Representative by clicking here. Click on their name to find their contact information.
- **Step 3:** Fill the below fields with your Senator and Representative's name, a story about housing impacts in your community, and your name and contact information.
- **Step 4:** Click send!

- **Alternatively:** Give your legislator a call and use the below as a conversation outline! You can find their phone number by using the instructions above to find their contact information.

Dear [Representative/Senator _____],

I'm writing today to express my enthusiastic support for H.4726, *The Affordable Homes Act*, and to ask that you advocate with conferees to maintain the bill's landmark investments and policy measures which will help to move our community forward.

The Commonwealth's housing crisis is undeniable. Nearly half of Massachusetts renters spend more than 30% of their income on housing,[1] and in Greater Boston this number increases to over 50%.[2] The crisis is even worse for low-income renters, with 64% of extremely low-income renters spending more than half of their income on housing. [3] These levels of cost burden are the result of both inadequate housing production and few protections for residents.

**Optional:** [Insert short personal/local narrative here - tell legislators about local experiences with housing]

*The Affordable Homes Act* recognizes the enormity of these challenges and provides the tools that our communities have asked for that will enable communities across the Commonwealth to address the broad array of challenges. The included investments and policy measures provide both the long-term revenue generation and investment that will be necessary to produce sufficient housing in the long-term, and the protections that will be critical to preventing displacement in the near-term.

I urge you to especially support the following measures, which:

Provide new tools and resources for communities:

- Local Option Tenant Opportunity to Purchase (Section 36D of H.4726)
- Local Housing Authority Modernization and Decarbonization funding (7004-0074 in H.4726 and S.2834)
  - $150 million for public housing decarbonization (within 7004-0074)
- Commission on Housing Shortage Strategies (Section 124 of S.2834)
- Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit (Sections 14A and 14B of H.4726)

Ease housing production, particularly of affordable units

- Accessory Dwelling Units By-Right (Section 7-8 of H.4726, Sections 9-10 of S.2834)
- Inclusionary Zoning by Simple Majority (Section 12 of S.2834)
    - Remove the 13% cap included in S.2834

Protect tenants and remove barriers to entry

- Eviction Sealing (Section 26, 48 of S.2834)
- Office of Fair Housing (Section 5 of H.4276, Section 7 of S.2834)

No simple or easy solution exists for the housing challenges we face, but the investments and policy measures in *The Affordable Homes Act* offer steps that set us on the path to resolving these challenges.

I strongly urge you to do all that you can to support the passage of *The Affordable Home Act* and the policy measures I mention above through conversations with your colleagues on the conference committee appointed to negotiate a final compromise on the bill.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Your Organization (if applicable)]
[Your address/contact information]