



April 11, 2024

The Honorable Edward Kennedy, Senate Chair
The Honorable Michael Finn, Chair
Joint Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets
Massachusetts State House, Room 466
Boston, MA 02133

Re: Statement in Support for H. 4138, “An Act known as the Affordable Homes Act”

Dear Chairman Kennedy and Chairman Finn:

We write to you as the [Boston Community Health Collaborative](#), which brings together partners from across the local public health system in the city of Boston to identify the most important health needs, assets, and priorities for the health of Boston residents through a coordinated city-wide Community Health Needs Assessment and the development and implementation of a shared Community Health Improvement Plan. As member institutions and organizations engaged in the Boston Community Health Collaborative (BCHC) we are writing to urge swift action and support for the Healey-Driscoll Administration’s transformational efforts to address the pressing issue of housing affordability in our state.

Boston is a vibrant, thriving, dynamic city, but it is also a city with persistent, troubling health inequities¹ as well as housing affordability and accessibility challenges. From a public health perspective, these two issues are deeply intertwined. Our unified process of engaging Boston residents and community leaders, reviewing community health data trends, and developing a shared Community Health Improvement Plan has enabled the Boston Community Health Collaborative to gain a robust understanding of the health challenges facing Boston residents and to coordinate our shared efforts to address inequities through the social determinants of health and shifting our efforts upstream.

Through our last two cycles of coordinated, city-wide Community Health Needs Assessment processes in both 2019 and 2022, we have heard directly from residents and community leaders that access to affordable, safe housing remains a critical challenge, directly impacting their health and well-being. In the public health world, housing is what is known as a “social determinant of health” in that the housing in which people are born, grow, live, and age shapes their health outcomes, for better or for worse.

Our 2022-25 Community Health Improvement Plan identifies supporting safe, stable, healthy, equitable, affordable housing solutions for the diverse communities of Boston through a racial equity lens as a shared goal to advance the health of Boston residents, including through advocating for public and private funding to support the production of affordable housing.

The Affordable Homes Act represents a comprehensive package of funding and policy that taken together will make a crucial step forward in addressing the pressing issue of housing affordability in the

¹ Boston Public Health Commission, [Health of Boston 2023](#).



Commonwealth, and in strengthening the health of Boston residents. By providing funding and incentives to increase the production of housing, creating and preserving affordable and supportive housing, and increasing the supply of homeownership opportunities the Act will help alleviate the burden of housing costs on extremely low, low- and moderate-income individuals and families in addition to creating inclusive communities where everyone has the opportunity to live and prosper.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. We appreciate your leadership and advocacy in creating a more affordable and equitable Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Boston Community Health Collaborative

Collaborative Leadership Signatories (in alphabetical order):

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center	Harbor Health Services
Boston Children's Hospital	Madison Park Development Corporation
Boston Medical Center	Mass General Brigham
Boston Public Health Commission, Central Coordinator	Ricky Guerra, Community Resident
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute	Tufts Medical Center
Fenway Health	Urban Edge
	Vivien Morris, Community Resident