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September 10, 2009

Navjeet K. Bal, Commissioner
Massachusetts Department of Revenue
P.O. Box 9569
Boston, Massachusetts 02114-9569

Dear Commissioner Bal:

We are a non-profit alliance of organizations that works with Massachusetts citizens and municipalities to help them understand, adopt, and implement the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act (M.G.L. Chapter 44B). Members of our coalition include municipalities that have adopted the Community Preservation Act, along with Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA); the Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance (MAHA); Mass Audubon; The National Trust for Historic Preservation; Preservation Massachusetts; The Trust for Public Land (TPL), and The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR).

We are writing to urge you, pursuant to Sections 10 (g) and (h) of M.G.L. Chapter 44B, to implement a third round surplus distribution of funds from the Massachusetts Community Preservation Trust Fund for qualifying communities on October 15th of this year. Given that Massachusetts communities are facing unprecedented fiscal constraints stemming from the current economic downturn, we feel that any additional funds that they qualify for as participants in the CPA program should be made available to them.

As you know, the legislative intent behind the creation of the equity and surplus rounds was to provide additional aid to smaller and less affluent communities. Only a handful of the communities eligible for these rounds will even approach last year's funding levels. We believe that the implementation of the surplus round is essential to the continued viability of these communities' local community preservation programs.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clarissa Rowe".

Clarissa Rowe, Chair
Community Preservation Coalition Steering Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stuart Saginor".

Stuart Saginor, Executive Director
Community Preservation Coalition