June 12, 2019

Honorable Karen Spilka
Senate President
State House, Room 332
Boston, MA 02133

Honorable Robert DeLeo
Speaker of the House
State House, Room 356
Boston, MA 02133

Dear President Spilka and Speaker DeLeo,

As Chief Executives of 101 municipalities that have adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA), we are writing to support the modernization of the statewide CPA Trust Fund. The Community Preservation Act is an invaluable program that helps our communities create jobs, generate tourism, and provide investments in our local economies through affordable housing development, construction and rehabilitation of parks and recreational facilities, and preservation of open space and historic assets.

However, the viability of CPA is threatened. As you know, locally raised funds are matched by the statewide CPA Trust Fund, which derives its revenue from recording fees at the Registries of Deeds. Yet this funding mechanism has never been updated since CPA was signed into law in 2000, severely diluting the state’s CPA Trust Fund distribution. An ever-growing gap has developed between the approximately $160 million invested annually by the 175 CPA cities and towns and the $24 million contributed by the state. As a result, the CPA Trust Fund distribution that previously matched 100% of locally raised CPA funding has plummeted to an estimated 11% match today. The program is no longer the state-local partnership it was designed to be.

In the spirit of renewing this partnership, both the House and Senate included language to permanently increase funding for the statewide CPA Trust Fund in the fiscal year 2020 budget. The increase would raise the base percentage match from 11% to just under 30% annually for all 175 CPA communities in November of 2020. We thank Chairman Aaron Michlewitz and Senator Cynthia Stone Creem for advocating for this increase in their respective chambers and we look forward to the final approval vote of this legislation.

Additionally, the budget conference committee is considering a transfer of up to $20 million from the state’s FY2019 budget surplus to the Trust Fund in time for the November 2019 distribution, avoiding a record-low disbursement. Without this money, the statewide match will be an estimated 11%. This short-term solution for 2019, coupled with the long-term fix for 2020 and beyond, will ensure a viable, vibrant, and enduring CPA.

We add our names in support of this initiative and urge the Legislature and Governor Baker to support these efforts to ensure the viability of this highly successful program.

Signed,

(see signatories on following page)

CC:
Honorable Cynthia Stone Creem
Honorable Michael J. Rodrigues
Honorable Cindy F. Friedman
Honorable Viriato M. deMacedo
His Excellency Charles Baker

Honorable Aaron Michlewitz
Honorable Denise C. Garlick
Honorable Todd M. Smola
Her Honor Karyn Polito
Elizabeth Sullivan
Town Administrator
Dennis

Mallory Aronstein
Town Administrator
Dighton

James A. Duggan
Town Manager
Dracut

Denise Menard
Town Manager
East Longmeadow

Nicole LaChapelle
Mayor
Easthampton

Connor Read
Town Administrator
Easton

Lisa O'Donnell
Chair, Board of Selectmen
Essex

Mark Reese
Town Administrator
Fairhaven

Sefatia Romeo Theken
Mayor
Gloucester

Angela Otis
Chair, Board of Selectmen
Goshen

Timothy P. McInerney
Town Administrator
Grafton

Matthew Streeter
Town Administrator
Granville

Mark Pruhenski
Town Manager
Great Barrington

David G. Nixon
Town Administrator
Hadley

Joseph Domelowitz
Town Manager
Hamilton

Michael McCue
Town Administrator
Hanson

Larry Ballantine
Chair, Board of Selectmen
Harwich

Jeffrey Ritter
Town Administrator
Holliston

Alex Morse
Mayor
Holyoke

Norman Khumalo
Town Manager
Hopkinton

Ryan McLane
Town Administrator
Hubbardston

Philip E. Lemnios
Town Manager
Hull

Thomas J. Calter
Town Administrator
Kingston

Peter d'Errico
Chair, Board of Selectmen
Leverett
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Gerald Schwall  
Chair, Board of Selectmen  
Rehoboth

Deborah M. Eagan  
Town Administrator  
Rowley

Kim Driscoll  
Mayor  
Salem

George Dunham  
Town Manager  
Sandwich

Richard M. Brown  
Town Administrator  
Somerset

Joseph Curatone  
Mayor  
Somerville

John Martin  
Chair, Board of Selectmen  
Southampton

William Wrigley  
Town Administrator  
Stow

Jeffrey K. Bridges  
Town Administrator  
Sturbridge

Melissa Murphy-Rodrigues  
Town Manager  
Sudbury

Sherry Patch  
Town Administrator  
Sunderland

Richard Montuori  
Town Administrator  
Tewksbury

Richard Reault  
Chair, Board of Selectmen  
Tyngsborough

Derek Brindisi  
Town Manager  
Upton

Jeannette A. McCarthy  
Mayor  
Waltham

Derek Sullivan  
Town Administrator  
Wareham

Michael J. Driscoll  
Town Manager  
Watertown

Daniel Hoort  
Town Administrator  
Wellfleet

John Petrin  
Interim Town Administrator  
Wenham

Nancy Lucier  
Interim Town Administrator  
West Boylston

David L. Gagne,  
Town Administrator  
West Bridgewater

Angus Jennings  
Town Manager  
West Newbury

William Reichelt  
Mayor  
West Springfield

Jennifer Rand  
Town Administrator  
West Tisbury
Brian Sullivan
Mayor
Westfield

Jodi Ross
Town Manager
Westford

Leon Gaumond, Jr.
Town Manager
Weston

Brian Domina
Town Administrator
Whately

Susan C. Bunnell
Chair, Board of Selectmen
Wilbraham