



Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions

protecting wetlands, open space and biological diversity through education and advocacy

By email to Anthony.Sacco@mahouse.gov

June 5, 2015

The Joint Committee on Revenue
Senate Committee Chair Michael J. Rodrigues
House Committee Chair Jay R. Kaufman
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senator Rodrigues and Representative Kaufman:

I write to request the Joint Committee on Revenue to report favorably on An Act to Sustain Community Preservation Revenue (H.2587/S.1459), which would strengthen the Community Preservation Act (CPA). The Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions (MACC) strongly supports the legislation.

For background, MACC is the professional association of Massachusetts conservation commissions. Each of the 351 cities and towns in Massachusetts has a conservation commission and almost every conservation commission is a dues-paying voting member of MACC. Conservation commissions are the municipal government wetlands, wildlife, and open space boards exercising the Police Power, Home Rule power, and public ownership of conservation, park, and natural resource properties as well as public easements, land restrictions, and other rights. Conservation commissions protect conservation lands and other natural resources in their communities under the Massachusetts Conservation Commission Act (G.L. c.40, § 8c) and administer and enforce the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (G.L. c.131, § 40) and local home-rule municipal wetlands laws and regulations. MACC's mission is to protect Massachusetts' natural resources by supporting conservation commissions through education and advocacy. Our goal is to enhance quality of life and environmental protection throughout Massachusetts through scientific and regulatory-based environmental stewardship implemented by knowledgeable conservation commissions across the state. We have been doing that work since 1961. More than 2,100 conservation commissioners are members of MACC.

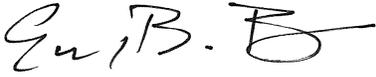
The Community Preservation Act is a valuable tool used by conservation commissions to carry out their responsibilities to protect wetlands and water resources. CPA funds may be used for the preservation of degraded water resources and protection of watersheds. They have been used by communities to control noxious weeds in waterbodies, and to protect drinking water sources and watersheds through the purchase of ecologically important lands.

As you know, the ability of municipalities to fund important CPA projects is hampered by the steep decline in funding from the statewide CPA Trust Fund. Enactment of An Act to Sustain Community Preservation Revenue will help communities continue to preserve historic resources; protect open space, wetlands, and water resources; build affordable community housing; and expand recreational opportunities.

We urge a favorable report on H.2587/S.1459.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eugene B. Benson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "E" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Eugene B. Benson

Executive Director

Email: eugene.benson@macweb.org