

TOWN OF WAREHAM

54 Marion Road
Wareham, Massachusetts, MA 02571

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Peter W. Tellelbaum, Chairman
Alan H. Slavin, Clerk
Stephen M. Holmes
Patrick G. Tropeano
Judith Whiteside

Dear Chairman Mayhew:

I am writing to ask that you join the Town of Wareham Board of Selectmen in supporting House Bill 115, an Act relative to the definition of low and moderate income housing. This bill is sponsored by Representative Susan Williams Gifford, and seeks to amend Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40B, § 20 by adding the following sentence:

Low and moderate income housing shall also include mobile homes and group homes, manufactured homes, in-law apartments and any first-time home buyers participating in any state or federal assistance program.

The bill's legislative webpage may be found at the following link where you can view its current status in committee: <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/188/House/H115>

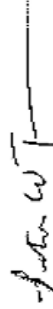
Our town, and others similarly situated across the Commonwealth, currently possesses hundreds of housing units in the form of mobile homes and other types of very affordable property that presently do not count towards the ten percent affordable housing quota required by Chapter 40B. Accordingly, we remain subject to the provisions of Chapter 40B that allow developers of affordable housing to avoid much of our local zoning controls.

Such development has often proven burdensome to abutters, added traffic flow on Town roads, and has increased strain upon police, fire and emergency medical services. At the same time, the minimal requirement that an affordable housing project pursuant to Chapter 40B contain only twenty percent affordable housing creates a situation where municipalities such as ours end up chasing their tails, by adding non-affordable housing to our overall housing stock at four times the rate of affordable units.

The proposed amendment will have negligible effect upon urban communities where affordable housing remains desperately needed, as cities typically do not have large mobile home parks; nor will the proposed amendment stigmatize or economically harm the property values of the proposed subject properties to be included in the definition of affordable housing. Rather, the proposed amendment seeks merely to appropriately classify what is indeed already very affordable housing as such, under the law.

The Wareham Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to authorize me to submit correspondence to you on this issue, as we realize that it will take the effort and support of many to bring the bill into law. Accordingly, we ask that you join us in reaching out to our legislators, particularly those serving on the Joint Committee on Housing, to urge their positive action on H. 1115. To discuss this issue with me, please contact me at the above address and phone number, or my town email at pteitelbaum@wareham.ma.us I look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,



Peter W. Teitelbaum, Esq.
Chairman, Wareham Board of Selectmen