

HEALTHY AGING MARTHA'S VINEYARD

Making Martha's Vineyard an Aging-Friendly Island

July 25, 2023

Representative Mark Cusack
Chair, Committee on Revenue
Room 34, State House
Boston, MA 02133

Senator Susan Moran
Chair, Committee on Revenue
Room 506, State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chair Cusack and Chair Moran:

I am writing in support of two bills that are of significant interest, and ask that you report them out favorably:

- H. 3804, Rep. Dylan Fernandes, "An Act Establishing the Martha's Vineyard Housing Bank"
- S. 1782, Sen. Julian Cyr, "An Act Establishing the Martha's Vineyard Housing Bank"

As Executive Director of Healthy Aging Martha's Vineyard (HAMV), I urge your quick support for these bills and ask you to send them to the floor for consideration. The lack of year-round housing inventory on the Vineyard is a critical and escalating problem that has far-reaching implications. Community efforts thus far to create new housing and preserve existing housing for our year-round residents, including vital workforce, have been extensive but still cannot meet the incredible need or effectively compete with the pressure from the second home and investment market. We have done everything possible to leverage state dollars to create and preserve housing for residents like teachers, firefighters, public safety officials and hospital employees but have only been able to scratch the surface. Our workforce is being priced out at every level, threatening our community, our economy, and our infrastructure.

These two bills will allow us to take even stronger action as an Island to meet our housing goals by creating a regional Housing Bank for the six towns on Martha's Vineyard. Together, the member towns of the Housing Bank will be able to make decisions to preserve and create year-round housing via formal coordination and shared revenue for greater impact than each town can pursue on its own. The bills also create a robust new funding stream that is entirely locally generated.

I ask that you report these bills out favorably.

Sincerely,

Cindy Trish
Executive Director
Healthy Aging Martha's Vineyard
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