



November 2020

We, as the President and incoming President of your Association, are appealing to you for your financial support to enable us to continue developing new initiatives to increase housing production, as well as continuing the fight against the onslaught of anti-development legislation, regulations and codes.

It has been 18 years since the Association's Public Policy Fund Initiative was created to allow the association to target funds where needed to promote and defend the rights of builders and homeowners to produce and own safe and affordable housing. These funds are used exclusively to advance our Public Policy Agenda. However, since that time, the fund has continued to dwindle. Currently, we do not have the resources we need to continue those efforts. As such, **we are asking each member of the HBRAMA to make a contribution to the Public Policy Fund.**

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, 2020 has been a year like no other. Yet despite the unprecedented challenges that each of us has been facing with COVID-19 in our personal lives, the homebuilding and remodeling industry in Massachusetts has been booming. That is due, in large measure, to the tireless work and political influence of the HBRAMA.

In an effort to contain the spread of the coronavirus, Gov. Baker issued an executive order on March 23<sup>rd</sup> closing nearly all workplaces. Construction activities and persons working in construction, however, were deemed "essential businesses" and "essential workers" and were not subject to the order. But under pressure from unions and some elected officials, the governor on April 1 removed all construction activities, **with the exception of construction services related to housing (including mixed use with housing)**, from the list of "COVID-19 Essential Services". That meant that while commercial, industrial and institutional construction was indefinitely shut down, homebuilders and remodelers could keep on working!

The governor's action in permitting housing construction to continue while shutting down most of the state's economy was due to both the Baker-Polito Administration's commitment to housing and the near daily advocacy of the HBRAMA. The association's successful effort to maintain a lifeline for its members was only possible because of the resources it had available through the Public Policy Fund.

Since its inception, we have tried to be good stewards of the Public Policy Funds and use those monies in ways that are most beneficial to most members. Nevertheless, the fund needs to be replenished. **We are asking each member of HBRAMA to make a voluntary contribution the Public Policy Fund** to allow the association to continue its critical role as "The Voice of the Housing Industry" in Massachusetts.

In addition to the above, over the past year the Association had:

- Taken the lead in developing COVID-19 Guidelines at construction sites;
- Successfully lobbied for the end of the state's eviction moratorium to enable our Association's landlord's and multifamily builders to recover rent lost during the COVID-19 Moratorium Period;
- Worked with other real estate industry allies to successfully urge Attorney General Healey to strike down a Brookline bylaw that would have prohibited the issuance of building permits for new construction if those buildings were to be serviced by new natural gas connections;

- Submitted an amicus brief in the case of *Murchison vs. Zoning Board of Appeals of Sherborn*. In *Murchison*, the Supreme Judicial Court affirmed that an abutter must suffer actual harm to have standing to challenge a real estate development project. In its brief, the HBRAMA argued that giving abutters the right to appeal zoning decisions without demonstrating actual harm would enable residents of wealthy, residential, low-density communities to block new housing simply because they live across the street from a proposed development;
- Continued to oppose anti-growth zoning reform and advocate for passage of the Housing Choices legislation to allow for majority approval of zoning changes that advance housing;
- Pressed forward with efforts to streamline the natural gas line installation and construction process to reduce costs and provide a greater level of predictability;
- Successfully urged the Board of Building Regulations and Standards to extend the concurrency period to delay the full implementation of the 2018 version of the International Energy Conservation Code until November 7, 2020.
- Continued to fend off efforts to weaken or repeal Chapter 40B and has maintained a dialogue with state housing agencies to streamline the 40B approval process.

The association estimates that member savings from our initiatives in the legislative and regulatory areas to be in the thousands per housing unit over the last year alone. Fighting the implementation of this additional burden on new construction would not have been possible without our Public Policy funding. The above savings are in addition to an estimated \$6,160.00 per housing start due to the advocacy of the National Association of Home Builders.

We must continue to have the resources to implement sound housing policy, influence public opinion through the media, continue to provide necessary research to strengthen our positions and work with other like-minded industries and associations to promote increased affordable housing production. The forces of NIMBYism and environmental extremism never rest, and neither will the HBRAMA.

Please consider making this investment in the future of your business.

**“Public Policy Fund Initiative” Contribution Levels:**

- **Influencer** - \$150
- **Playmaker** - \$300
- **Rulemaker** - \$750+

**Please send your check made payable to “HBRAMA Public Policy Fund” to HBRAMA 465 Waverley Oaks Rd. Suite 421 – Waltham, MA 02452 or visit [www.HBRAMA.com/donate/](http://www.HBRAMA.com/donate/) to donate by credit card and to give us your feedback on the HBRAMA and the priorities for the coming year.**

Thank you in advance for your commitment to the industry.

Sincerely,



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Matt Anderson, President



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Emerson Clauss III, President-Elect