



City of Boston • Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor
Martin J. Walsh

December 17, 2020

The Honorable Robert DeLeo, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Karen Spilka, Senate President
The Honorable Aaron Michlewitz, Chair of House Ways and Means
The Honorable Michael Rodrigues, Chair of Senate Ways and Means

Dear Speaker DeLeo, President Spilka, Chair Michlewitz, and Chair Rodrigues;

Thank you for everything you have done to address the many challenges we have faced during these difficult times and for taking the time to meet with several of us last week. **As municipal leaders from across the Commonwealth, we are coming together today to implore you to pass the Economic Development bond bill now and provide relief for small businesses, restaurants, and their employees at this critically urgent time.** Without immediate action, many of our small businesses will not survive to see an economic recovery.

As you know, several communities have already rolled back to earlier phases of the Commonwealth's reopening plan in order to curb the transmission of this deadly disease. These decisions were not made lightly. There are neighbors, families, and children behind every one of our businesses, and like you, we are deeply committed to helping them make it through this pandemic.

There are proposals before you that would provide additional critical support for small businesses and we urge you to act quickly to pass them:

- **The Economic Development Bond Bill.** This bill includes several bond authorizations and programs to help our small businesses bridge the gap to recovery. The House and Senate versions of the bill both include significant support for small businesses through grants and loans. We will work closely with the Baker Administration and our businesses to quickly take advantage of these programs as soon as the bill is passed.
- **Supplemental Budget.** Governor Baker filed a supplemental budget for FY21 that would further fund economic recovery and business relief. In addition to other programs, the Governor asked for an additional \$49 million in small business support.



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We also ask you to review other creative funding mechanisms that come before you, especially those that would help to create stopgap funding for restaurants and their employees. This industry is critical to the vibrancy of neighborhoods and downtowns in our communities and to the employees, suppliers, and patrons that all form a vital part of our economy. Out of 16,000 restaurants statewide, 3,400 never reopened after the closures this spring, and more and more of them are closing every day. The time for action is now.

We know that the Commonwealth cannot meet these needs entirely on its own, and we have reached out to our federal delegation to express our urgent need for a federal relief package that provides clear and specific aid to Main Streets. We have also urged Governor Baker to follow the example of Governors in states like Rhode Island and New Mexico, where they have expanded direct state aid programs for small businesses and restaurants. **Today we are asking you to pass these pieces of legislation to get critical funding programs off the ground now.**

Thank you very much for your leadership and support for these urgent priorities.

Sincerely,

Martin J. Walsh
Mayor of Boston

Marc D. Draisen
Executive Director
Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Geoff Beckwith
Executive Director
Massachusetts Municipal Association

John S. Mangiaratti
Town Manager of Acton

Paul Heroux
Mayor of Attleboro

William Sapelli
Mayor of Agawam

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Mayor of Amesbury

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