



**Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Revenue
In Support of H.2463/S.1618 An Act to preserve community preservation revenue
By Loring Schwarz, LWVMA Legislative Specialist, Natural Resources
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The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts (LWVMA), representing 47 local Leagues from Cape Cod to the Berkshires, urges this Committee to support adequate funding for the Community Preservation Act (CPA) by increasing the fees on specific transactions at registers of deeds, with those fees allocated to CPA matching funds. The League has a long history of support for and adequate funding of the CPA since its passage in 2000. We support the natural resource and, now, climate change goals that increased funding for CPA would provide. Our members in communities across the Commonwealth know how important increased and sustained funding for open space, affordable housing, historic preservation, and resilience is for maintaining a high quality of life in the Commonwealth. LWVMA urges this Committee's support of this bill to preserve and sustain Community Preservation Act revenue.

The Community Preservation Act is a very popular state/local partnership that provides funding for open space protection, development of outdoor recreation, affordable housing, and historic preservation. Half the cities and towns in the state, 175, have adopted the CPA, and the program has raised over \$2.1 billion in public funds since 2000.

We would also note that CPA funding can be used to help communities adapt to a warmer and wetter climate – including building rain gardens, protecting and restoring shorelines, and building storm resilient parks. CPA funds can also be used for greenhouse gas mitigation by retrofitting historic buildings with more energy efficient systems and building envelopes, as well as creating net-zero affordable housing.

The great impact of the Community Preservation Act in municipalities across the state calls for adequate funding of the match available to communities working to improve open space, affordable housing and historic and recreational opportunities, and local resilience beginning in 2020.

We understand also that the House and Senate have included increased CPA funding in the FY20 state budget currently in conference committee. The proposed budget language would provide a close to 30% match for CPA communities, from a current 11% record low match.

Thank you for your consideration of this important bill.