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27 August 2021

Via Electronic Mail

The Honorable John Cronin, Senate Chair
The Honorable Lori Ehrlich, House Chair
Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government
State House
Boston, MA 02133

**RE: Support for An Act Relative to the Preservation of Wetlands and Water Resources
in Chapter 40B Applications (H.2198)**

Dear Chair Cronin and Chair Ehrlich:

The Jones River Watershed Association (JRWA) is writing in full support of An Act Relative to the Preservation of Wetlands and Water Resources in Chapter 40B Applications (H.2198) and respectfully urges the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government to report this bill out with a favorable recommendation.

JRWA has been working for over thirty-five years within the southeast region to restore, protect and conserve water resources for current and future generations. We consistently review and comment, and will often take necessary action, to advance sound development in Kingston. In the last decade however, we increasingly see developers circumvent proper rules under the guise of providing affordable housing. Their projects encroach on wetlands and floodplains and no doubt cause contamination of water resources. We are now faced with ratcheted up threats from opportunistic developers planning to locate housing developments in areas certain to flood in a decade or two. At our peril they ignore inevitable sea level rise predictions. They are using Ch 40B to contravene protections against real life threats to our communities and future residents. These developments are certain to cause great harm in the not very distant future.

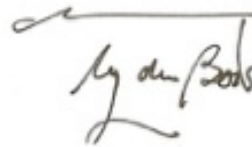
Local bylaws are developed and enforced to protect the unique geology and ecosystems in various towns and regions, for the common good. We are living in dramatically changing and challenging times when rational consideration is necessary to ensure the best hope for the future. Giving the upper hand to developers only interested in private gain does not help provide good housing to people in need. Using 40B this way will break the harmony so essential to protect our shared resources and cultivate healthy communities. It will lay trauma at the doorstep of present and future residents and incur significant costs to recover from damages.

*Resigned 6/30/21

JRWA believes in good housing for all. In order to be successful in bringing social and environmental justice and opportunity to our communities, we must absolutely protect our shared environmental resources. As it is now, Ch 40B is leading to destruction of those essential resources, and this can be fixed. The proposed legislation is a positive step forward in this direction. Please do what is necessary to advance this remedy.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and the work of your committees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pine duBois". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the name.

Pine duBois, Executive Director
pine@jonesriver.org
781-424-0353

cc:
Rep. Kathleen LaNatra
Senator Su Moran