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Gary Christenson, Mayor

January 8, 2016

Senator William Brownsberger, Senate Chair
Representative John V. Fernandes, House Chair
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senator Brownsberger and Representative Fernandes:

On behalf of the City of Malden, I am writing to support Bill H.1656 and S.901 for the implementation of a statewide housing court.

Currently, Malden residents are part of the one-third of the population of the Commonwealth who do not have access to this specialized forum that hears housing issues. As of the last census, Malden ranked 14th in the Commonwealth in terms of the number of rental units. Therefore, the need for a housing court that has the expertise to deal with code and fire enforcement is critical.

Malden's most vulnerable residents including low-income families, elderly, and immigrants, are increasingly faced with housing issues. Many of the matters could readily be resolved if the landlords and tenants had access to the spectrum of resources such as judicial expertise, housing specialists, and a Tenancy Preservation Program that are available to other citizens accessing housing courts.

Given the inherent stabilizing impact that the implementation of a housing court statewide would have on communities across the Commonwealth, I urge you to report favorably on Bill H.1656 and S.901. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

GARY CHRISTENSON
Mayor, City of Malden

cc: Representative Paul Donato
Representative Paul Brodeur
Representative Steven Ultrino
Senator Jason Lewis

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