



**CITY OF FITCHBURG
MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

**LISA A. WONG
MAYOR**

**KENNETH P. JONES
ASSISTANT TO THE MAYOR**

**EVELIZ RIVERA
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

June 17, 2008

Members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House
Rooms 138 and 413c
Boston, MA 02133

Re: Support for Senate Bills # 2662, 2663, 2664
Support for House Bills #4733, 4734, 4735

Dear Chairpersons and Members:

I am writing in support of six bills which had hearings before the Joint Committee on the Judiciary on May 13, 2008. These bills address the issues of foreclosures as well as abandoned and vacant properties which greatly affects communities across the Commonwealth and particularly the City of Fitchburg.

- Senate Bill 2662 and House Bill 4735, An act to Require Judicial Foreclosure
- Senate Bill 2663 and House Bill 4733, An Act Relative to the Temporary Moratorium on Foreclosures
- Senate Bill 2664 and House Bill 4734, An Act Requiring Just Cause for Eviction and Foreclosed Properties

The city of Fitchburg is currently partnering with local agencies to deal with the consequences of foreclosure and the displacement of families in our neighborhood. This legislation will provide a necessary tool to handle this problem and by providing needed time to develop strategies to deal with the ripple effect of abandoned properties: crime, homelessness and decreasing property values.

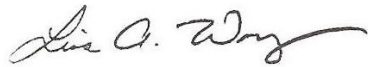
It appears that the foreclosure crisis is not over, which means that more comprehensive plans are necessary. Continuation of this problem and further foreclosures tend to destabilize neighborhoods that have previously had much effort in to engage the community in a plan to revitalize the neighborhoods. These bills are an important part of the strategy to continue the work of our community's revitalization.

Local government and social service agencies are attacking this from multiple areas. Our city is working with our Treasurer, Board of Health, Building Inspectors, Planning, Police and Fire Departments to identify and target troubled properties and work with local groups to establish plans and proposals so that we can acquire and put back into use abandoned, foreclosed and bank-owned properties.

The effect of these bills is to provide a short term solution for protecting homeowners, tenants, neighborhoods and municipalities from the negative effects of a down-turn in the economy and the effects of foreclosure on a very high number of sub-prime loans. For that to have happened is extremely unfortunate. What can be done now is to pass these very important bills which will allow communities across the commonwealth to slow the pace of foreclosure while allowing a statewide effort to develop comprehensive solutions.

I understand that your fellow legislators and the Governor are working to develop plans and strategies which will enable communities to deal with this grave issue. I am hopeful that effort will continue. I strongly ask for your support for the bills addressing foreclosures. I can be reached at (978) 345-9550 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa A. Wong".

Lisa A. Wong
Mayor

cc. The Honorable Stephen DiNatale
State House
Room 433
Boston, MA 02133

cc. The Honorable Robert Antonioni
State House
Room 109e
Boston, MA 02133