



April 7, 2009

The Honorable Brian Dempsey, House Chair
The Honorable Karen Spilka, Senate Chair
Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies
State House
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Re: S. 2019, *An Act Mobilizing Economic Recovery in Massachusetts*

Dear Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairwoman and Honorable Members of the
Committee,

On behalf of the cities and towns of the Commonwealth, the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) is pleased to express its strong support of S. 2019, *An Act Mobilizing Economic Recovery in Massachusetts*. Without the enactment of this important legislation, Massachusetts stands to lose millions of federal stimulus dollars pursuant to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). This vital legislation includes several provisions intended to facilitate compliance with ARRA's deadlines, including MMA-supported language to improve certain state procurement procedures.

The MMA was pleased to serve on several of the Administration's Federal Stimulus Task Forces that worked to mobilize the state to receive billions of dollars in federal authorizations. The proposals offered in this legislation are consistent with many of the recommendations made by these committees. In particular, the MMA is focused on two key areas of reform proposed in this bill that would ensure that our cities and towns receive federal stimulus monies and have the ability to meet the ARRA's "use it or lose it" rules—(a) necessary authorization to charge less than the current interest rate for loans provided from the state's revolving loan fund (SRF); and (b) reform to our state's public procurement requirements.

SRF Projects

ARRA directs a total of \$186 million to Bay State cities and towns for clean water and drinking water grants through the state's SRF program. Specifically, \$134 million is available for SRF projects and \$52 million is available for drinking water projects.

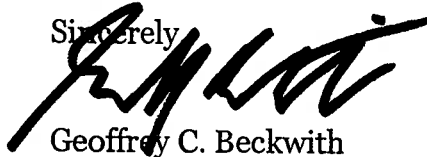
the MMA supports codifying and applying all of these changes to all municipal awarding authorities for all projects beyond those using ARRA monies.

Lastly, while the MMA supports the proposed creation of an Economic Stimulus Alternate Procurement Board for the purpose of providing a means of waiving certain procurement requirements and instituting alternate requirements when necessary to ensure that a municipal awarding authority does not lose ARRA funding due to the procurement process (Section 24), we request and recommend that local government be represented in some capacity on such.

In conclusion, the MMA looks forward to working with you to secure ARRA funds to provide much-needed stimulus to our cities and towns, especially provided the devastating impacts recent and anticipated local aid cuts will have on all municipal budgets across the state. S. 2019 will ensure that cities and towns receive their maximum share of these proceeds.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Beckwith', written over the typed name.

Geoffrey C. Beckwith
Executive Director

GCB/mgf