

June 17, 2014

Dear Legislator,

Our **95** organizations thank you for your leadership in allocating state bonding resources and for providing this opportunity to express **strong support** for *H.4150, An Act providing for the preservation and improvement of land, parks, and clean energy in the Commonwealth*. We respectfully urge you to pass a robust bond which authorizes investments for the capital needs of land conservation and restoration, fresh water and marine protection, climate change mitigation and adaptation, resource management and habitat protection.

Our collective organizations consider capital investments in the environment to be the cornerstone of land, water, and wildlife conservation in the Commonwealth. **Massachusetts ranks #1 among states in quality of life according to Best States for Business and Careers rankings.**^{i,ii} For two decades, state bond investments have enhanced the cultural and recreational opportunities, clean air and water, and open space that drive these and similar rankings. As you review this legislation, please consider the following:

Capital investments in high-value land for recreation, forestry, clean air, water and wildlife have:

- Conserved 129,000 acres of landⁱⁱⁱ, leveraged \$118 million in matching funds^{iv}, and yielded \$4 in economic benefits for every \$1 invested in land conservation^v
- Provided public drinking water supply and protection, and managed stormwater to reduce water treatment capital expenses

Investments in land and water are a major driver of Massachusetts' \$30 billion^{vi} tourism industry:

- Outdoor recreation accounts for \$10 billion in annual consumer spending^{vii}
- 90,000 jobs are supported by outdoor recreation, accounting for \$3.5 billion in wages^{viii}
- Active outdoor recreation generates annual state tax revenues of \$739 million^{ix}

Capital investments in Gateway City parks create jobs, protect infrastructure, and save lives:

- Recent investments in gateway city parks created 492 jobs, \$26 million in labor income^x
- Gateway City parks protect urban infrastructure against intense storms and flash floods
- Parks help to combat obesity, depression while providing clean air, water and shade

Investments in protecting our prime agriculture lands, drive our \$13 billion^{xi} agriculture industry:

- 7,755 farms comprise 523,517 acres^{xii} of the most valuable farmland in the United States (valued at \$10,430 per acre)^{xiii}
- The Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) program has permanently protected over 800 farms and 68,000 acres of land^{xiv}

Protection of timberlands maintains a \$1.64 billion forest products industry:

- Forests generate between \$242 and \$338 million in wood product revenues each year^{xv}
- Forest products manufactured at 166 facilities across the Commonwealth^{xvi}
- Total forest-related manufacturing employs 14,800 with annual payroll of \$744 million^{xvii}

Better management of solid waste saves communities money and creates jobs:

- MA residents and businesses spend over \$300 million annually to dispose of solid waste, most of which can be recycled^{xviii}
- More than 14,000 people in MA work in the recycling industry, with annual revenues of \$3.2 billion^{xix}
- The Commonwealth has set a goal of reducing solid waste by an additional 2 million tons by 2020. By achieving this goal, we can reduce the equivalent of 3.5 million tons of carbon dioxide and save enough energy to power 1.4 million homes annually^{xx}

Thank you for considering our request; **we urge you to support a strong environmental bond** that protects nature and benefits the health and the economy of Massachusetts. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact Karen Heymann at kheyman@massaudubon.org or (781) 392-7548.

Sincerely,

American Farmland Trust
Appalachian Mountain Club
Arborway Coalition
Association to Preserve Cape Cod
Attleborough Conservation Commission
Barnstable County Bill of Rights Working Group
Berkshire County League of Sportsmen
Berkshire Natural Resources Council
Bolton Conservation Trust
Boston Green Tourism
Boston Harbor Islands Alliance
Boston Park Advocates
Brookline GreenSpace Alliance
Cape Codders for Peace and Justice
Cape Downwinders
Charles River Watershed Association
Charlestown Waterfront Coalition
Clean Water Action
Climate Action Liaison Coalition
Conservation Law Foundation
Dudley Conservation Commission
Dudley Conservation Commission
East Quabbin Land Trust
Environmental Business Council of New England
Environmental League of Massachusetts
Essex County Greenbelt Association
Franklin Conservation Commission
Franklin Land Trust
Franklin Park Coalition
Friends of Alewife Reservation

Friends of the Blue Hills
Friends of the Mystic River
Grafton Conservation Commission
Grassroots Wildlife Conservation, Inc.
Green Decade Newton
Groundwork Lawrence
Grow Food Northampton, Inc
Grow Native Massachusetts
Gun Owners Action League
Ipswich River Watershed Association
Judith K. Record Memorial Conservation Fund
Kestrel Land Trust
Kingston Conservation Commission
Lake Wickaboag Preservation Association
Lincoln Conservation Commission
Littleton Conservation Trust
Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust, Inc.
MA Watershed Coalition
Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions
Massachusetts Audubon Society
Massachusetts Chapter of the American Institute of Architects
Massachusetts Congress of Lake and Pond Associations
Massachusetts Forest Alliance
Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition
Massachusetts League of Environmental Voters
Massachusetts Organizations of State Engineers and Scientists
Massachusetts Rivers Alliance
Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance
Massachusetts Watershed Coalition
Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Millbury Conservation Commission
Millers River Watershed Council
Monson Conservation Commission
Mystic River Watershed Association
Nantucket Land Council
Nashua River Watershed Association
Natural Resources Commission of Wellesley
Neponset River Watershed Association
New England Mountain Bike Association
New England Small Farm Institute
New England Wild Flower Society

North Attleborough Conservation Commission
Norton Conservation Commission
OARS: For the Assabet, Sudbury and Concord Rivers
Parker River Clean Water Association
Pepperell Natural Resources Association
Protect our Cape Cod Aquifer (POCCA)
Rutland Land Conservancy
Sierra Club-Massachusetts Chapter
Spencer Conservation Commission
Sturbridge Conservation Commission
Sudbury Valley Trustees
Sutton Conservation Commission
The Boston Harbor Association
The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, Inc.
The Goldenrod Foundation
The Nature Conservancy
The Trust for Public Land
The Trustees of Reservations
Walden Woods Project
Waltham Land Trust
Water Supply Citizens Advisory Committee
Watershed Action Alliance of Southeastern Massachusetts
Wildlands Trust
Zoo New England

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- i Kurt Badenhausen, “The Best States for Business and Careers” (Forbes, November 22, 2011, accessed July 17, 2013, http://www.forbes.com/special-report/2011/best-states-11_land.html).
- ii CNBC, “America’s Top States for Business 2011: A CNBC Special Report” (accessed July 18, 2013, <http://www.cnbc.com/id/41666600/>).
- iii Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
- iv The Return on Investment in Parks and Open Space in Massachusetts, *The Trust for Public Land*, September 2013
- v The Return on Investment in Parks and Open Space in Massachusetts, *The Trust for Public Land*, September 2013
- vi Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism, *2012 Annual Report* (March 2013)
- vii Outdoor Industry Association, *The Outdoor Recreation Economy: Massachusetts*
- viii Outdoor Industry Association, *The Outdoor Recreation Economy: Massachusetts*
- ix Outdoor Industry Association, *The Outdoor Recreation Economy: Massachusetts*
- x Trust for Public Land, Return on Investment report, 2014
- xi Rigoberto Lopez and Chris Laughton. The Overlooked Economic Engine: Northeast Agriculture and supporting report (Farm Credit East, 2012).
- xii United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service, New England Agricultural Statistics (2011).
- xiii U.S. Department of Agriculture, “2012 Census of Agriculture”.
- xiv Massachusetts Department of Agriculture, <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/land-use/agricultural-preservation-restriction-program-apr.html>.

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- xv University of Massachusetts, Center for Agriculture, Research & Education, "Valuing the Forest for the Trees" (accessed July 18, 2013, <http://ag.umass.edu/news-events/highlights/valuing-forest-trees>).
- xvi American Forest and Paper Association, *Forest & Paper Industry at a Glance: Massachusetts* (2011).
- xvii University of Massachusetts, Center for Agriculture, Research & Education, "Valuing the Forest for the Trees" (accessed July 18, 2013, <http://ag.umass.edu/news-events/highlights/valuing-forest-trees>).
- xviii Final 2010-2020 Solid Waste Master Plan: A Pathway to Zero Waste, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
- xix U.S. Recycling Study, prepared for the Northeast Recycling Council, Feb. 2009
- xx Final 2010-2020 Solid Waste Master Plan: A Pathway to Zero Waste, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection