



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
House of Representatives
State House, Boston 02133-1054

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COMMITTEES:
VICE CHAIR, REVENUE

December 10, 2015

Somerville Board of Alderman
Somerville City Hall
93 Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02143

To the Honorable Board of Alderman:

I apologize for being unable to attend this evening's meeting of the Board of Aldermen in person. I am writing to comment regarding the issues of economic and social inequality. Good Jobs For Somerville has petitioned the board to support legislation that would help address inequality in the City of Somerville, and thereby improve quality of life for every Somerville resident and strengthen the fabric of our community.

As one of four members of the Massachusetts state legislature that represent Somerville, I wish to express my strong support for proposals being highlighted by the numerous advocacy groups that will testify this evening. These proposals include:

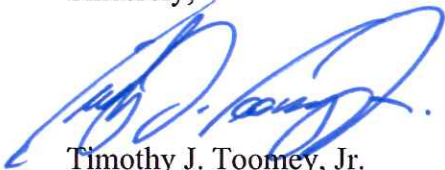
- **Paid Family and Medical Leave:** We must ensure that *all* workers have the ability to care for the well-being of themselves and their family members without putting their job at stake. Massachusetts took a strong step toward achieving this goal by adopting the Paid Sick Time Law through the initiative petition process in 2014. We should use this law's success as an opportunity to expand family and medical leave to all workers.
- **"Millionaire Tax":** The Massachusetts Constitution currently mandates a flat income tax across all income levels. We have an opportunity in 2018 to change the state constitution and create a two-tiered system in which the highest-earning residents are taxed at a higher rate. Doing so would raise over \$1 billion in new annual revenue for the Commonwealth which could be used to improve our schools, repair our transportation infrastructure, and make public higher education more affordable.

- **A Living Wage:** A living wage is at the very foundation of a healthy economy and a more equitable society. When large employers like big box stores and fast food chains choose to pay their employees so little that full-time workers must apply for public assistance to make ends meet, these corporations are subsidizing their profits with our tax dollars. That is simply not right. A living wage of \$15 an hour is needed to keep our region accessible for the workers who keep it running day in and day out.

I hope that the Board of Aldermen will strongly consider going on record in support of these items. The grassroots support of Massachusetts' cities and towns is essential to affecting progress on these issues in the state legislature and beyond.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
State Representative
26th Middlesex District