

John Long

From: Brian Sensale <bsensale@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 02, 2018 11:25 AM
To: City Clerk Contact; Mayor
Subject: Transfer Fee

Mayor Curtatone, and Members of the Board of Alderman,

I am writing this letter in response to the home rule petition that has been put forth to institute a 1% transfer fee on out of city parties for real estate transactions in the city. I have read the petition and supporting documents, but I oppose the petition as it stands, and have asked my state legislators to reject it on my behalf. Though I know you are not accountable to me as a constituent, I'd like to share my thoughts, in the hope that a different sort of petition might emerge, and/or some changes might be made.

I grew up in Somerville, and when I was looking to purchase my first house, Somerville was high on my list. I ended up buying a two family property, and lived there for 7 years. As life changed, and I got married and started a family, we found that we needed more space than our house was able to provide, and made the decision to move to Wakefield. We decided at the time to keep the property in Somerville. It is the only rental property we own. We seek long term tenants, preferring stability over rent prices, maintain our property and ensuring that the tenants we have are good neighbors. As of now, we have owned the property for over 15 years, and plan to continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

I was rather disappointed to find then that I was lumped in with the developers, speculators and absentee landlords this fee applies to. (I don't consider myself an absentee landlord, but that seems to be the only categorization in the public documents I could possibly match with). Whats to stop a speculator from buying a multi-family property, living in it for two years while renovating it, and flipping it once residency has been established? In the past, when new fees have been assessed, there have been exemptions for people in my case. Owners of a single property, or owners who have held the property for a minimum amount of time. I'd ask that you consider adding an exemption for this class of person again. If someone has a long standing clean record as a single property landlord, they too should be exempt from the transfer fee.

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