

WHEREAS: The Somerville Board of Aldermen and the Administration of Mayor Joseph Curtatone have documented and collected substantial evidence of an affordable housing crisis in our City; and

WHEREAS: That affordable housing crisis threatens the sustainability of tenancies across the city and has already resulted in the displacement of many residents; and

WHEREAS: The City has implemented a mix of legislative and programmatic initiatives to support the development of new affordable housing and to protect the affordability of as much of the existing housing stock as possible, including but not limited to an Inclusionary Housing program, a Linkage Fee program, participation in the Community Preservation Act, and implementation of a Hundred Homes Campaign, so-called, to acquire habitable rental properties and deed restrict them to assure their affordability in perpetuity; and

WHEREAS: The Board of Aldermen and Mayor Curtatone agree that further action to protect the affordability of the City's housing stock is urgently needed to ensure that Somerville remains a great place to live, work, play, and raise a family for the broad socioeconomic and demographic diversity of residents that call our City home; and

WHEREAS: In 2018, the Board of Aldermen unanimously passed and sent to the Legislature, with the full support of Mayor Curtatone, a Home Rule Petition (H-4582 in the 2017-18 State Legislative session) authorizing the City to implement a Transfer Fee, the proceeds of which would be deposited into the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund to protect and increase the City's stock of affordable housing; and

WHEREAS: Passage of that Home Rule Petition may well require mobilization of a broad base of political and legislative support from across the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS: State enabling legislation filed by Rep. Mike Connolly and Sen. Joseph Boncore would authorize Somerville and other Cities and Towns to enact their own Transfer Fee Ordinances to address the affordable housing needs in their communities without each jurisdiction having to individually obtain Home Rule authorization; and

WHEREAS: The enabling legislation is fully consistent with the policies set forth in Somerville's aforementioned Home Rule Petition; ***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT***

RESOLVED: That the Somerville Board of Aldermen endorses transfer fee enabling legislation filed by State Representative Mike Connolly and State Senator Joseph Boncore.