

Madalyn Letellier

From: Ajda the Turkish Queen [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 12:24 AM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Resident support for rent stabilization

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Ajda Snyder and I am a renter at [REDACTED] in Ward 2 in Somerville. I am also a musician, singer-songwriter, recording artist, live performer, and voice teacher.

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

I've been a renter and resident in Somerville for over 11 years, and deeply love living here. I've rented in 3 different buildings, first in a unit in a triple decker Inman Square for 7 years, then into a 2 bedroom unit shared with the landlord near Trum Field for about 2 years over the early part of the pandemic, and the last two years in an affordable artist unit here in Ward 2 near Twin Cities Plaza.

Rent stabilization allows musicians like myself and fellow creatives to remain in the communities we love, and contribute to and enjoy a consistent sense of identity and belonging surrounding where we live. It prevents Somerville from becoming gentrified beyond recognition from the funky, artsy, scrappy city that hosts hallmark events like Porchfest and Fluff. We don't need another Seaport or Kendall Square; we need to ensure that rents remain affordable for current residents, not punish them with displacement because they don't all have high-paying tech jobs. Renters are very vulnerable, and need protections in order to preserve the character of our community. Many of us lack the resources to withstand more rent increases, much less buy property, which is completely beyond reach.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Ajda Snyder
[REDACTED]

Madalyn Letellier

From: Owen B [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, November 10, 2023 9:54 AM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; Organizing Program
Subject: Approve rent stabilization home rule petition

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Owen Berson and I am a renter at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Somerville (Ward 3).

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

I have already had multiple close friends displaced from Somerville due to high rents, including artists and musicians, young people, and Black and Indigenous people. We cannot wait while more and more of our beloved neighbors get priced out and displaced from our city.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Sincerely,
Owen Berson

Madalyn Letellier

From: Ryan Black [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, November 12, 2023 7:47 PM
Subject: Please make rent control proposal stronger

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Hello City Councilors,

My name is Ryan Black (he/him) and I am a Somerville resident in Ward 7. I've seen that the Mayor has submitted a rent control home rule petition (HRP) to the City Council for consideration. I appreciate that the city is taking up the issue of rent control, but **strongly feel that the proposal needs to be stronger.**

Evidently, so do many others if you go back and listen/watch the listening sessions the city put on. For instance, a great many people who gave testimony said that the policy must include vacancy controls: A provision which ties stabilized rents to units themselves. Without vacancy controls landlords would have a perverse financial incentive to evict tenants so as to reset rents at higher rates.

Additionally, the listening sessions had multiple people expressing a strong desire for rent control which extends to owner-occupied two-unit and triple-decker buildings --- and which doesn't exempt new construction for a long period of time. If a rent stabilization policy exempts such buildings (two-units, triple-deckers, and new construction), so many of Somerville's renters will not be able to benefit from this policy.

So, before you approve this HRP, **please amend to improve the proposal in these three ways: add vacancy controls; no exemptions for two units and triple deckers; and no exemptions for new construction.** During the city's listening sessions, a great many people called for even bolder measures like rent-rollbacks, so these three changes would hardly be that radical in the grand scheme of things.

Thank you for reading,
Ryan Black (he/him)

Madalyn Letellier

From: Rachel Breslau <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, November 10, 2023 5:00 PM
To: Anti-Displacement Task Force; Public Comments; All City Council
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Rent stabilization home rule petition

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Rachel Breslau and I am a renter at [REDACTED] Somerville, MA in Ward 1.

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

This year my landlord increased my rent by 23%, while making no significant improvements to their property. In fact, my landlord had been telling us for a year that he would replace our oven because it was very old and the numbers had rubbed off the dial so we could know longer tell what temperature we were setting the oven to, but he did not replace our oven during that year. I was very, very lucky to be able to afford the rent increase and stay in my home, but I know so many others would not be able to. I want to make sure that my neighbors don't face such unexpected and high rent increases from year to year and are able to stay in their homes.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Sincerely,
Rachel Breslau

Madalyn Letellier

From: Veronica Cañas [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 8:27 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Subject: Improvements needed to HRP draft on rent control

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Hello Councillors,

My name is Veronica Cañas, and I'm a renter at [REDACTED] and in Ward 7.

I am writing to say that the rent control home rule petition (HRP) submitted to you by the Mayor isn't sufficient and to ask you to please improve it before passage.

Here are some necessary improvements that had overwhelming support during the city's listening sessions:

- **A much shorter (or no) exemption period for new construction.** The current draft includes an exemption to rent control for the first 15 years after a building's construction. Some other cities in the US already have either no such exemption period (e.g. St. Paul, MN) or a much shorter exemption period (e.g. Takoma Park, MD - 5 years). Shortening or eliminating the exemption period will ensure that residents living in newer buildings also get the protections of rent control. Longer new construction exemption periods yield greater profits for developers and landlords but also greater instability for our neighbors.
- **Express language ensuring vacancy control.** Landlords shouldn't be allowed to avoid the restrictions of rent control when a unit becomes vacant. Allowing them to do so both gives landlords a financial incentive to push tenants out and also helps hasten the increase of rents across the city over time.
- **No exemption for owner-occupied buildings.** A large number of tenants in Somerville live in owner-occupied buildings of three or fewer units. The Council shouldn't tell these residents that they deserve less housing security than tenants in other buildings, particularly since this HRP also includes a dispensation for landlords who face major tax increases, make major property improvements, or are vulnerable seniors.

We are in the middle of a housing crisis and as our city councilors, it is your responsibility to make sure that every resident of Somerville has shelter. Without rent control, so many of our neighbors, and even possibly myself, are at risk of being forced to leave our homes. I love Somerville and my neighborhood and don't want to be forced to leave.

Please do everything in your power to advance a strong rent control HRP that is worthy of Somerville and can help to grow the movement for rent control and true housing justice in Massachusetts.

Sincerely,

Veronica

--

Veronica Cañas

[REDACTED]

Madalyn Letellier

From: bill cavellini [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 2:55 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; [REDACTED]
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor
Subject: Rent Stabilization Home Rule Petition

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Bill Cavellini and I am a renter that has lived at [REDACTED] in Somerville for 20 years. I am writing to urge you to vote to approve Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition.

I have been on the front lines fighting to help my neighbors stay in Somerville. As first co-chair of the Union Square Neighborhood Council Board, I championed more affordable housing in new real estate developments. But that is only one avenue to help tenants stay in their beloved city. We desperately need rent control because our city and state currently allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions.

This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections. But, it needs other provisions to respond to the desperate situation low-income tenants face right now. Existing rents are already too high. Once rent control has a real chance of passing at the legislature, I worry that some rental property owners will raise rents before the governor signs the bill. This can be prevented by including in our home rule petition a rollback requirement to a time six months before the signing date.

The petition would also benefit from a condo conversion provision that does not automatically allow eviction for that use.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Sincerely,
Bill Cavellini

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Madalyn Letellier

From: Terence Cawley <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 9:28 AM
To: All City Council; Public Comments
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Subject: Call for Improvements to Rent Control Home Rule Petition

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Councilors,

My name is Terence Cawley, and I am a renter in Somerville's Ward 3.

I am writing to say that ***the rent control home rule petition (HRP) submitted to you by the Mayor isn't remotely good enough*** and to ask you to ***please improve it before passage***.

Some say that, because we need rent control now, we should advance this weaker HRP as a way to get at least some desperately-needed relief in our current housing crisis. But the truth is that no rent control HRP will get passed by this current Massachusetts State House. In fact, it's very unlikely that any rent control HRP will even get a committee hearing, let alone get passed out of committee and sent to the full House.

As a result, ***please treat this HRP like what it is: a demonstration of how bold rent control can and should be and one piece of a growing movement for restoring rent control in Massachusetts***. Somerville's HRP will likely represent the most-aggressive version of rent control that will be sent to the State House by any Massachusetts municipality. With that in mind, it's imperative that this HRP actually include the as-yet-absent elements that our community has desperately needed for years.

Here are some necessary improvements that had ***overwhelming support*** during the city's listening sessions:

- **A much shorter (or no) exemption period for new construction.** The current draft includes an exemption to rent control for the first 15 years after a building's construction. Some other cities in the US already have either no such exemption period (e.g. [St. Paul, MN](#)) or a much shorter exemption period (e.g. [Takoma Park, MD](#) - 5 years). Shortening or eliminating the exemption period will ensure that residents living in newer buildings also get the protections of rent control. Longer new construction exemption periods yield greater profits for developers and landlords but also greater instability for our neighbors.
- **Explicit language ensuring vacancy control.** Landlords shouldn't be allowed to avoid the restrictions of rent control when a unit becomes vacant. Allowing them to do so both gives landlords a financial incentive to push tenants out and also helps hasten the increase of rents across the city over time.
- **No exemption for owner-occupied buildings.** A large number of tenants in Somerville live in owner-occupied buildings of three or fewer units. The Council shouldn't tell these residents that they deserve less housing security than tenants in other buildings, particularly since this

HRP also includes a dispensation for landlords who face major tax increases, make major property improvements, or are vulnerable seniors.

I have lived in Somerville for 4 years and would very much like to continue living here, but as the rent my partner and I pay keeps increasing, we are increasingly forced to consider relocating. Many of our friends in Somerville are currently in the same position. Rent control would ensure that Somerville can remain a diverse and affordable place to live.

Thank you for doing everything in your power to advance the most robust rent control HRP in the commonwealth and helping to grow the movement for rent control and true housing justice.

Sincerely,
Terence Cawley

Madalyn Letellier

From: Courtney Foster <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 8:53 AM
To: All City Council; Public Comments
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Subject: Somerville resident re rent control home rule petition

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear City Councilors,

This is Courtney Foster, a Somerville resident on [REDACTED] who is a late-20s professional, student, and renter (as was the case for so many, I am in the same unit this year as last, but my rent too was raised).

I am writing to say that the rent control home rule petition (HRP) submitted to you by the Mayor isn't sufficient and to ask you to please improve it before passage.

Some say that, because we need rent control now, we should advance this weaker HRP as a way to get at least some desperately-needed relief in our current housing crisis. But the truth is that no rent control HRP will get passed by this current Massachusetts State House. In fact, it's very unlikely that any rent control HRP will even get a committee hearing, let alone get passed out of committee and sent to the full House.

As a result, please treat this HRP like what it is: a demonstration of how bold rent control can (and should) be and as one piece of a growing movement for restoring rent control in Massachusetts. Somerville's HRP will likely represent the boldest version of rent control that will be sent to the State House by any Massachusetts municipality this session. With that in mind, it's imperative that this HRP actually include the as-yet-absent elements that our community has been demanding for years.

Here are some necessary improvements that had overwhelming support during the city's listening sessions:

1. A much shorter (or no) exemption period for new construction. The current draft includes an exemption to rent control for the first 15 years after a building's construction. Some other cities in the US already have either no such exemption period (e.g. St. Paul, MN) or a much shorter exemption period (e.g. Takoma Park, MD - 5 years). Shortening or eliminating the exemption period will ensure that residents living in newer buildings also get the protections of rent control. Longer new construction exemption periods yield greater profits for developers and landlords but also greater instability for our neighbors.
2. Express language ensuring vacancy control. Landlords shouldn't be allowed to avoid the restrictions of rent control when a unit becomes vacant. Allowing them to do so both gives landlords a financial incentive to push tenants out and also helps hasten the increase of rents across the city over time.
3. No exemption for owner-occupied buildings. A large number of tenants in Somerville live in owner-occupied buildings of three or fewer units. The Council shouldn't tell these residents that they deserve less housing security than tenants in other buildings, particularly since this HRP also includes a dispensation for landlords who face major tax increases, make major property improvements, or are vulnerable seniors.

Please do everything in your power to advance a strong rent control HRP that is worthy of Somerville and can help to grow the movement for rent control and true housing justice in Massachusetts. Justice is a long game and it's on us to set up an enabling policy environment for the best rent control policy we can get when the timing is ripe.

Sincerely,
Courtney

Madalyn Letellier

From: Nathanael Clauser <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 10:51 AM
To: All City Council; Public Comments
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Subject: Improve the Rent Control HRP Before Passing It!

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Councilors,

My name is Nate Clauser, and I live at [REDACTED] in Ward 5.

I am writing to say that ***the rent control home rule petition (HRP) submitted to you by the Mayor isn't remotely good enough*** and to ask you to ***please improve it before passage***.

The Mayor and others may say that, because we need rent control now, we should advance this weak HRP as a way to get at least some desperately-needed relief in our current housing crisis. But the truth is that no rent control HRP will get passed by this current Massachusetts State House. In fact, it's very unlikely that any rent control HRP will even get a committee hearing, let alone get passed out of committee and sent to the full House.

As a result, ***please treat this HRP like what it is: a demonstration of how bold rent control can (and should) be and as one piece of a growing movement for restoring rent control in Massachusetts***. Somerville's HRP will likely represent the boldest version of rent control that will be sent to the State House by any Massachusetts municipality this session. With that in mind, it's imperative that this HRP actually include the as-yet-absent elements that our community has been demanding for years.

Here are some necessary improvements that had ***overwhelming support*** during the city's listening sessions:

- **A much shorter (or no) exemption period for new construction.** The current draft includes an exemption to rent control for the first 15 years after a building's construction. Some other cities in the US already have either no such exemption period (e.g. [St. Paul, MN](#)) or a much shorter exemption period (e.g. [Takoma Park, MD](#) - 5 years). Shortening or eliminating the exemption period will ensure that residents living in newer buildings also get the protections of rent control. Longer new construction exemption periods yield greater profits for developers and landlords but also greater instability for our neighbors.
- **Express language ensuring vacancy control.** Landlords shouldn't be allowed to avoid the restrictions of rent control when a unit becomes vacant. Allowing them to do so both gives them a financial incentive to push tenants out and also helps hasten the increase of rents across the city over time.
- **No exemption for owner-occupied buildings.** A large number of tenants in Somerville live in owner-occupied buildings of three or fewer units. The Council shouldn't tell these residents that they deserve less housing security than tenants in other buildings, particularly since this

HRP also includes a dispensation for landlords who face major tax increases, make major property improvements, or are vulnerable seniors.

Please do everything in your power to advance a strong rent control HRP that is worthy of Somerville and can help to grow the movement for rent control and true housing justice in Massachusetts.

Sincerely,

Nate Clauser



Madalyn Letellier

From: Heather Couture [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, November 11, 2023 2:42 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Home Rule Petition? Yes, Please, ASAP!

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear Members of City Council Et Al.:

I just learned that Mayor Ballantyne has submitted rent stabilization home rule petition legislation to the city council, and can I just say: HIP HIP HOORAY!!!!

So many people worked so hard on this for so long--Thank you Judy! Thank you Ben! Thank you Anti-Displacement Task Force Residential Subcommittee! Thank you Mayor Ballantyne! Thank you anyone I missed!--and the substance and thoughtfulness of the legislation reflects that. I hope y'all agree, and vote to approve it ASAP.

We all know that affordable housing is desperately needed here in Somerville, and that the reason so many tenants are having to fight so hard to stay here is because our city and state continue to allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. The home rule petition legislation, when enacted, will disrupt this harmful cycle and ensure fewer members of our community are subject to exorbitant rent increases and surprise evictions.

My husband and I are long-time renters, and live in half of an owner-occupied duplex with landlords who have offered below market rent for over two decades in the interest of tenant longevity. Since moving here seven years ago, we've only had one <1% rent increase. If it weren't for the grace and budgetary breathing room that this arrangement affords us, we would never have been able to move here in the first place.

Now that we are here, we have become deeply attached to this sweet, quirky, and complicated city, and hope to stay as long as possible. This decision comes with a high opportunity cost since we cannot afford to buy a home here. Because of this, rental protections are incredibly important to us on the individual level as well as collectively as a social and racial justice issue.

So please, I urge you to vote to approve the home rule petition swiftly, so that it can be filed with the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over so we can start safeguarding that which makes Somerville so special: its residents.

Sincerely, and with deep appreciation for all you do,

Heather Couture

[REDACTED] Ward 7

"I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the community, and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can."

-George Bernard Shaw

Madalyn Letellier

From: Hannah Creasey [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, November 10, 2023 3:50 PM
To: citycouncil@somervillema.gov; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED], a Somerville resident, support the proposed rent stabilization home rule

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Hannah Creasey and I am a tenant at [REDACTED] in Somerville's Ward 3.

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

I care deeply about this community and believe that rent control is a humanitarian issue that protects community members/constituents from greedy overpricing practices which contribute to instability and homelessness.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Best regards,
Hannah N. Creasey
Somerville Ward 3 Constituent

Madalyn Letellier

From: Zuzka Czerw [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 11:46 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: HRP for Rent Stabilization

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Members of City Council:

My name is Zuzka Czerw and I am a tenant at [REDACTED] in Ward 4 in Somerville.

I urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization HRP. So many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. The HRP is a tool that could give our community these vital protections.

Too many of my neighbors are at risk of displacement from the city they call home. I urge your support for the HRP that can alleviate some of these concerns.

Thank you,
Zuzka Czerw

Madalyn Letellier

From: Yuki Davis [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, November 9, 2023 4:00 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Support for Somerville's Rent Control Home Rule Petition

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

To the Members of the SomervilleCity Council,

My name is Yuki Davis, and I am a renter at [REDACTED] in Ward 2 of Somerville.

I am writing to ask for your immediate vote of approval on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. Too many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is just the first step towards giving our community these protections.

As a public health and reproductive justice professional, I know that safe, healthy, and affordable housing is a necessary foundation to thriving communities, but too many families across Somerville and Massachusetts are facing a crisis of affordability that pushes them out.

I am proud to live in a diverse, multi-racial, and mixed-income Somerville, and yet I am counting down the months until I am priced out of this city, despite the privileges I hold of a steady, salaried income. I know that much of our community faces (or has already faced) displacement due to uncontrolled rent increases. Our community cannot wait any longer for rent control or for this petition to be filed. I ask for your urgent action on this issue.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

With gratitude,
Yuki

--

Yuki Davis

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]: she/they

Madalyn Letellier

From: Corey Donahue [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 2:11 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Subject: Strengthening the Rent Control Home Rule Petition

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Councilors,

My name is Corey Donahue, and I am a renter at [REDACTED] in Ward 2 in Somerville.

I am writing to say that ***the rent control home rule petition (HRP) submitted to you by the Mayor isn't remotely good enough*** and to ask you to ***please improve it before passage***.

Please treat this HRP like what it is: ***a demonstration of how bold rent control can (and should) be and as one piece of a growing movement for restoring rent control in Massachusetts***. Somerville's HRP will likely represent the boldest version of rent control that will be sent to the State House by any Massachusetts municipality this session. With that in mind, it's imperative that this HRP actually include the as-yet-absent elements that our community has been demanding for years.

Here are some necessary improvements that had ***overwhelming support*** during the city's listening sessions:

- **A much shorter (or no) exemption period for new construction.** The current draft includes an exemption to rent control for the first 15 years after a building's construction. Some other cities in the US already have either no such exemption period (e.g. [St. Paul, MN](#)) or a much shorter exemption period (e.g. [Takoma Park, MD](#) - 5 years). Shortening or eliminating the exemption period will ensure that residents living in newer buildings also get the protections of rent control. Longer new construction exemption periods yield greater profits for developers and landlords but also greater instability for our neighbors.
- **Express language ensuring vacancy control.** Landlords shouldn't be allowed to avoid the restrictions of rent control when a unit becomes vacant. Allowing them to do so both gives landlords a financial incentive to push tenants out and also helps hasten the increase of rents across the city over time.
- **No exemption for owner-occupied buildings.** A large number of tenants in Somerville live in owner-occupied buildings of three or fewer units. The Council shouldn't tell these residents that they deserve less housing security than tenants in other buildings, particularly since this HRP also includes a dispensation for landlords who face major tax increases, make major property improvements, or are vulnerable seniors.

As a renter in Somerville, I'd love to be able to continue to live in a city that I cannot afford to purchase property in. However, I can never be secure in knowing whether or not rent increases will price me out of the city. Please help protect me and let me stay in Somerville by passing a much stronger HRP.

Please do everything in your power to advance a strong rent control HRP that is worthy of Somerville and can help to grow the movement for rent control and true housing justice in Massachusetts.

Sincerely,
Corey Donahue

Madalyn Letellier

From: Kristen <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 4:01 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Subject: We need effective rent control!

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Somerville Councilors,

My name is Kristen Doucette, and I am a renter at [REDACTED] in Ward 7.

I am writing to say that ***the rent control home rule petition (HRP) submitted to you by the Mayor isn't remotely good enough*** and to ask you to ***please improve it before passage***.

I have lived in Somerville for the past 4 years and am proud to be a resident. Somerville has something to offer for everyone in the community, whether it be art, music, sports, you name it. What I love most about living in Somerville is our community. I've never lived in a place that tries so hard (and succeeds!!) at engaging the community through all different means. The people who live here make Somerville a very interesting place to live and I hope to live here a long time!

But over the past few years, I have seen my friends and neighbors pushed out of Somerville due to the exorbitant cost of rent. Some of my friends have been forced to find other housing after their landlord raised their rent upwards of 30% from the previous year, which in my opinion, is downright greedy. And many people are still living on the streets, forced to play a never-ending game of "catch-up" with the ever-increasing costs of renting an apartment for a roof over their heads and safety from the elements.

Somerville has the opportunity to be a leader in rent control advocacy for the rest of the state, but we won't be effective in our leadership if we don't re-write the HRP.

Some say that, because we need rent control now, we should advance this weaker HRP as a way to get at least some desperately-needed relief in our current housing crisis. But the truth is that no rent control HRP will get passed by this current Massachusetts State House. In fact, it's very unlikely that any rent control HRP will even get a committee hearing, let alone get passed out of committee and sent to the full House.

As a result, ***please treat this HRP like what it is: a demonstration of how bold rent control can (and should) be and as one piece of a growing movement for restoring rent control in Massachusetts.*** Somerville's HRP will likely represent the boldest version of rent control that will be sent to the State House by any Massachusetts municipality this session. With that in mind, it's imperative that this HRP actually include the as-yet-absent elements that our community has been demanding for years.

Here are some necessary improvements that had ***overwhelming support*** during the city's listening sessions:

- **A much shorter (or no) exemption period for new construction.** The current draft includes an exemption to rent control for the first 15 years after a building's construction. Some other cities in the US already have either no such exemption period (e.g. [St. Paul, MN](#)) or a much shorter exemption period (e.g. [Takoma Park, MD](#) - 5 years). Shortening or eliminating the exemption period will ensure that residents living in newer buildings also get the protections of rent control. Longer new construction exemption periods yield greater profits for developers and landlords but also greater instability for our neighbors.
- **Express language ensuring vacancy control.** Landlords shouldn't be allowed to avoid the restrictions of rent control when a unit becomes vacant. Allowing them to do so both gives landlords a financial incentive to push tenants out and also helps hasten the increase of rents across the city over time.
- **No exemption for owner-occupied buildings.** A large number of tenants in Somerville live in owner-occupied buildings of three or fewer units. The Council shouldn't tell these residents that they deserve less housing security than tenants in other buildings, particularly since this HRP also includes a dispensation for landlords who face major tax increases, make major property improvements, or are vulnerable seniors.

Please do everything in your power to advance a strong rent control HRP that is worthy of Somerville and can help to grow the movement for rent control and true housing justice in Massachusetts.

Sincerely,
Kristen Doucette

Madalyn Letellier

From: Derek DuPont [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 9:03 AM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Rent Stabilization Home Rule Petition

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Good morning councilors,

My name is Derek DuPont. I'm a renter at [REDACTED] in Ward 3.

I'm excited by and grateful for the work done by Mayor Ballantyne's administration and the Anti-Displacement Task Force in drafting a home rule petition for rent stabilization. Our city's tenants have needed this protection for a long time -- many have already been displaced, but that shouldn't stop us from taking further action to help those of us renting and living here.

I've been a tenant in Somerville for over ten years and it's rare that I don't see some increase in my monthly rent when renewing my lease, regardless of whether my own wage has gone up. I am privileged in that I can continue to afford a comfortable space, but I know that many of our neighbors aren't fortunate enough to be in this position. While our city and state make well-intentioned and needed infrastructural investments that make our neighborhoods more attractive (and while the housing supply remains low), I worry about the downstream effects of displacement, such as low-wage workers being pushed out of transit-friendly neighborhoods and into miserable commutes so they can keep their jobs. We need protection like rent stabilization so that we aren't making improvements that only benefit the wealthy.

I urge you to vote in favor of the petition when it comes before you and to support it on its journey to the State House. Our neighbors are counting on you!

Best,
Derek

Madalyn Letellier

From: Shreya Durvasula [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 11:30 AM
To: Anti-Displacement Task Force; Public Comments; All City Council
Subject: We need rent stabilization in Somerville

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Good Morning, my name is Shreya Durvasua and I have been a renter in Somerville for 8 years. I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition.

I love it here, and I have been an active community member participating in mutual aid efforts, local festivals, and patronizing local businesses. I think Somerville is so special, and I am worried I might not get to live here for much longer if the rents keep going up. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.
Shreya Durvasula

Madalyn Letellier

From: Ethan Dussault [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, November 9, 2023 3:58 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Rent Stabilization Can't Wait. Approve HRP.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Ethan Dussault and I am a renter at [REDACTED] in Ward 4.

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

As someone who has lived through decades of transformation in the area, I can't help but think this move is long overdue by about as much time. We can't wait any longer.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Best,
Ethan Dussault

Madalyn Letellier

From: David Gibbs [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 2:03 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; Organizing Program
Subject: Support for Rent Stabilization Home Rule Petition

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is David Gibbs and I am a homeowner at [REDACTED] in Ward 5. I am also the Executive Director of the Community Action Agency of Somerville.

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

I have lived in Somerville for nearly 30 years. In that time I have seen rents outpace wages by astronomical amounts, with the result that many of my friends and neighbors have had to leave the city. And in my role as ED at CAAS, I see the effects of this insane policy every day. This is not a result of "market forces"; it is the result of policies enacted or omitted by those elected to lead us. If we mean anything by our professions of caring about diversity, we MUST address the economic situation that is threatening that diversity now.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

David Gibbs

David Gibbs | Executive Director

{he/him/his}

Community Action Agency of Somerville, Inc.

66-70 Union Square, Suite 104 | Somerville, MA 02143

[REDACTED] | www.caasomerville.org



"This is what I want to tell you: You don't have to make yourself suffer in order to serve. You don't have to grind your bones into the ground. You don't have to cut your life up into pieces and give yourself away until there is nothing left. You belong to a community and a broader movement. Your life has value. We need you alive. We need you to last. You will not last if you are not breathing."

Valarie Kaur, *See No Stranger: A Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love*

Madalyn Letellier

From: jane gillooly [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, November 10, 2023 2:43 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Rent Stablization Home Rule Petition

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

To the Members of City Council:

My name is Jane Gillooly, and I am a homeowner at [REDACTED] in Ward 3 in Somerville].

I am writing to urge your vote of approval on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The diversity of the city of Somerville has suffered because of unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

We rented a border apartment in our Somerville home for many years at a reasonable rent. Our tenant stayed for almost 10 years until he moved out of state. He was a welcomed member of the neighborhood. In our experience renters who feel secure and stable in their living situation are more likely to give back to the community and plan for their futures. We were long-time renters ourselves before buying. We rented from the same landlord for forty years. We had a reasonable rent and long-term leases, which allowed us to budget and eventually buy. The residential turnover rate in Somerville is very high and it is damaging to the connections within the community. I look forward to a future when both owners and renters can afford to put down roots.

Thank you for your vote to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Jane Gillooly

Madalyn Letellier

From: Aaron Greiner [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, November 10, 2023 9:30 AM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: In Support of Rent Control

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Aaron and I am a renter at [REDACTED], Somerville.

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

As a renter myself, while I would like to stay in Somerville, my future in the city is always uncertain because at any moment my rent could increase dramatically and I could be priced out.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Best,
Aaron

Madalyn Letellier

From: jenn harrington [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, November 10, 2023 12:55 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Support Somerville's home rule petition for rent stabilization

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear Somerville City Council,

I have been a renter for 20+ years in the same apartment on [REDACTED] in Ward 3 in Somerville.

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

I've had tremendous LUCK to have a fantastic landlord so I can call the place I rent a home. My story is rare. In fact, my story has become just about nonexistent since rent control was outlawed in Massachusetts. Landlords have had almost 30 years to show what they can do without rent control. With insane rent spikes,

- we've seen our community members forced to leave Somerville;
- we've seen our city become far less diverse;
- we've seen our cultural, artistic, and volunteer communities flee;
- we've seen people struggle and sacrifice to stay here.
- we've seen people who work here have to increase commuting hours because they can't afford to live here, or the next town over, or the next town over that;
- we've seen more and more property owners who do not live here make a huge profit that they disperse elsewhere;
- we've seen more than understandable unrest and distress as our city and state fail to protect citizens.

In three decades the majority of property owners have worked to make our communities work for just them. During that time, they've proved that the imbalances they've created just don't work. Landlords, just like any other industry, require regulation in order to protect community health.

And that's what rent stabilization is—it's an issue of health.

- If you care about all the people in our city
- If you care about racial equity
- If you care about our immigrant population
- If you care about the ability for people to have a roof over their head
- If you care about food security
- If you care about children and families and the elderly and our working class and artists
- If you care about mental health
- If you care about climate change

If you care about making Somerville thrive in so many ways, you will vote to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Thank you,
Jenn Harrington

Madalyn Letellier

From: Jackson Hawk [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, November 11, 2023 3:33 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Rent Control Now!

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Jackson Hawk and I am a tenant at [REDACTED] in Ward 7 in Somerville.

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

I have close friends who live in the Ball Square and Davis Square areas who had their rents increase by as much as 25% with the construction of the Ball Square T stop. Situations like this have absolutely no reason for happening other than the greed of landlords. By ignoring this issue, you are effectively evicting all but the wealthiest Somerville residents and contributing to the nationwide housing crisis!

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Best,
Jackson Hawk

Madalyn Letellier

From: Marlena Idrobo [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, November 10, 2023 5:37 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Rent control home rule petition

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Marlena and I am a renter in Ward 2, Somerville [REDACTED]

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants, including myself, are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

I rent a 4-bedroom apartment with three roommates near one of the new Green Line T stops. This past summer when our lease was up for renewal, my landlord informed us that she had spoken to her broker who told her the amount she was charging for rent was below market rate. The landlord said she was "offering a deal" by proposing to raise our rent by 9%. If we didn't accept this deal, she told us, she would put the unit on the market for a price that was 21% higher. If Somerville had rent stabilization in place, my landlord would not have been able to propose these rent increases.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Sincerely,
Marlena Idrobo

Madalyn Letellier

From: Kevin Foster [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 12:51 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Home Rule Petition on Rent Control

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Good afternoon,

My name is Kevin Foster and I am a renter at [REDACTED]

I would like to urge your vote to approve as quickly as possible the city's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition.

This city, along with the region, is experiencing a crisis of rents. Long-time residents and relatively newly arrived residents alike are experiencing drastic spikes in rent. Landlords will point to the opening of the GLX as an excuse for their property values, and therefore their rents can increase in kind. This is of course without any real change to the housing or the property it sits on. Because of this and other factors, we are in the middle of a major displacing event that will fundamentally change who can and will live in this city. As the Secretary of the Union Square Neighborhood Council, this is a reality I see and hear from renters in the Union Square neighborhood every day.

The idea of the market, and an unregulated market at that, dictating the fundamental need that every human being has, that of shelter, is an absurdity of our time and place. While this home rule petition is not perfect, it is a decent first step in addressing this egregious error in our society that puts profits over people.

I again urge you to pass this before the legislative calendar year is over and continue to fight tooth and nail for its passage through the State House.

Best,
Kevin Foster
Secretary for the Union Square Neighborhood Council
[REDACTED]

Madalyn Letellier

From: Becca K [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 9:06 AM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: In support of Somerville rent control home rule petition!

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Bex Kirlew and I am a renter at [REDACTED], Ward 6 in Somerville.

I'm writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

This is so vital to implement ASAP! I personally know many people who are thinking of leaving the area or have already left because of how steep rent increases can be. I've had friends look for houses in the suburbs because of a rent increase of \$300 in one year, and I've occasionally heard of \$1000+ increases — a ridiculous amount, but completely possible in a world where there's no cap on increases per year. I consider myself incredibly lucky that the most my landlords have ever raised our rent by is \$100, but I know that could change at any time. I love the community and my friends in Somerville and I want to know that we can stay here and build something lasting.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Bex Kirlew

Madalyn Letellier

From: Madeleine Lachevre [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 9:59 AM
To: All City Council; Public Comments
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Subject: ATTN: Improve Draft Home Rule Petition on Rent Control

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Councilors,

My name is Madeleine, and I am a renter at [REDACTED], Somerville/Ward 2.

I am writing to say that **the rent control home rule petition (HRP) submitted to you by the Mayor isn't remotely good enough and to ask you to please improve it before passage.**

Some say that, because we need rent control now, we should advance this weaker HRP as a way to get at least some desperately-needed relief in our current housing crisis. But the truth is that no rent control HRP will get passed by this current Massachusetts State House. In fact, it's very unlikely that any rent control HRP will even get a committee hearing, let alone get passed out of committee and sent to the full House.

As a result, **please treat this HRP like what it is: a demonstration of how bold rent control can (and should) be and as one piece of a growing movement for restoring rent control in Massachusetts.** Somerville's HRP will likely represent the boldest version of rent control that will be sent to the State House by any Massachusetts municipality this session. With that in mind, it's imperative that this HRP actually include the as-yet-absent elements that our community has been demanding for years. Here are some necessary improvements that had **overwhelming support** during the city's listening sessions:

- **A much shorter (or no) exemption period for new construction.** The current draft includes an exemption to rent control for the first 15 years after a building's construction. Some other cities in the US already have either no such exemption period (e.g. [St. Paul, MN](#)) or a much shorter exemption period (e.g. [Takoma Park, MD](#) - 5 years). Shortening or eliminating the exemption period will ensure that residents living in newer buildings also get the protections of rent control. Longer new construction exemption periods yield greater profits for developers and landlords but also greater instability for our neighbors.
- **Express language ensuring vacancy control.** Landlords shouldn't be allowed to avoid the restrictions of rent control when a unit becomes vacant. Allowing them to do so both gives landlords a financial incentive to push tenants out and also helps hasten the increase of rents across the city over time.
- **No exemption for owner-occupied buildings.** A large number of tenants in Somerville live in owner-occupied buildings of three or fewer units. The Council shouldn't tell these residents that they deserve less housing security than tenants in other buildings, particularly since this HRP also includes a dispensation for landlords who face major tax increases, make major property improvements, or are vulnerable seniors.

I have lived in Somerville for the last two years and have grown to care deeply for this vibrant community. The city's diversity is one of its most beautiful assets, and we owe it to ourselves and our community members to foster an environment where folks across the socio-economic spectrum may continue to afford to live here. The current cost of living is astronomical, and until we live in a world where more American families live comfortably above the poverty line and individuals are not expected to keep two or three jobs to stay afloat, we must work together to protect and uplift residents of all financial backgrounds. We are at risk of continuing to

price out families and residents if we do not act to improve and implement rent control mechanisms in Somerville soon. Let the city of Somerville exemplify the state of Massachusetts' Right to Shelter values, and improve the HRP.

Please do everything in your power to advance a strong rent control HRP that is worthy of Somerville and can help to grow the movement for rent control and true housing justice in Massachusetts.

Sincerely,
Madeleine Lachevre

Madalyn Letellier

From: Abraham Lateiner [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, November 9, 2023 2:31 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: rent stabilization home rule petition

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Abraham Lateiner and I am a renter at [REDACTED] in Somerville.

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

I'm new to my neighborhood and love it. But I also have many friends and colleagues who can't afford to live near me. This disrupts community building that me and my kids depend on. I know that I'm not the only one losing out on opportunities because this city is so expensive to live in.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Best,
Abraham Lateiner

Madalyn Letellier

From: Jade Lu [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, November 9, 2023 4:51 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Rent Stabilization Home Rule Petition

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Hello Members of City Council,

My name is Jade Lu, and I am a renter at [REDACTED] in Prospect Hill in Ward 3.

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

I have found my neighborhood and Somerville as whole to be such a wonderful home over the past 3+ years, and I know much of that is due to our community and the unique character that folks bring to the area. While I know that growth and change are natural and necessary, I believe that we need to enact more protections for those that are really struggling to stay in the area.

I also want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for your service and dedication to Somerville. I know that much of my love for this place is also thanks to your hard (and often invisible) work to keep things running. As a huge fan of the expanded bike path(!), our libraries, and Prospect Hill Park - thank you very much. I'm sure that it's difficult to balance the priorities of growth and affordability, but I hope that you are able to support this initiative in recognition of the growing need in the community.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Best,
Jade

Madalyn Letellier

From: Kaleigh M [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 4:52 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments
Cc: Mayor; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Subject: Rent Control Concerns

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Councilors,

My name is Kaleigh Marcotte, and I am a renter at 94 Boston Ave in Ward 5.

I am writing to say that ***the rent control home rule petition (HRP) submitted to you by the Mayor isn't remotely good enough*** and to ask you to ***please improve it before passage***.

Some say that, because we need rent control now, we should advance this weaker HRP as a way to get at least some desperately-needed relief in our current housing crisis. But the truth is that no rent control HRP will get passed by this current Massachusetts State House. In fact, it's very unlikely that any rent control HRP will even get a committee hearing, let alone get passed out of committee and sent to the full House.

As a result, ***please treat this HRP like what it is: a demonstration of how bold rent control can (and should) be and as one piece of a growing movement for restoring rent control in Massachusetts***. Somerville's HRP will likely represent the boldest version of rent control that will be sent to the State House by any Massachusetts municipality this session. With that in mind, it's imperative that this HRP actually include the as-yet-absent elements that our community has been demanding for years.

Here are some necessary improvements that had ***overwhelming support*** during the city's listening sessions:

- **A much shorter (or no) exemption period for new construction.** The current draft includes an exemption to rent control for the first 15 years after a building's construction. Some other cities in the US already have either no such exemption period (e.g. [St. Paul, MN](#)) or a much shorter exemption period (e.g. [Takoma Park, MD](#) - 5 years). Shortening or eliminating the exemption period will ensure that residents living in newer buildings also get the protections of rent control. Longer new construction exemption periods yield greater profits for developers and landlords but also greater instability for our neighbors.
- **Express language ensuring vacancy control.** Landlords shouldn't be allowed to avoid the restrictions of rent control when a unit becomes vacant. Allowing them to do so both gives landlords a financial incentive to push tenants out and also helps hasten the increase of rents across the city over time.
- **No exemption for owner-occupied buildings.** A large number of tenants in Somerville live in owner-occupied buildings of three or fewer units. The Council shouldn't tell these residents that they deserve less housing security than tenants in other buildings, particularly since this HRP also includes a dispensation for landlords who face major tax increases, make major property improvements, or are vulnerable seniors.

I personally spoke at the renter meetings that were held this summer and fall, and I feel very discouraged and like the people who represent me are not listening to me and my fellow

constituents. There are people in this community who have been here for years who paid the taxes to get the Green Line Extension and now they are going to be priced out of their homes. We even had a professor at Brown who teaches this very thing tell you all that this would not be enough. If you will not listen to the people at least listen to professionals. Please I implore you to enact a much more restrictive and all-encompassing rent control for the sake of all of the people here in Somerville.

Please do everything in your power to advance a strong rent control HRP that is worthy of Somerville and can help to grow the movement for rent control and true housing justice in Massachusetts.

Sincerely,
Kaleigh Marcotte

Madalyn Letellier

From: Tamar Mastering [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 7:49 AM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Somerville Home Rule Petition for rent control

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Marisa Déry and I am a renter at [REDACTED], ward 5.

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections. I am 60 years old and was forced to move out 2 years ago when my landlord passed away and the family decided to sell. It was difficult finding a place within our budget; while the cost was substantially higher than our previous home (where I had been for 13 years), the rent is being increased yearly which is unsustainable.

Somerville needs to adopt rent control to ensure the stability of its residents. If the climbing rent issues are not resolved soon, this city will cease to be one of "America's best cities to live in".

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Marisa Déry

Sent from The 11th Dimension

Madalyn Letellier

From: Josh McLinden [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 3:01 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Improve and pass Somerville's rent control home rule petition

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Josh McLinden and I am a renter at [REDACTED] in Ward 3 of Somerville.

I am pleased to see that Mayor Ballantyne, with the guidance of the Anti-Displacement Task Force and informed by the demands of the movement to support tenants, has submitted the strongest home rule petition for rent control proposed in the state to date. As a long-time activist for housing justice, I have to admit that it's incredible to see rent control policy back on the agenda for local governments, and I applaud the City's efforts toward the much-needed return of rent control. I am particularly pleased to see just cause eviction protections included in the proposal, along with other protections such as relocation rights.

That said, this proposal is not perfect. I understand the reasoning behind the list of exemptions included in the proposal, but I am particularly concerned about exempting new construction from rent control policy, especially as Somerville continues what promises to be a long boom in new building construction. I'm also wary of exempting three-unit buildings given the predominance of triple deckers in Somerville.

I am writing to urge you to consider improving the proposed policy by further limiting the exemptions listed above, but if that proves too difficult, I also want to express my support for this petition as it is. I support the Council moving toward a vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Sincerely,
Josh McLinden

[REDACTED]

Madalyn Letellier

From: Alison Pasquariello [REDACTED] >
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 6:44 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Subject: Request to make a stronger HRP

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Councilors,

My name is Alison Pasquariello, and I am a renter at [REDACTED] in Ward 6 in Somerville.

I am writing to say that ***the rent control home rule petition (HRP) submitted to you by the Mayor isn't remotely good enough*** and to ask you to ***please improve it before passage***.

We know no rent control HRP will get passed by this current Massachusetts State House. In fact, it's very unlikely that any rent control HRP will even get a committee hearing, let alone get passed out of committee and sent to the full House.

I am writing to ask that you ***treat this HRP like what it is: a demonstration of how bold rent control can (and should) be and as one piece of a growing movement for restoring rent control in Massachusetts***. Somerville's HRP will likely represent the boldest version of rent control that will be sent to the State House by any Massachusetts municipality this session. With that in mind, it's imperative that this HRP actually include the as-yet-absent elements that our community has been demanding for years.

Here are some necessary improvements that had ***overwhelming support*** during the city's listening sessions:

- **A much shorter (or no) exemption period for new construction.** The current draft includes an exemption to rent control for the first 15 years after a building's construction. Some other cities in the US already have either no such exemption period (e.g. [St. Paul, MN](#)) or a much shorter exemption period (e.g. [Takoma Park, MD](#) - 5 years). Shortening or eliminating the exemption period will ensure that residents living in newer buildings also get the protections of rent control. Longer new construction exemption periods yield greater profits for developers and landlords but also greater instability for our neighbors.
- **Express language ensuring vacancy control.** Landlords shouldn't be allowed to avoid the restrictions of rent control when a unit becomes vacant. Allowing them to do so both gives landlords a financial incentive to push tenants out and also helps hasten the increase of rents across the city over time.
- **No exemption for owner-occupied buildings.** A large number of tenants in Somerville live in owner-occupied buildings of three or fewer units. The Council shouldn't tell these residents that they deserve less housing security than tenants in other buildings, particularly since this HRP also includes a dispensation for landlords who face major tax increases, make major property improvements, or are vulnerable seniors.

Housing is a human right, and landlords should not get to profit off of the struggle of the working class. I believe our community would be healthier and more prosperous if we all had affordable housing, and I hope you will act in the best interest of Somerville's community by fighting for sufficient rent control.

Please do everything in your power to advance a strong rent control HRP and can help to grow the movement for rent control and true housing justice in Massachusetts.

Sincerely,
Alison Pasquariello

Madalyn Letellier

From: Catherine Porter [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 8:25 AM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; Organizing Program
Subject: Home Rule Petition

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Catherine Porter and I am a renter at [REDACTED] in Somerville (Ward 6) and a Community Organizer at CAAS.

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

Day in and day out, I see Somerville families destabilized and traumatized by unfathomable rent increases and the threat of displacement. I urge you to approve this petition to move it forward as quickly as possible, we do not have more time to wait.

I would also encourage you to strengthen the bill with the following measures, **but not at the expense of slowing this important protection down:**

- A shorter exemption for new construction
- No exemption for owner-occupied buildings

These tenants should be guaranteed the same rights and protections and not be treated differently.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Catherine Porter

--

Catherine Porter | Community Organizer

Pronouns: she/her

Yo hablo español.

[REDACTED]
Community Action Agency of Somerville, Inc.

66-70 Union Square, Suite 104 | Somerville, MA 02143

[REDACTED] | www.caasomerville.org

Madalyn Letellier

From: Courtney Reed [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, November 12, 2023 4:46 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor
Subject: Draft Somerville home rule petition (HRP) for rent stabilization.

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council,

My name is Courtney Reed and I am a renter at [REDACTED] Apt. 3, Somerville.

I am writing to **urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition**. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

I know first-hand as a renter how hard it is to secure decent and affordable housing. When I first moved to Somerville, I paid a large share of my salary to a landlord that owns over 30+ 'triple decker' units in the city & doesn't even live in the area himself for most of the year. When I moved into my current building for cheaper rent, I found that the apartment lacked basic amenities & the city did little to intervene. We'd often lose power and had to take cold showers (further, my neighbors in the building have a personal injury lawsuit against the former landlord as a result of his neglect). This bill is the bare minimum you can do to support the **overwhelming number of renters in the community, people like me, who are struggling to live comfortably and to prevent displacement** as the city continues to grow & experience development.

I also wanted to express that I believe **the exemptions in the petition are overly broad**. Subsidized units should not be exempt from the bill's regulations on rent increases; I've seen the rent prices on the city's 'affordable units' and they're still out of reach for many people like me. Moreover, the 15-year grace period for newly constructed buildings will weaken the impact of the petition, as many landlords reference the rent prices of new, luxury apartment buildings to get a sense of the 'market price' of area units. The new unsubsidized rentals in Union Square, for example, are completely inaccessible, with studios getting listed at \$2,700 a month or more. **Please consider striking these two exemptions as they undermine the rest of the petition.**

Thank you for voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Best,

Courtney Reed
She, Her, Hers

Madalyn Letellier

From: Ada Ren-Mitchell [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 2:39 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Please support Somerville's home rule petition for rent stabilization!

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

To the City Council of my dear Somerville,

My name is Ada Ren-Mitchell and I am a renter at [REDACTED]

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

While I've been fortunate in having a stable place to live even with rent increases, I've seen friends struggle to afford to stay in their homes in Somerville, and eventually have to move farther out or to cheaper cities or even states. I've been part of our block party planning since 2015, and it's really hard to try building community in a city I love but doesn't feel like it loves us back. Please be part of supporting the wonderful people who live here.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

- Ada Ren-Mitchell

Madalyn Letellier

From: Monica de los Reyes [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 10:42 AM
To: All City Council; Anti-Displacement Task Force; Public Comments
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; [REDACTED]
Subject: Rent control home rule petition

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Hello,

I am a tenant at [REDACTED] in Somerville, and I am writing to express my support for Somerville's home rule petition on rent control and stabilization. Although I believe the proposal contains too many exemptions, especially for new construction, I still support the measure, since rent control is so desperately needed in Somerville. I urge you to vote to approve the petition and argue for rent control to be allowed across the state in tonight's meeting. Should the home rule petition be passed, I hope that we as a community can continue to improve it to include stronger protections for renters in Somerville.

Thank you,
Monica de los Reyes

Sent from my iPhone

Madalyn Letellier

From: Samantha Wolfe [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 5:39 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments
Cc: Lance Davis; Ben Ewen-Campen; Mayor; Organizing Program
Subject: Support for Rent Control HRP

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Samantha Wolfe and I work at the Community Action Agency of Somerville in Union Square.

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

As a Community Organizer for CAAS I have worked with HUNDREDS of Somerville renters over the past 2 years. Renting individuals and families are only so resilient. I grew up in a single-parent household and we rented my whole life. I felt the anxiety of not knowing how much our rent was going to go up every year, not knowing if we were going to have to pack everything up and move our whole lives somewhere else. Like my family, low-wealth renters in Somerville are afraid to even bring up maintenance concerns because of how easy it'd be for their Landlord to not renew or hike up the rent under false pretenses. All of this has a real impact on renters' health and on childrens' development that ripples through the community.

Low and even middle-income Somerville renters, especially communities of color and immigrants, can NO longer weather hundreds of dollars in rent hikes nor the extreme uncertainty of renting in a City that does not have Just Cause Eviction Protections. Thank you for voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

In partnership,

Samantha Wolfe

--

Samantha Wolfe | Lead Organizer
{she/her/hers} Yo hablo español. Je parle français.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[Community Action Agency of Somerville](https://www.caasomerville.org/), Inc.
66-70 Union Square, Suite 104 | Somerville, MA 02143



Virus-free. www.avast.com

Madalyn Letellier

From: Katie Worringer [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, November 12, 2023 7:33 PM
To: All City Council; Public Comments
Cc: Ben Ewen-Campen; Lance Davis; Mayor; Anti-Displacement Task Force
Subject: Improve rent control home rule petition before passing

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Councilors,

My name is Katie Worringer and I am a homeowner at [REDACTED] in Ward 5. Prior to 2018, I was a renter in Somerville.

I am writing to say that ***the rent control home rule petition (HRP) submitted to you by the Mayor isn't remotely good enough*** and to ask you to ***please improve it before passage***.

Some say that, because we need rent control now, we should advance this weaker HRP as a way to get at least some desperately-needed relief in our current housing crisis. But the truth is that no rent control HRP will get passed by this current Massachusetts State House. In fact, it's very unlikely that any rent control HRP will even get a committee hearing, let alone get passed out of committee and sent to the full House.

As a result, ***please treat this HRP like what it is: a demonstration of how bold rent control can and should be and one piece of a growing movement for restoring rent control in Massachusetts***. Somerville's HRP will likely represent the most-aggressive version of rent control that will be sent to the State House by any Massachusetts municipality. With that in mind, it's imperative that this HRP actually include the as-yet-absent elements that our community has desperately needed for years.

Here are some necessary improvements that had ***overwhelming support*** during the city's listening sessions:

- **A much shorter (or no) exemption period for new construction.** The current draft includes an exemption to rent control for the first 15 years after a building's construction. Some other cities in the US already already have either no such exemption period (e.g. [St. Paul, MN](#)) or a much shorter exemption period (e.g. [Takoma Park, MD](#) - 5 years). Shortening or eliminating the exemption period will ensure that residents living in newer buildings also get the protections of rent control. Longer new construction exemption periods yield greater profits for developers and landlords but also greater instability for our neighbors.
- **Explicit language ensuring vacancy control.** Landlords shouldn't be allowed to avoid the restrictions of rent control when a unit becomes vacant. Allowing them to do so both gives landlords a financial incentive to push tenants out and also helps hasten the increase of rents across the city over time.
- **No exemption for owner-occupied buildings.** A large number of tenants in Somerville live in owner-occupied buildings of three or fewer units. The Council shouldn't tell these residents that they deserve less housing security than tenants in other buildings, particularly since this

HRP also includes a dispensation for landlords who face major tax increases, make major property improvements, or are vulnerable seniors.

Thank you for doing everything in your power to advance the most robust rent control HRP in the commonwealth and helping to grow the movement for rent control and true housing justice.

Sincerely,
Katie Worringer

From: [Emily Doran](#)
To: [All City Council](#); [Public Comments](#); [Anti-Displacement Task Force](#)
Cc: [Lance Davis](#); [Ben Ewen-Campen](#); [Mayor](#); [REDACTED]
Subject: rent stabilization home rule petition
Date: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 5:59:29 PM

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Members of City Council:

My name is Emily Doran and I am a renter at [REDACTED] in Ward 2. I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

To speak briefly about myself, first I want to reference one of my two roommates, Bill, who has lived at this address for 12 years. In that same amount of time, I have lived in three different places, because twice I've been asked to leave my home, or face eviction, so that developers and landlords, already wealthy people can become wealthier. My housemates and I occasionally have conversations about what we would do, should our landlord decide to sell the property, leaving us all, and myself for the third time, facing eviction, through no fault of my own. When will these practices stop?

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

Thank you,
Emily Doran

From: [Derrick Rice](#)
To: [All City Council](#); [Anti-Displacement Task Force](#); [Public Comments](#)
Cc: [Lance Davis](#); [Ben Ewen-Campen](#); [Mayor](#); [REDACTED]; [Naima Sait](#); [Wilfred Mbah](#); [JT Scott](#); [Willie Burnley Jr](#); [Jake Wilson](#); [strezoatlargo@gmail.com](#); [judyforward7@gmail.com](#); [Charlotte Kelly](#); [Matthew McLaughlin](#); [Jesse Clingan](#); [Beatriz Gomez-Mouakad](#)
Subject: In support of passing the Rent Control HRP as written
Date: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 5:37:29 PM

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Councilors, Mayor Ballantyne, and neighbors:

I'm writing in support of passing the [currently-proposed Home Rule Petition to enable Rent Control](#) in Somerville, as written, and without delay. I join my voice with the several community organizations who call for this to be approved unanimously by the Somerville City Council, as a way of demonstrating clear and unqualified support for Rent Control in Somerville.

In particular, I am excited to see that this HRP includes "vacancy protections" by limiting the rent increase on units rather than on on tenants. I am also excited to see that the exceptions for smaller rental buildings are limited to owner-occupied dwellings.

While I think the 15 year exemption for new construction is longer than I would like, I do not think that extended debate about this (or any other detail) will serve our community.

I ask that you show clear, swift support of this proposal, with no quarrelling which opponents could point to in an attempt to undermine our efforts to protect our neighbors. What we need now is to build a groundswell of support for rent control across the state, city by city.

- Derrick Rice, Ward 3

From: [Devin Matté](#)
To: [All City Council](#); [Public Comments](#)
Cc: [Lance Davis](#); [Ben Ewen-Campen](#); [Mayor](#); [Anti-Displacement Task Force](#)
Subject: Comment on Rent Control Home Rule Petition
Date: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 5:07:31 PM

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Hello Councilors,

My name is Devin Matte, and I am a renter at [REDACTED] Somerville (Ward 5).

I am writing to support the passing of the home rule petition on rent control in Somerville. I think we need to move forward with this fairly balanced rent control proposal, but I do believe there are areas where we can improve the language to better cover our city's renters.

I am personally renting an owner occupied triple decker building. Under this proposal I wouldn't be covered by rent control in the city. I understand that there need to be exceptions and carve outs, so I wouldn't argue these buildings need also be covered by the 5% maximum. But I would have liked to see something like a 10% maximum for owner occupied buildings

I also would love to see language around ensuring vacancy control. Landlords shouldn't be able to push out tenants to rent at a higher rate to the next tenant.

I hope to see you push forward a strong yet fair rent control proposal that has a real chance to pass in the state house and provide a small relief to residents throughout the city.

Thanks,
Devin Matte
[REDACTED]

From: [Amanda Tragert](#)
To: [All City Council](#); [Public Comments](#); [Anti-Displacement Task Force](#)
Cc: [Lance Davis](#); [Ben Ewen-Campen](#); [Mayor](#); [REDACTED]
Subject: Yes to Home Rule Petition!
Date: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 4:44:48 PM

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Members of City Council:

My name is Amanda Tragert and I am a renter at [REDACTED], Ward 5 in Somerville.

I am writing to urge your vote of approval as quickly as possible on Somerville's proposed rent stabilization home rule petition. The reason so many tenants are fighting to stay in Somerville is because our city and state allow unregulated rent increases and no-fault evictions. This home rule petition is a tool that could give our community these protections.

I've lived in Somerville for 8 years now, and my entire life is there. But even as my pay has gone up with an advanced degree, rents have gone higher and higher. I work a normal, middle-class job at UMass Boston, and yet I cannot afford a 1 or 2 bedroom apartment in my own city (and my roommates and I are also close to being priced out of our poorly maintained, absentee landlord-owned home). I love Somerville for its vibrant and diverse community of immigrants, artists, students, and families. But every year housing is more out of reach, and my community is further displaced. The Green Line that was supposed to help workers going into Boston is displacing those people it was meant to help. We don't need Union Square to be Kendall Square pt. 2, with biotech and industry spiking our rents. We need a home rule petition.

Thank you for your voting to approve the petition swiftly, so that it can be filed at the State Legislature before the legislative calendar year is over.

All the best,
Amanda Tragert