

**MASSACHUSETTS CATHOLIC CONFERENCE
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LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

To: Members of the Joint Committee on Housing
From: James F. Driscoll Esq., Executive Director
Re: House 368/Senate 607 “An Act Relative to Community Housing Services”
Date: May 10, 2011

The Massachusetts Catholic Conference (“Conference”) respectfully submits this testimony in support of House 368/Senate 607, “An Act Relative to Community Housing Services”.

The Planning Office for Urban Affairs of the Archdiocese of Boston clearly articulated the benefits of this legislation in their testimony submitted to the Committee today.

The four Roman Catholic Bishops of Massachusetts highlighted the need for affordable housing in their Statement on September 21, 2010, when they referenced the need for affordable housing. Their Statement states in part: “The stories we hear in our parishes and through our diocesan ministries are painful: families made homeless when they lost their house to foreclosure; families paying high rents for apartments that are in poor condition or are far from good schools and good jobs; young middle class families who cannot afford to buy homes in the communities in which they grew up; elderly residents on fixed incomes who choose between paying their rent and paying for costly prescription medications; and people with special needs who cannot find homes that are accessible”.

For these reasons, the Conference urges the Committee to give House 368 and Senate 607 a favorable report recommending their passage.

The Massachusetts Catholic Conference is the public policy office of the Roman Catholic Bishops in the Commonwealth, representing the Archdiocese of Boston and the Dioceses of Fall River, Springfield, and Worcester.