

CAPE COD & ISLANDS
ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, INC

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Edward Markey
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable William Keating
United States House of Representatives
2351 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

April 12, 2021

RE: Wastewater Infrastructure for Cape Cod

Dear Senators Warren and Markey and Congressman Keating:

Cape Cod's future as both a vibrant tourism destination and a diverse year-round community is threatened. Every single facet of what makes our region great—be it the homes in which we live, the economy in which we work, the activities we enjoy, or the natural beauty we appreciate—hinges on how we collectively address our ongoing water quality crisis created by the region's lack of wastewater management infrastructure.

Declining water quality is a big problem requiring a big solution. The Barnstable County 208 water quality plan, accepted and endorsed by the federal Environmental Protection Agency, is built upon a recognition that the cost of infrastructure is a responsibility shared by the local, state and federal governments. Specifically, the federally approved 208 plan assigns 50% of the overall \$4 billion cost to our local governments and 25% each to the state and federal governments.

As the leaders of four organizations with very different missions, we are united by a recognition of the importance of clean water to everything on Cape Cod. We see investment in modern wastewater infrastructure as the most important factor in making progress not just in environmental quality but also to preserve our economy and to unlock the potential for housing production in village centers serviced by infrastructure.

We are seeking your support to include substantial federal funds for wastewater infrastructure during deliberation on the American Jobs Plan being filed by the President.

The logic here is clear and compelling.

The Commonwealth, through the creation and funding of the Cape and Islands Water Protection Trust, has funded its obligation, and towns throughout your district have made great strides in authorizing local funding.

However, the federal share toward the Cape's needs has not been funded, and the current legislation provides the perfect vehicle to address this immediately.

The case for investing in wastewater now is clear. We are an international visitor destination because our water—from Herring Cove Beach in Provincetown to Eel Pond in Woods Hole and every inlet, beach shore, kettle pond, and river in between—draws people to the region. Because of this, the Cape is an economic engine for the entire Commonwealth, generating more than a billion dollars in direct visitor spending and spinning off exponentially more indirect economic activity.

Our real estate market is one of the most desirable and highest valued in the entire country—as evidenced by an historic rise in median home value in the middle of a pandemic; yet 49% of Cape Cod residents are cost burdened, meaning that they pay more than 35% of their income to housing. Homeownership is simply out of reach for many Cape Codders. Federal infrastructure funding in support of wastewater infrastructure will support improved water quality and enable building densities sufficient to expand affordability.

To protect our environment, to maintain the region's economic value and to continue to grow housing on this finite peninsula, we need to build wastewater infrastructure. It is crucial that we ensure these assets are not crippled by a crisis that can be addressed and, through cooperative management, repaired.

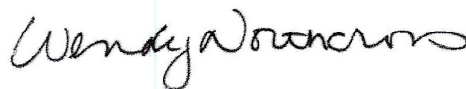
We ask your leadership on this big solution. The commitment of federal funds as a down payment on the federal obligation of 25% (\$1 billion) toward financing the 208 plan and solving our water quality problem is both right, necessary, and timely.

We stand ready to assist your pursuit of these critical funds for our region.

Sincerely,



Andrew Gottlieb,
Association to Preserve Cape Cod



Wendy K. Northcross
Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce



Alisa Magnotta
Housing Assistance Corp.



Ryan Castle
Cape Cod & Islands Association of
Realtors

cc Mass. Congressional Delegation
Mass. Legislative Delegation
Barnstable County Commissioners
Cape Selectmen and Councilors