

August 4, 2008

His Excellency Deval Patrick
Office of the Governor
State House
Boston, MA 02108

Re: Environmental Bond and Land Conservation Tax Incentives

Dear Governor Patrick:

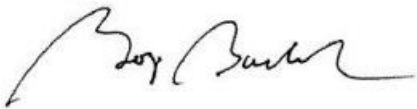
On behalf of our collective organizations, we would like to thank you for your demonstrated and outstanding commitment to land conservation and urge you to sign the *Environmental Bond (H. 5054)* with Section 8, a modest tax incentive for land conservation, included.

The tax incentive is a **catalyst for land protection** and will help make **conservation more competitive with development**. One of Massachusetts' most appealing attributes is its green open space, but that is disappearing at a rate of over 40 acres a day – an area greater than the Boston Common. To ensure the preservation of our most critical natural resources, including working farm and forest land, the state must employ a variety of tools, from improved local zoning and increased capital investments in land protection, to enhanced tax incentives for voluntary land donations or bargain sales by private land owners.

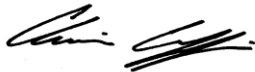
With a combined membership of over 150,000 in Massachusetts, we represent the state's largest conservation organizations and we recognize the need and the critical importance of bringing a state tax credit for conservation to the Commonwealth.

A state income tax credit has been very successful in 18 other states, and we urge you to bring this critical conservation tool to Massachusetts!

Sincerely,



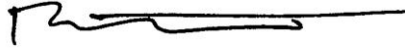
George Bachrach, President
Environmental League of Massachusetts



Cris Coffin, New England Director
American Farmland Trust



Andrew J. Falender, Executive Director
Appalachian Mountain Club



Whitney Hatch, New England Regional Director
Trust for Public Land



Laura Johnson, President
Mass Audubon



Andy Kendall, President
The Trustees of Reservations



Bernie McHugh
Coordinator
Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition



Loring Schwarz, Acting Director
The Nature Conservancy
Massachusetts Chapter



Lora Wondolowski, Executive Director
Massachusetts League of Environmental Voters

cc: Ian Bowles, Secretary, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Leslie Kirwan, Secretary, Executive Office of Administration and Finance