



**TOWN OF EDGARTOWN
OFFICE OF SELECTBOARD**

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June 22, 2026

(Via Email)

Senator Julian Cyr
Massachusetts State House
24 Beacon Street
Room 111
Boston, MA 02133
julian.cyr@masenate.gov

(Via Email)

Representative Thomas Moakley
Massachusetts State House
24 Beacon Street
Room 134
Boston, MA 02133
Thomas.Moakley@mahouse.gov

Re: Martha's Vineyard Commission/40B; Urgent Request for Legislative Assistance

Dear Senator Cyr and Representative Moakley:

Fifty years ago, the Legislature recognized the statewide importance of preserving the unique qualities of Martha's Vineyard and took decisive action to protect the Island from rampant overdevelopment. By creating the Martha's Vineyard Commission, the Legislature created a legal framework designed to ensure that development on Martha's Vineyard was balanced against the need to maintain our rural character and coordinated in a manner that prioritized regional interests over those of any single town. For 50 years, the Island towns and their residents have relied on the Commission to fulfill its statutory mandate to safeguard Martha's Vineyard against developers who put profit ahead of the priorities of everyday Islanders.

Martha's Vineyard is once again under threat from development that fails to respond to the particular needs of this island. As you are aware, recently the State's Housing Appeals Committee issued a decision stripping the Martha's Vineyard Commission of its statutory authority to review projects proposed under Chapter 40B. Under the 40B statutory scheme, in exchange for a small percentage of income-restricted units, towns are rendered largely powerless against inappropriate density, demands on our limited infrastructure, and impacts to our environment, including our great ponds and open spaces. Moreover, under 40B, the towns are unable to require developers to provide the kinds of housing the Island desperately needs: workforce and community housing for year-round Island residents. For decades, the Martha's Vineyard Commission has exercised its greater regulatory powers to ensure that these developments reflect the Island's needs and priorities. If the Commission can no longer perform this function, the values it has protected for decades will be rapidly and permanently compromised.



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By this letter, the undersigned Towns of Martha's Vineyard ask our elected representatives to once again take decisive action to protect this Island, as your predecessors had the courage and foresight to do 50 years ago. The consequences of failing to act now are both significant and irreversible.

Respectfully,


Arthur Smadbeck, Chair


Alex Morrison


Julia Tarka
EDGARTOWN SELECTBOARD

cc: Governor Maura Healy – c/o Tom Ashe - Tom.Ashe@mass.gov
Adam Turner, Executive Director, Martha's Vineyard Commission
Wendy Brough, Town Administrator, Oak Bluffs
Joseph LaCivita, Town Administrator, Tisbury
Jennifer Rand, Town Administrator, West Tisbury
Timothy Carroll, Town Administrator, Chilmark
Jeffrey Madison, Town Administrator, Aquinnah