
Regulation Amendment Opposition

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To MEPA-regs (EEA) <MEPA-regs@mass.gov>

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Dear MEPA Office,

I am writing to strongly oppose the proposed amendments to MEPA regulations that would streamline the review of qualifying housing and mixed-use projects. While I understand the Commonwealth's urgent need for housing, reducing environmental review requirements in the name of "streamlining" undermines the very purpose of MEPA: to ensure that development proceeds in a way that protects Massachusetts' natural resources, communities, and long-term resilience.

These amendments raise several serious concerns:

1. **Environmental Safeguards Weakened**

Streamlining review for large-scale housing projects risks overlooking wetlands, vernal pools, wildlife habitats, and other sensitive ecological areas. Once destroyed, these resources cannot be replaced, and inadequate review could lead to permanent environmental harm. Sensitive areas such as wetlands save the state money by mitigating flood risk and naturally cleaning our drinking water.

2. **Community Impacts Ignored**

Housing production goals should not come at the expense of public health, traffic safety, stormwater management, and infrastructure capacity. Local communities deserve thorough analysis and accountability before projects advance. MEPA is the last line of defense for communities threatened by large corporations who only care about profit and not the wellbeing of the state as a whole.

3. **Climate & Resiliency Conflicts**

Massachusetts is already grappling with flooding, extreme weather, and strained water resources. Weakening MEPA review contradicts the Commonwealth's climate adaptation and resiliency commitments, opening the door to projects that increase vulnerability to these hazards.

4. **Public Participation Reduced**

MEPA exists not only to protect the environment, but also to ensure transparency and public input. By narrowing the scope and speed of review, these amendments sideline community voices and reduce opportunities for meaningful oversight.

The housing crisis should not be used as justification to erode longstanding environmental protections. Strong review standards and meaningful community involvement are essential to ensuring that growth is sustainable, responsible, and equitable.

For these reasons, I urge MEPA to reject the proposed amendments to 301 CMR 11.00 and instead pursue solutions that both meet housing goals and maintain rigorous environmental oversight.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,
Haily Brady
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Sent from my iPhone