



March 26, 2014

Senator Patricia D. Jehlen
Massachusetts State House
Room 513
Boston, MA 02133

Re: S. 177 – An Act fueling job creation through energy efficiency

Dear Senator Jehlen:

On behalf of the City of Cambridge, I am writing in strong support of S. 177, *An Act promoting job creation through energy efficiency*, and request that you contact the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy to encourage Senator Downing and Representative Keenan to move the legislation toward approval. This bill will reform the current Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) statute. The current PACE law, adopted in 2010, authorizes cities and towns to issue bonds for energy conservation and renewable energy projects and finance them through the property tax system. We believe that having the financing attached to the property rather than the owner is a key feature that makes the PACE model effective. However, the law is complex and difficult for municipalities to implement, especially since a funding source was not created. As a result, no municipality in the Commonwealth has implemented the law. S. 177 will reform the current PACE statute by creating a streamlined and centrally administered PACE program, thus promoting clean energy and job growth in the Commonwealth. The passage of S.177 will enable Massachusetts to join the ranks of other states, such as Connecticut, that have launched successful PACE programs.

The City also supports efforts by Senator Brian Joyce to add a provision to allow PACE financing of projects that will improve the resilience of commercial properties. This provision would provide an important means for commercial properties to address the risks of flooding and other effects that are being exacerbated by climate change.

Addressing climate change is a primary focus for Cambridge. Since energy use in buildings, especially commercial buildings, is the major source of greenhouse gas emissions in the city, mechanisms such as PACE are critically needed to finance the energy performance improvements of our building stock. The energy performance and resiliency of our buildings are central to several current initiatives in Cambridge including the Community Compact for a Sustainable Future, the Getting to Net Zero Task Force, and the climate change vulnerability assessment and preparedness plan.

We believe S. 177 will significantly contribute toward fulfilling the City's goals for climate protection, energy efficiency, and renewable energy. Thank you in advance for your consideration. The City of Cambridge fully supports this bill and hope you will do the same.

If you would like to discuss these issues, please do not hesitate to contact me at rrossi@cambridgema.gov or directly by phone at (617) 349-4300.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard C. Rossi". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Richard C. Rossi
City Manager

Cc: Senator Brian Joyce