

Support An Act to Sustain Community Preservation Revenue

Support Passage of An Act to Preserve Community Preservation Revenue (H.2463/S.1618)

What is the Community Preservation Act (CPA)?

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is a state law passed in 2000 that allows an adopting municipality to establish a dedicated local fund for open space, historic preservation, affordable housing, and outdoor recreation projects. CPA is adopted through a local ballot referendum to add a small surcharge on property taxes, with the state providing matching revenue each year from the CPA Trust Fund. Each CPA community creates a local Community Preservation Committee (CPC) upon adoption of the Act, and this local board makes recommendations on CPA projects to the community's legislative body. The Community Preservation Act gives cities and towns a means for preserving and improving a community's character and quality of life.

CPA accomplishments since the law was enacted in September 2000, include:

- 175 communities have adopted CPA (50% of the Commonwealth's cities and towns / 60% of its population)
- Just over \$2.1 billion has been raised to date for community preservation funding statewide
- More than 5,700 affordable housing units have been created with an additional 9,450 units supported
- 29,289 acres of open space have been preserved
- Over 5,100 appropriations have been made for historic preservation projects
- Over 2,200 outdoor recreation projects have been initiated.

175 Communities rely on critical matching funds from the CPA Trust Fund

The CPA Trust Fund, which provides matching funds to CPA communities, is a powerful incentive for cities and towns to pass and to retain the CPA. It is funded through a \$20 surcharge on most documents filed at the Registry of Deeds. The amount of this fee has stayed the same since the CPA passed in 2000. In recent years the base CPA Trust Fund distribution for most communities has declined from 100% to 19% in 2018, fortified by the addition of \$10 million in budget surplus funds. To sustain the CPA Trust Fund revenue, and honor the commitment made by the state to voters, the fee must be raised.

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The legislation calls for increasing the Registry recording fees (to \$75) to provide all current CPA communities with a first-round distribution/match from the CPA Trust Fund of approximately 45% in FY 2020, and to ensure that CPA communities can continue to fund more local initiatives.

BREAKING NEWS: On April 10, the House Ways & Means Committee announced its proposed FY 2020 budget and proposed to increase the recording fee to \$50.

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