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Subject: [EXTERNAL] - Voters support more action to boost housing, new poll finds

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CommonWealth
— BEACON —



New from Commonwealth Beacon

ENERGY AFFORDABILITY : Gov. Maura Healey unveiled [new energy affordability legislation](#) with reforms to Mass Save financing, protections against predatory third-party electric suppliers, and a look towards nuclear but environmentalists say that it doesn't go far enough. Bhaamati Borkhetaria has the story.

CLIMATE PACT : In the face of federal funding cuts, the leaders of 17 municipalities in the Greater Boston area came together on Monday. They [recommitted](#) to working on meeting regional climate goals for the next decade, Bhaamati Borkhetaria reports.

OPINION : If the Massachusetts Legislature is going to consider a generational ban on nicotine, they [might as well](#) ban other enjoyable but dangerous activities, from drinking alcohol to skiing, Boston-based freelance writer Tom Keane says, with tongue in cheek to make his point about government overreach. "Brookline – and perhaps soon Massachusetts – is leading the way in telling adults, 'No, no, no! It's not your decision! We will tell you what you can and cannot do,'" he writes.

Voters support more action to boost housing, new poll finds

May 14, 2025

By **JENNIFER SMITH**

In housing debates, it's only a matter of time before critiques of damaging "neighborhood character" and some flavor of "not in my back yard" clash with assertions that the Massachusetts housing market is so squeezed that building almost anything at all should be a priority. Common wisdom usually boils down to residents wanting to preserve their community while home values rise, suggesting that other communities would be better suited for more units.

But [new polling](#) conducted by the MassINC Polling Group for Abundant Housing Massachusetts – which is pushing two bills this legislative session to spur development – finds that majorities of voters feel that the state and their own communities alike are not doing enough to address the housing crunch.

"Many polls have found housing at or near the top of the list of issues facing the state," said Richard Parr, research director with the MassINC Polling Group, which is partly owned by MassINC, the nonprofit organization that publishes CommonWealth Beacon "What's more interesting is that voters think this is a problem their own communities should be doing more on."

Some 57 percent of voters think that the cost of housing is a "a big problem" in their own communities, and 68 percent think there aren't enough affordable homes in their own cities or towns. By wide margins, Parr noted, voters favor building more housing over both protecting neighborhood character (71 percent to 21 percent) or preserving local control over what can be built (63 percent to 28 percent).

"All this suggests that the voices who speak out at community meetings against new housing projects are likely not a majority in their own communities," he said.

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MORE CONTEXT:

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- [Single stairwell buildings could be next frontier in housing reform](#)
- [An MBTA Communities reality check](#)

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More from Commonwealth Beacon

OPINION : Kyle Murray, the Massachusetts program director at the Acadia Center, [argues](#) that the real culprit for high bills this winter was the cost of natural gas infrastructure, generous utility profits, and the region's continued fossil fuel investments.

TAKING A SEAT : John Houton, the Boston City Hall attorney running against his boss, Mayor Michelle Wu, has been placed on [administrative leave](#). Gintautas Dumcius has more.

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EDUCATION : As US colleges confront a sharp decline in domestic college-aged students, many schools began relying on international students to fill classrooms and balance budgets. But under the policies of President Trump's second administration, that pipeline may [be drying up](#). (GBH News)

IMMIGRATION : A Worcester woman taken into custody by immigration enforcement during a chaotic scene last week – prompting outrage and protests from residents and some elected officials – was separately arrested and [charged](#) with assaulting her daughter in February. (WBUR)

EDUCATION : The Trump administration [froze another](#) \$450 million in federal grants and contracts to Harvard on Tuesday, accusing the university of failing to take action on antisemitism and discrimination against white people on campus. (The Harvard Crimson)

POLITICS : Gov. Maura Healey's administration said "nearly all" of the six Canadian premiers invited to Boston to discuss the impacts of President Trump's tariffs have said they [are willing](#) to meet. (Boston Herald – paywall)

EDUCATION : The Northampton school employees union and the city are still a ways apart on a new three-year contract, [negotiating over](#) cost-of-living adjustments and potential half days on Wednesdays. The union voted on Thursday to go work-to-rule for Northampton Public School district employees, ceasing any voluntary work not strictly required by the terms of their contract. (Daily Hampshire Gazette – paywall)



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