



794 Purchase Street • P.O. Box 8827 • New Bedford, MA 02742
(508) 999-5231 Tel • (508) 999-5237 Fax • www.newbedfordchamber.com

November 1, 2011

The Honorable Deval L. Patrick
Governor
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
State House, Room 360
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Patrick:

On behalf of the New Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce, we are writing to you in support of Massachusetts Senate Bill 2113 (S2113) regarding the regulation of the Massachusetts Historical Commission's oversight of properties that are only on the State Historic Register.

The New Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce, a one thousand member-strong business organization, provides leadership on issues and activities important to our economy and quality of life. Our mission is to serve the interests of member businesses while advocating business advancement, economic growth, and job creation for the benefit of New Bedford and the SouthCoast region of Massachusetts.

The Chamber is concerned about any legislative mandates or regulatory requirements that unduly impact economic development efforts and that add a significant financial burden to business development. To this extent, we are deeply troubled by the unreasonable regulatory requirements imposed by the Massachusetts Historical Commission on the Meditech project in Freetown. The property has never been listed on either the national or state historic registers. It is also zoned industrial and has a long history of commercial, agricultural and industrial uses including serving as the site of the Algonquin Gasification Plant. Furthermore, all local and state permitting issues had been satisfactorily addressed and Meditech had proposed to only develop 21 acres, while donating 117 acres to the Trustees for the Reservation for open space preservation.

The commission's burdensome demands have caused the recent termination of the Meditech project in the Town of Freetown. This is extremely frustrating since the project would have resulted in a \$65-70 million multi-story 180,000 square foot medical records facility and 825 new jobs for our region. No government funds or local tax incentives were to be used or sought for the project. This sends the wrong message to employers looking to expand and create jobs in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and gives neighboring states a competitive advantage in what little economic growth there is available.

We believe that this legislation will help to clarify the role of the Massachusetts Historical Commission and help avoid this situation in the future. We thank you for your consideration on this important economic development issue. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Lynne Mastera
Chair of the Board

David Maher
Vice Chair of Government Affairs

Roy Nascimento, IOM
President & CEO

cc: The Honorable William Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
The Honorable Therese Murray, Senate President
The Honorable Robert A. DeLeo, Speaker of the House
SouthCoast Legislative Delegation