



11 Beacon Street, Suite 710
Boston, MA 02108
Phone: 617-723-6100
Fax: 617-723-6111
www.cobth.org

June 2, 2015

The Honorable Michael Rodrigues
Chairman, Joint Committee on Revenue
Massachusetts State House, Room 213B
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Jay Kaufman
Chairman, Joint Committee on Revenue
Massachusetts State House, Room 34
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairman Rodrigues and Chairman Kaufman,

On behalf of the Conference of Boston Teaching Hospitals (COBTH) and its fourteen member institutions, I am writing to voice our strong opposition to **HB2492**, "An Act Relative to Protection of Open Space." **HB2492** would allow municipalities the right of first refusal over the sale or conversion of tax-exempt property to taxable residential, industrial or commercial use. Such right could adversely impact the ability of non-profits and charitable organizations to dispose of or convert the tax-exempt status of its property in a fair and timely manner.

While non-profits and charitable organizations do not often sell or convert their tax-exempt property, when they do it is often to improve the organization's financial status or in furtherance of its charitable mission. For some non-profits the sale or conversion of tax-exempt property may include expansion or enhancement of services, partnerships with commercial research organizations, or investments to improve the delivery of care to local residents.

The delay and uncertainty **HB2492** would instill into the conversion process could potentially chill developments which would not only benefit the non-profit organization but also the local municipality. Furthermore, protections and procedures already exist under state and federal law to regulate and review conversions of a non-profit to a for-profit. COBTH respectfully urges the committee to reject **HB2492** for the negative impact it would have.

We appreciate the committee's time and consideration of our opinion.

Sincerely,

John Erwin
Executive Director
Conference of Boston Teaching Hospitals