



GLENN A. CUNHA
INSPECTOR GENERAL

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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May 29, 2013

The Honorable Kenneth J. Donnelly, Chair
Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight
State House, Room 413D
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Peter V. Kocot, Chair
Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight
State House, Room 22
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairman Donnelly and Chairman Kocot,

I write in support of House 12, *An Act Relative to Operating Agencies*. Given the recent oversight problems at housing authorities, this bill gives housing authority boards the power to ensure that key employees understand their legal and ethical obligations under the state's public procurement laws. In many cases familiar to this Office, housing authority officials did not understand, or did not comply with, the state's procurement laws. House 12 helps to address that problem.

Chapter 121B of the General Laws defines an "operating agency" as a housing authority or redevelopment authority. This bill would empower an operating agency to require its executive director and procurement officer to attend and earn a certificate from the Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official (MCPPO) training program, which my Office runs. The bill does not require attendance or the receipt of a certificate.

Greater controls and oversight are necessary in the housing authority system, and education will lead to this. Moreover, news reports about the recent problems at housing authorities have damaged the public's confidence that its tax dollars are being spent in an appropriate manner. Increased education and awareness of proper procurement procedures will help to restore confidence in a system that helps house a vulnerable population.

Finally, the *Report of the Commission for Public Housing Sustainability and Reform*, issued on June 21, 2012, recommended that at least one staff member at every housing authority obtain MCPPO certification in public construction and public procurement. This is an even more stringent requirement than my proposal in House 12, but the committee may want to consider it.

I strongly urge the committee to report this bill out favorably. As always, my Office stands

Chairman Donnelly and Chairman Kocot
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ready to assist you and your committees. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Glenn A. Cunha". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Glenn A. Cunha
Inspector General