Your Letterhead/Name/Organization/Address

Date

Dear Senator Lydia Edwards and Majority Leader Mike Moran,

RE: H.4356/HOMES Act and Automatic Sealing

We are grateful to you for filing the HOMES Eviction Record Sealing Act/H.4356 and your continuing efforts to reduce the negative impact that eviction cases have on tenants’ ability to find housing.

In the current iteration of H.4356, tenants who win their cases or get their cases dismissed must still petition the court to seal their eviction record. This requirement creates an undue burden on tenants, it is unnecessary, and it undercuts the bill’s purpose to eliminate eviction records as a barrier to housing. A case-by-case petition process also creates an unnecessary administrative burden for the court.

**We urge you to take an alternative approach and provide that the court automatically seal cases that are dismissed, cases that a tenant wins, and no-fault eviction cases - without a tenant having to file a petition.**

Many residents may lack the awareness or resources necessary to navigate the petition filing process. They may be afraid to come back to court or unable to take a day off work to file a petition or attend a hearing, if required.

Similar to Governor Healey's recent policy of pardoning misdemeanor marijuana possession convictions where those pardoned will see their records updated **automatically**, automatic sealing in certain eviction cases would remove unnecessary procedural hurdles for vulnerable families who have faced the trauma of eviction.

Thank you very much for your commitment to this issue. We look forward to working together to accomplish our shared goal of fair access to housing for all.

Sincerely,

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(Signature)

cc: Senate President Karen E. Spilka

 House Speaker Ronald Mariano

 Senate Ways and Means Chair Michael J. Rodrigues

 House Ways and Means Chair Aaron Michlewitz