

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

STATE HOUSE • BOSTON 02133

MICHAEL S. DUKAKIS
GOVERNOR

May 23, 1978

TO THE HONORABLE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

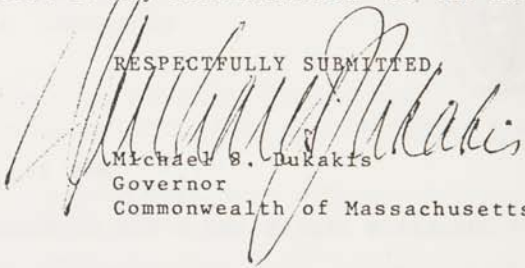
In accordance with the provisions of Article LVI of the Amendments to the Constitution, I am returning, herewith, House Bill No. 3433, entitled, "An Act Providing that Ownership of Residential Real Property shall not make Certain Elderly Persons Ineligible for Housing for the Elderly."

H.3433 would require local housing authorities to disregard the fact that an applicant for public housing for the elderly, or the applicant's spouse, owns any residential real property in their consideration of such person's application, and particularly in the consideration of available assets. While this bill is certainly well-intentioned, concerns have been raised by both the Department of Community Affairs and advocates for public housing tenants that the effect of such legislation would be to further disadvantage the poorest applicants for elderly housing -- those who do not own a home. I share these concerns, because I believe that first priority for our limited supply of public housing should go to those with the greatest need. My administration is moving ahead on the construction of the 4000 units of new elderly housing that was authorized last year. But these 4000 units will not completely meet the pressing need for high-quality elderly housing throughout the commonwealth, and thus the issues raised by this bill cannot be ignored.

In addition, H.3433 is defective in its drafting because it exempts all residential real property from consideration, rather than just the personal residence of the applicant. Read literally, it would allow those who own large apartment buildings to apply for an occupy low-rent elderly housing, again to the disadvantage of those elderly persons most in need of such housing.

I therefore recommend that H.3433 be amended by striking out the words "residential real property" and inserting in place thereof the words:- a personal residence containing not more than two dwelling units and by adding after the word "conveyed" the words:- for the fair cash value of the property, the net proceeds of which may be considered in any determination of the assets of the applicant,

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



Michael S. Dukakis

Governor

Commonwealth of Massachusetts