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# HOUSE . . . . . No. 4576

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**
STATE HOUSE · BOSTON, MA 02133

CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR

KARYN POLITO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

*August 10, 2016*

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives,

Pursuant to Section 5 of Article LXIII, as amended by Section 4 of Article XC of the Amendments to the Constitution, I am today signing House Bill 4569, "An Act Relative to Job Creation and Workforce Development," but disapproving the two sections described below.

This legislation marks an important step in the implementation of our economic development plan, "Opportunities for All, the Baker-Polito Strategy and Plan for Making Massachusetts Great Everywhere." Our administration engaged in thousands of conversation with Massachusetts residents, business and community stakeholders, municipal officials, legislators, and legislative staff. Those conversations formed the basis of our plan which, combined with additional input throughout the legislative process, resulted in this bill. I am signing into law almost all sections of the bill, which is a testament to the collaborative manner in which the two branches worked to reach consensus. We look forward to continuing to work with legislators and other stakeholders to ensure that the best ideas are funded and implemented to promote economic prosperity for our citizens, economic vitality for our communities, and economic growth for our businesses.

There are only two sections of the bill I disapprove, sections 36 and 131.

Section 36 proposes to allow for the creation of "Community Benefit Districts." These are areas in which a group of property owners, with the approval of the city or town, agree to a program of assessments to pay for benefits that accrue to the properties assessed. The concept is

similar in many respects to Business Improvement Districts, which already are authorized by the General Laws.

While I generally support efforts to reform Business Improvement Districts, I cannot support some of the details in the bill as presented to me and am therefore disapproving this section. The bill includes a presumption that all manner of tax-exempt entities—from non-profits to houses of worship to governmental entities—would be included among the persons and entities required to pay assessments levied in the district despite their tax-exempt status. Nor does the bill mandate protections for residential property owners who are entitled to tax abatements under existing law, such as the elderly, the blind, and qualifying veterans. Additionally, I am concerned that the proposed criteria for creating a Community Benefit District do not include a requirement that even a simple majority of affected property owners support the creation of the district.

Our administration looks forward to working collaboratively with the House and Senate to address these and other more technical issues with Community Benefit Districts so that we offer our communities a structure that ensures that everyone's voice is heard and our most vulnerable residents are protected from increased property assessments.

Section 131 would require the Registry of Motor Vehicles to license a specific regional transit authority to provide instruction for hire in the operation of motor vehicles for any class of commercial driver's license. I am disapproving this section for the same reason I vetoed a similar outside section in this year's budget: because the language does not provide sufficient protections to prevent a quasi-public, government-subsidized entity from being given an unfair competitive advantage over existing small businesses.

The remainder of this bill I approve.

Respectfully Submitted,

Charles D. Baker,
*Governor*