

April 7, 2024

The Honorable Jennifer Conlin
Michigan House of Representatives
Post Office Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

RE: A request for your support of HB 5430 to expand the Michigan Historic Preservation Tax Credit

Dear Representative Conlin:

I enjoyed meeting you at your recent Coffee Hour at the Dexter Senior Center. Because I was there as a representative of the Michigan Historic Preservation Network - of which I was a founding member in 1981 - I wanted to write you separately to ask your support of HB 5430 as one of your constituents.

Owners of historic buildings in Michigan greatly benefitted from the state historic preservation tax credit available from 1999-2011 when they completed restoration work on income-producing and residential properties. It was a highly successful program with each \$1.00 of credit leveraging \$10.56 in direct economic impact. Public Act 343 of 2020 reinstated the credit but with a \$5M annual cap making the program so small as to be inconsequential. House Bill 5430 will correct this by raising the cap to \$100M and making other changes to reach a wider constituency.

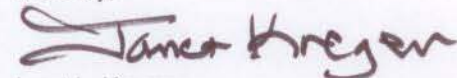
I live in Ann Arbor and benefit daily from the city's commitment to its historic properties. Our historic central business district has an array of shops and restaurants that provide me and all our visitors a "traditional downtown" experience, and Kerrytown offers a unique neighborhood shopping area and farmers' market. Historic residential districts – the Old West Side, Old Fourth Ward, Broadway, and Washtenaw/Hill to name a few – offer an array of housing options. These are all economically thriving areas providing a tax base that benefits my City and the quality of life it provides its residents.

My interest in an expanded historic preservation tax credit program extends beyond Ann Arbor, however, because it will benefit your entire district and the entire state. Preservation projects help meet Gov. Whitmer's goal of building *or rehabilitating* 10,000 housing units. Preservation work provides housing at all price-points, sustainably recycling all types of historic buildings – from schools and mills to factories and office buildings. Preservation incentives can be folded into large economic development programs in the aging cores of big cities, but also can help revitalize rural areas, small towns, and mid-sized communities. A preservation project's return on investment provides enormous local benefits because it frequently uses local professionals, tradespeople, and suppliers who spend locally and pay local taxes.

Furthermore, preservation projects keep demolition waste out of landfills. They curb sprawl by utilizing existing infrastructure. They eliminate carbon released during both demolition and new construction. They conserve the embodied energy invested during initial construction and, with retro-fitting, can make any building energy efficient. The success of preservation includes keeping traditional downtowns and neighborhoods vital. In addition to attracting both young professionals and retirees – and everyone in between – these authentic, walkable places are cultural centers for their regions and heritage tourism destinations. In every case, valuable real estate is back on local and state tax rolls.

Please let me know if you will be supporting the passage of HB 5430. I would be happy to zoom or visit with you or your staff again if you would like to talk further.

Sincerely,



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