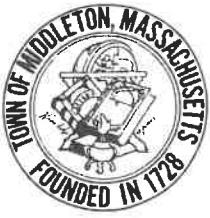


MIDDLETON SELECT BOARD



Town of Middleton
48 South Main Street
Middleton, Massachusetts
01949-2253
978-777-3617
www.middletonma.gov

-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-

March 14, 2025

Dear Middleton Resident,

Since signed into law, the MBTA Communities Act has created a lot of division in our small community. The local discourse on this topic has generated some thoughtful conversations. We don't only hear the anger and frustration about this state overreach, we share it.

In Middleton, we are putting our collective efforts into leading on this issue. The Select Board has resisted the urge to use our community's time, effort - and your taxpayer dollars - on throwing legal punches that look good but have no shot at landing. We are all angry at the position the Commonwealth has put us in, and are committed to using our resources not on short term gains, but rather pushing for a change in circumstances that gives us a real chance at succeeding in the long term.

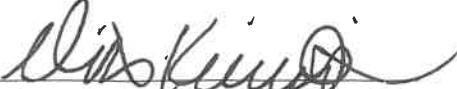
That change has arrived. February 21, 2025 correspondence from the Auditor of the Commonwealth (attached) has determined that, "the provisions of the MBTA Communities Act *impose an unfunded mandate* within the meaning of the Local Mandate Law." The Middleton Select Board met in response to this news in Executive Session on Thursday, February 27, 2025 and voted unanimously to file *Middleton v. Commonwealth, et al* to challenge the following points:

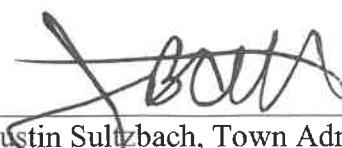
1. Middleton cannot be held to this law because it is an unfunded mandate.
2. Middleton is not an adjacent community as we do not border any town that has MBTA service.
3. The Town has been awarded a sizeable grant that was conditioned on compliance with the MBTA law. If the statute cannot be applied to the Town, we request an injunction that frees up those and other grant funds.

Timing is an important element. We appreciate the collective patience of the people of this great town. Middleton has felt many emotions relative to this short-sighted law. Rather than allowing emotions to dictate our approach, we have positioned Middleton in a way to legitimately challenge this law. This situation has been evolving and we have been diligently monitoring the facts. We are one town united. We love this town and we would do anything to defend it. We know you feel the same.

In service,

ON BEHALF OF THE MIDDLETON SELECT BOARD


Rick Kassiotis, Select Board Chair


Justin Sultzbach, Town Administrator