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Date: October 26, 2020 at 4:09:29 PM EDT
To: "jraitt@town.arlington.ma.us" <jraitt@town.arlington.ma.us>
Subject: Letter of Support for Accessory Dwelling Units

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Dear Ms. Raitt,

I am writing in favor of the town adopting Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in all residential districts.

As a resident of Arlington for over sixteen years, my family was fortunate to ride a wave of gentrification and was purchase our beloved single-family home. Prior to living in Arlington, we owned a two-family house in Somerville which enabled us to build equity and “trade up” to our current home in Arlington. We are grateful to live here.

Now that my husband and I are in our early fifties with college and high school aged children, we are more attuned to a myriad of issues facing our neighbors, rather than being solely hyper focused on local public education. Our neighbors and friends are struggling with our high cost of living and lack of housing choices and stock.

Our neighbors (new grandparents) searched for several years to find a suitable Arlington home to downsize that would allow them to age in place and provide them with the independence they desired, like planting a garden and landscaping to their specifications. After a frustrating search, they could not find a suitable home and will be moving to a suburb further west to create an ADU in an older relative’s home in **another town!** They have lived in our neighborhood for over thirty years, and I consider them to be the heart and soul of our street.

Two close Arlington friends, both single family homeowners and public servants, are struggling to meet rising property taxes that come with their home/land assessments. While they are both thrilled that their homes were a good investment twenty years ago, they cannot find a reasonable lower maintenance condo or similar home in the community that they love. They will be transitioning out of Arlington within the next five years.

As a member of Arlington’s Elder/Disabled Tax Relief Committee, I read the requests from older residents needing assistance to pay their property taxes. Arlington residents are a hardy bunch, they take advantage of the property tax community service work-off program (there is a waitlist) and work with our elder care social workers to leverage every dollar. It is not enough and often their efforts are not sustainable year after year.

ADUs will not solve every problem, however, they will offer Arlington residents *more choice*. A choice to live independently and with dignity (no one wants to ask for financial help) and a choice to age in place as supported by Arlington’s Master Plan. For newer and/or younger residents, ADUs offer more rental choice. They can help welcome new residents otherwise not able to afford

our wonderful town. An ADU option will also offer support for longtime Arlington families as their children and grandchildren haven't been able to afford Arlington or our surrounding towns.

Finally, I encourage you to adopt ADUs with as few restrictions as possible. This includes parking restrictions, size of units, etc. We already have strong regulations from our building and public safety departments to address any issues. Again, we want to give our neighbors and friends **more choice to live sustainably**.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Lewis-Forbes
71 Mary Street
Arlington