

Dear Mayor Lungo-Koehn,

We want to thank you for your response to Council Paper 22-439. We appreciate your proposal for a limited override referendum of \$3 million for Medford Public Schools. While we may disagree on some of the items in your statement, this is a time to set aside differences in our characterizations of events and take action for the good of the community.

Last night, pursuant to Councilor Caraviello's use of Rule 21 of the Medford City Council, Paper 22-439 was tabled for one week. We see that time as an opportunity to reach an agreement about our path forward.

The dire financial situation of our community demands immediate action. The proposal in Paper 22-439 to increase the property tax levy by \$12 million would end the city's structural deficit, avoid budget or service cuts in FY2024, and provide financial certainty for the City of Medford. However, we also heard the concerns you outlined in your July 19th press statement as well as the concerns of some of our fellow councilors at the July 19th Council meeting.

As a next step, we can advance both your proposal and our proposal to a citywide referendum vote and trust Medford voters to make this major decision about the city's financial future. We propose the following:

1. We will amend Council Paper 22-439 to place a "Tiered Override" with two ballot questions on the November 2022 ballot as outlined by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 59, Section 21C(i). One question would be your (the Mayor's) \$3 million proposal, and the second would be the \$12 million proposal from the original Paper 22-439. Voters would vote "Yes" or "No" on each proposal individually, and if either or both proposals receive a majority of "Yes" votes, the one in the higher amount would take effect in FY2024. (Full text of amendment is below).
2. If you are open to this proposal or to discussing alternative potential next steps, please let us know by Thursday, July 21st at 4:30PM so we can request a Special Meeting of the Medford City Council be held next week in advance of the August 2nd deadline for submission of a referendum to the Secretary of State for inclusion on the November 2022 election ballot.

Madam Mayor, thank you again for engaging with us and the City Council in this essential and urgent discussion about our city's financial health and the future of our community. Students, families, and residents need to know that we are taking action to fund the public schools and city services we all deserve. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely Yours,

Zac Bears
Medford City Council Vice President

Kit Collins
Medford City Councilor

Proposed Amendment to Council Paper 22-439

Ordered, by the City Council of the City of Medford, that in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 59, Section 21C of the Massachusetts General Laws, pending the approval of the Mayor of the City of Medford, and with the approval of the Secretary of State's Office, the following questions be placed on the ballot and submitted to the voters of Medford at the Biennial State Election to be held on Tuesday, November 8, 2022:

Question 1a

“Shall the City of Medford be allowed to assess an additional \$3,000,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of the general operation of Medford Public Schools for Additional Classroom Teachers and Staff, Classroom and Infrastructure Needs, and Classroom Teacher and Other District Staff Compensation (\$3,000,000) for which the monies from this assessment will be used for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023.”

Question 1b

“Shall the City of Medford be allowed to assess an additional \$12,000,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of the general operation of Medford Public Schools for Additional Classroom Teachers and Staff, Classroom and Infrastructure Needs, and Classroom Teacher and Other District Staff Compensation (\$6,000,000); the general operation of the Medford Public Library for Additional Staff, Staff Compensation, Books, and Materials Needs (\$400,000), the general operation of the Department of Public Works for Additional Staff, Road and Sidewalk Infrastructure Needs, and Tree Planting and Maintenance (\$2,600,000); and for operations of general government (\$3,000,000), for which the monies from this assessment will be used for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023.”

Be it Further Ordered that the following instructional language be placed on the ballot alongside these questions as recommended by the Division of Local Services: “Questions 1a and 1b are separate questions. You may vote for or against each question independently. Each question requires a majority of those voting on that question to pass. If more than one question passes, the question with the highest dollar amount will prevail.”