



# *City of New Bedford*

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**Shane A. Burgo**  
*Councillor At Large*

### **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS**

**MARCH 27, 2023**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: COUNCILLOR AT LARGE SHANE BURGO AT (508) 542-9658**

### **COUNCILLOR BURGO RESPONDS TO MAYOR MITCHELL'S VETO OF THE CITY COUNCIL'S MOTION REGARDING A RENT STABILIZATION BALLOT QUESTION**

"Now is a time for listening and discussions, not for lectures on public policy and governance. It has been over two weeks since the ballot question regarding rent stabilization was passed. In that time, discussions around rising rents — and our housing crisis in general — have finally been given the heightened attention they deserve. Dialogue is good. Lectures benefit no one while rising rents are at a crisis level in our City. Ask the residents. It is surprising and disappointing that our Mayor apparently hasn't received their messages, as they continue to suffer through this housing crisis. Then, ask why, in his last State of the City address, did the Mayor omit any proposals for or solutions to housing affordability.

There is no "one solution" to ending homelessness. Nor is there one solution to guaranteeing affordable housing for everyone. New Bedford is changing daily. We need to do our best to make sure that all New Bedford's residents share in the new City that is evolving around them. Rent stabilization alone will not solve our housing crisis. I never have claimed that and never will, but it can bring much needed relief to the severely cost-burdened families in our community. Specifically, many City residents that are at a greater risk of being priced out of a City they've always called home and forced into homelessness.

Contrary to what has been purported, rent control and rent stabilization, have been on the minds of many throughout not only New Bedford but the entire Commonwealth. Boston is leading the way with its own stabilization initiatives. We can discuss the differences between rent control and rent stabilization and sort out how best to rise above this challenge. We can engage all the stakeholders in seeking solutions best for everyone, solutions that support new housing development and ensure that housing is affordable. As we have seen in two short weeks, a ballot question inspires conversation. It focuses issues. It stimulates debate. For elected officials to go forward with proposals without first gauging the will of the citizens on such a unique concept and important issue would be irresponsible. This is not an issue that should be determined from the top down but rather from the bottom up.

I encourage the Administration to meet with our many local non-profit groups or even our monthly neighborhood community groups, to understand and know that the people of New Bedford can no longer afford to be price gouged. We need to plan for sustainability. New Bedford is a quilt of many communities. Each of those quilted threads are being destroyed by rising rents.

My colleagues and I will continue to facilitate the discussions surrounding this ballot question and look forward to working with the Administration, developers, and everyone that will be impacted by a potential rent stabilization Ordinance."