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ENOUGH ROOM
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Honorable Members of the
Cambridge City Council
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Cambridge MA 02139

2001 JAN 25 P 1
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

January 25, 2001

Re: MIT, Harvard PILOT

During the January 22, 2001 meeting of the City Council several of you spoke strongly about the substantial endowments of Harvard, and MIT and their ability to purchase land removing it from the public sector and placing it into institutional possession forever. The discussion focused mainly on the PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) made by Harvard and MIT.

In December, 2000, I submitted a petition to the Massachusetts House of Representatives to amend the Massachusetts General Laws, specifically Chapter 59 § 5, Persons and Property Exempt from Taxes. I enclose a copy of the petition which has a docket number of 3648.

This petition as law will eliminate the tax exemption of any eligible non profit entity which has assets of more than \$500 million. I solicit your support. When it is assigned a bill number and a hearing date I will notify the Council asking for your attendance and testimony before the General Court committee.

Encl.

Roy Bercauw

13-5

An Amendment to M.G.L. Chapter 59 § 5 Property; Exemptions

DOCKET #

3698

The following words are to be inserted after section 5, third (e):

Any not for profit institution which has accumulated more than \$500,000,000.00 (five hundred million dollars) in an endowment, or net worth or any combination of the two, shall not be exempt. Allowing charitable institutions to hold enormous funds and then allow them to participate in buying land and not have to pay taxes on that land is an unfair practice. Private for profit developers are unable to compete with an alleged charitable institution which uses a pretext of accumulating land under their alleged mission. This is a particularly acute problem with MIT and Harvard University which purchases land and do not have to pay property taxes. They develop their land further into the formerly residential neighborhoods of Cambridge destroying the historical demography of the city. Harvard and MIT also purchase vast tracts of land in Boston.

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Consent Communication #15

Communication was received from
Roy Bercaw, Editor, Enough
Room, regarding MIT and Harvard
PILOT. (payment in lieu of taxes)

In City Council January 29, 2001

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