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November 3, 2022

Honorable City Council
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton Centre, MA 02459

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NEWTON, MA. 02459

Councilors:

I respectfully submit a docket item to your Honorable Council requesting to seek Home Rule legislation allowing the City to increase the maximum real property tax reductions for certain programs authorized under M.G.L. c. 59 beyond that amount currently allowed by the state. Given the high cost of living in the metro Boston area, and specifically the City of Newton, I am requesting the enhancements for the following tax assistance programs which will double the assistance available to eligible City of Newton residents:

SENIOR CITIZENS – REDUCTION - G.L. c. 59, sec. 5K and VETERANS -REDUCTION – G.L. c. 59, sec. 5N

Section 5K and 5N, respectively, authorize a reduction for the real property taxes of seniors over the age of 60 or veterans in exchange for volunteer services to the city. The statute permits a maximum reduction based on either 125 volunteer service hours or \$1,500. The City currently allows a reduction based on the maximum 125 volunteer service hours. I am requesting that the maximum reduction in exchange for volunteer services be increased to 200 volunteer services hours or \$3,000.

I have attached for your consideration a draft of the proposed special legislation.

Following passage of the Home Rule Legislation, Chapter 27 Taxation of the City’s Ordinances will need to be amended to include the changes to the maximum allowable reduction under the volunteer services programs.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF NEWTON TO AMEND THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT
FOR CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY TAX REDUCTION PROGRAMS

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding section 5K of chapter 59 of the General laws, the city of Newton may, by ordinance, provide a real property tax reduction up to an amount of \$3,000 or an amount based on 200 volunteer service hours.

SECTION 2. Notwithstanding section 5N of chapter 59 of the General laws, the city of Newton may, by ordinance, provide a real property tax reduction up to an amount of \$3,000 or an amount based on 200 volunteer service hours.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon its passage.