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March 12, 2018

Mike Festa, State Director
AARP Massachusetts
1 Beacon St., Suite 2301
Boston, MA 02108-3130

Dear Mr. Festa,

On behalf of the Town of Dedham, Massachusetts, I am pleased to present an application for membership in the AARP and World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

Like other communities, Dedham's population of older adults is growing rapidly; by 2030, 41% of the community is projected to be 55 and older. With significant demographic and economic shifts underway, our community recognizes the value of becoming age friendly. We are committed to building awareness; promoting policy; improving infrastructure; and increasing programs and resources. Our goal is to meet the needs of residents across the lifespan in an environment that fosters healthy aging.

Dedham's mission to become age-friendly is driven by Livable Dedham, a community action organization founded in 2015. With funding from Tufts Health Plan Foundation and a recently completed Strategic Plan with the Gerontology Institute at the University of Massachusetts, Livable Dedham has strengthened its momentum and identified 45 critical action items. These initiatives aim to enhance the physical and social environment with the following projected outcomes:

- 1) Increased desirability of Dedham as a great place to grow up and grow old,
- 2) Improved town infrastructure to support the needs of older adult residents,
- 3) Increased programs, activities, support services, and volunteerism,
- 4) Improved intergenerational interaction,
- 5) Expanded communication channels to promote awareness of programs and services among older residents, and

- 6) Increased local, state, and national partnerships to ensure continued funding for, and focus on, the needs of older residents.

Membership in the AARP/WHO Network of Age Friendly Communities will strengthen the foundation from which Dedham advocates for the needs of older adults. We look forward to supporting the AARP's mission by implementing sustainable and rewarding age friendly initiatives that will impact community infrastructure and residents throughout the historic demographic shift underway.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James Kern", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James Kern
Town Manager, Dedham, Massachusetts