



**Boston City Council**  
**ED FLYNN**  
Councilor - District 2

May 28, 2024

Renato Castelo, Director  
Office of Participatory Budgeting  
1 City Hall Square, Room 813  
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Director Castelo:

Following our hearing today, I am writing to again emphasize my unequivocal and vehement opposition to the voting process for project proposals from the Office of Participatory Budgeting, particularly in allowing residents as young as 11 years-old to vote for projects to be earmarked.

During this time of great fiscal uncertainty - with a study warning that remote work policies and the city's declining commercial property values may cost us \$500 million in revenue annually, as well as a subsequent proposal to also tax commercial property at a higher rate- now more than ever, it is critical that we show the taxpayers of Boston that we take our financial responsibilities seriously. Allowing children to decide the usage of taxpayer dollars would do just the opposite, and be viewed as tone deaf, unserious, and wholly inappropriate by my constituents.

From my understanding, the Office of Participatory Budgeting will begin its ideas collection this July, which will lead to project proposal development, and ultimately culminates in residents voting on a ballot either in-person or online with 15 proposals, in which residents who are at least 11 years-old can choose up to five proposals.

Civic engagement for our youth is critically important; however, allowing children as young as 11 years-old to decide the use of budget dollars sends the wrong message to neighbors who have faced years of increased property taxes.

Deciding and voting on the budget should be an informed decision, one that the residents of Boston have entrusted to their duly elected officials. I believe that allowing children as young as 11 years-old to vote on these matters will be viewed as out-of-touch and reckless, especially given the fiscal uncertainty as it relates to our future budgets. I urge that we immediately reconsider this process and demonstrate that we are serious about fiscal responsibility.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 617-635-3203, or at [Ed.Flynn@Boston.gov](mailto:Ed.Flynn@Boston.gov).

Sincerely,

Ed Flynn  
Boston City Councilor, District 2

Cc: Tiffany Chu, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Ashley Groffenberger, Chief Financial Officer, City of Boston