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Hello,

Thank you for your time reading this letter of support for the MVRHS Athletic fields.

My name is Matthew Malowski and, like a lot of people on the Vineyard, I wear many hats. I am a father first and foremost of two athletic daughters who are passionate soccer, hockey and basketball players. I am also a high school soccer coach, and school counselor and licensed mental health therapist. Our island and especially our Island kids, need to have an updated and renovated athletic campus that supports their needs and provides safe places for our kids to compete.

Our high school is in critical need for an athletic campus that not only meets the demands of the 21st century athletic programs, but more importantly provides safety and fosters development in the sport he or she is competing in. Currently, as you know, our complex is in dire condition. To say it is in poor condition is an understatement. Even after a year of no use due to Covid-19 the field is still impacted, grass is spotty and torn up by animals, and uneven.

I am on those fields in both the spring and fall soccer seasons coaching our students. I have first hand knowledge and experience as to what it is like playing on the current surface, and I have seen the injuries caused due to the poor condition of our playing surfaces.

The Huntress proposal is reasonable, it is fair, and it is more than thoroughly thought out. I believe anyone would be hard pressed to find a more vetted proposal in the history of planning and development for a project such as this. This debate and planning has gone on well over 6 years, and finally our community has a proposal that meets the needs of the majority of our Island community. No community will ever, EVER get 100 percent buy in from all constituents. There will always be a small minority of people on either side of the spectrum who will not be happy. Like our politics should be, we meet in the middle and move forward with a proposal that most will support. We are there. I have moved to the middle myself. I believe this to be a good solution for our students and our athletic programs.

The Martha's Vineyard Commission should approve this proposal and acknowledge the brilliant efforts of both factions of this debate. The Martha's Vineyard Commission has a responsibility to help this community move forward with a moderate plan that considers both sides of the debate, which is why you must approve this proposal. You will hear from both extremes, "Absolutely no synthetic turf," to "We need multiple turf fields."

We live in New England and our climate is tough on grass. One synthetic field will improve our existing grass fields, and Huntress has found an option that supports our environment. Rational minds need to prevail and leadership needs to be shown that compromise works, and benefits the overall community.

I thank you for your time reading my support of this proposal. I believe you will find those who use the fields everyday know first hand what is required, and all support this plan. I believe that to be a very important factor. These coaches and players know what they need and require to be successful and safe. Please listen to them.

Thank you.

Best regards,
Matthew Malowski
148 Edgartown VH Rd
Oak Bluffs, MA