



PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS
2022 Auditor
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate: Chris Dempsey

Office Sought: Auditor

Party: Democratic

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OVERVIEW

We view our questionnaire as an educational resource, for both candidates and voters, on progressive approaches to the issues. It provides candidates the opportunity to address a number of important issues beyond the surface talking points and provides progressive voters an extremely valuable resource when making a decision.

Our Questionnaire starts with an “About You” section and ends with an opportunity for you to include additional remarks beyond what we asked.

The bulk of our questionnaire is focused on the issues outlined in our [Progressive Platform](#), which also inform our [Legislative Agenda](#). We are interested in your overall philosophy as well as your views on specific policy and legislation.

Each section features charts or graphs (with links to sources) that illustrate one or more facets of the issue under discussion.

*Each section contains open-ended questions and YES/NO questions. **If the question is a YES/NO question, please answer either YES or NO.** Feel free to expand your answers, but **please keep answers < 150 words.***

Issue Subsections:

- A. Revenue and Taxation
- B. Jobs and the Economy
- C. Education
- D. Health Care
- E. Housing
- F. Racial and Social Justice
- G. Good Government and Strong Democracy
- H. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection

I. About You & Your Governing Approach

1. Why are you running for office? And what would be your top 3 priorities if elected?

My campaign is driven by the desire to make state government work better for the residents, taxpayers, and workers of the Commonwealth. As the son of public-school teachers who dug into their own pockets to pay for school supplies for their students, I have seen first-hand how we underfund critical needs like public education and public health. I have also seen that when decisions in state government are made with a lack of public accountability and transparency that they often benefit special interests -- especially corporate interests -- at the expense of the common good. As State Auditor, I will make the Commonwealth a more fair and equitable place to be born, raise a family, work, and grow old, by making our state government more effective, more accountable, and more responsive to its people.

Massachusetts residents face a number of pressing challenges, from the high cost of housing, to a broken transportation system, to health care that is neither cost effective nor accessible, to an education system that produces vastly different outcomes for students depending on their zip code. The State Auditor's Office can help improve all of these areas of public policy and more. Our campaign was the first in this race to issue policy plans for how we wanted to use the office as a platform to improve state government. Our first three policy papers addressed these three topics, all of which are discussed in-detail later in this questionnaire: (1) Federal Stimulus Funding, (2) Climate and Environmental Justice, and (3) Reform of the Massachusetts State Police.

2. What prepares you to serve in this capacity?

I have the education, the experience, and the toughness to be the next Chief Accountability Officer for the taxpayers and residents of Massachusetts. I am a proven advocate and watchdog for the public interest, and am the only candidate in this race with experience working in the executive branch of state government, which is the focus of the State Auditor's Office. In addition to my experience in the public and non-profit sectors, I have worked in the private sector in management consulting and technology development, and I earned an M.B.A. from Harvard Business School.

As the Chief Accountability Officer for state government in Massachusetts, the Auditor must be someone who is independent, who has experience working in state government, and who has stood up to powerful special interests to protect taxpayers and the public interest. The Auditor must be the public face of accountability and good government for all of the Commonwealth.

I served as Assistant Secretary of Transportation for Governor Deval Patrick, where I co-founded the MassDOT open-data program, which launched smartphone applications that tell you when your bus or train is going to arrive, saving taxpayers and farepayers millions compared with more costly and cumbersome alternatives. We made the MBTA -- not an agency known for innovation -- the first transit agency on the entire East Coast to make

those apps available to riders and received national attention in the Wall Street Journal and on NPR by making the MBTA a leader on real-time information.

More recently, I served as the Director of the Transportation for Massachusetts coalition, which advocates for better transportation policy statewide. While Massachusetts compares well to other states on issues like education and health care, we have fallen far behind on transportation, where we typically rank in the bottom ten states. We need more leaders on Beacon Hill with the experience and expertise to fix our transportation problems, which are intertwined with our challenges in housing, the environment, and in other key areas of public policy.

But beyond my professional track record working to improve the Commonwealth, I have also stood up to protect the public interest with volunteerism and civic engagement. I led the grassroots campaign No Boston Olympics, which was successful despite being outspent 1,500-1 by some of the most powerful special interests in the state. The Boston 2024 Olympic bid required that taxpayers promise to cover 100% of Olympic cost overruns, threatening the fiscal future of our Commonwealth and putting taxpayers on the hook for a private endeavor that promised certain companies great profits at the expense of public needs. This grassroots leadership earned me Boston Globe Magazine's "Bostonian of the Year" award in 2015. While I was often the face of that campaign, I was never alone. I am proud of the broad coalition we built that included so many Massachusetts residents across the political spectrum and which was made up of many local, regional, and statewide leaders, including many of the leaders and members of Progressive Massachusetts. I truly believe our successful, united opposition to Boston 2024 was one of the great progressive victories of the last decade in Massachusetts.

I also have experience working in and with municipal government, as an elected Town Meeting Member in Brookline since 2012, and as Chairperson of the Transportation Board. I understand the needs and budgetary constraints faced by Massachusetts cities and towns, and have managed hundreds -- if not thousands -- of hours of public meetings keeping the wheels of local government turning while ensuring that all voices are heard. The work of a municipal board is not glamorous, but it is crucial to a well-functioning democracy and vibrant communities. I believe we need to elect more leaders who have invested their time in that low-level, good government kind of work.

In the private sector, I have worked with some of the country's largest companies to help the economy grow as a consultant and also led business development for a software technology startup that created jobs in Massachusetts and provided improved and innovative delivery of public services to residents in Massachusetts, New York, California, and elsewhere.

I am a graduate of the Brookline Public Schools, Pomona College (B.A.), and Harvard Business School (M.B.A.). I have taught transportation and urban policy at the graduate level at the Northeastern University School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs. I live with my fiancée, Anna, on the first floor of a triple-decker in Brookline Village, a few blocks from where I grew up and where my parents still live. Anna and I are looking forward to starting a family together, and we want that to be in a Massachusetts that is the best that it can be; that means making Massachusetts state government the best that it can be.

3. How would you describe the role and importance of the Office of the Auditor to a voter?

The State Auditor is the Chief Accountability Office for state government, with a special focus on holding the executive branch accountable to state law and finding ways to make state government work better. The office conducts audits, investigations, and studies to promote accountability and transparency and improve the performance of state agencies.

As one of just six positions elected statewide, the Auditor must be fiercely independent, but also able to collaborate with state and local leaders as we work to build a stronger Commonwealth together. The power of the Auditor's Office to change policy directly is somewhat limited. But its power to change policy indirectly is vast, especially when wielded by an Auditor who is trusted, conscientious, experienced in the reform of state government, and who shares progressive values. By using the Auditor's Office as a platform for thoughtful, consistent advocacy within state government, the next State Auditor can make our Commonwealth more efficient, effective, accountable, and fair.

4. What would be your top 3 legislative priorities as Auditor, and how would you work to pass them?

The primary responsibility of the Auditor's office is to conduct audits and provide support and recommendations to improve the functioning of our government. While I respect the hard work our representatives do each day, I am not running to be a legislator. Any candidate for Auditor running to advance a specific legislative agenda should reconsider the purpose of the office for which they are running. The State Auditor's Office will maximize its ability to make government more fair, equitable, and accountable when its legislative priorities flow from the work that the Auditor's team has done, not vice versa. With that said, when audits recommend solutions that can only be achieved through legislation or when agencies are unresponsive to recommendations, I will partner with my legislative-branch colleagues to bring forward bills to address the situation.

5. What do you view as the role of the state government in supporting progressive policy at the local level?

I am the only candidate in this race with experience at the municipal level, where I have served as an elected Town Meeting Member since 2012, have served on committees on zoning and regulation of short-term rentals (such as AirBNBs), and served for many years as the Chair of the Brookline Transportation Board. I understand the needs of our communities first-hand. I encourage progressive voters to review my decade-long record supporting progressive values in Brookline Town Meeting.

The State Auditor does not audit the day-to-day work of municipal government, so perhaps the best opportunity to support progressive policy at the local level is in these two ways:

- (1) Ensuring that existing state law is being implemented or administered appropriately

by state government when it impacts local policy. For example, as State Auditor I will measure and assess progress at the state level to promulgate requirements that communities zone for multi-family, walkable neighborhoods near MBTA transit stations, a progressive provision of the recently passed Housing Choice Bill.

- (2) By using the platform of the office to advocate for change to state policy that would enable more progressive policy at the local level. This advocacy can cover a range of topics, but I believe it will be the most effective when backed up by the work of the Auditor's Office staff. As an example, in 2021 Auditor Bump released her "Rural Rescue Plan" that made the case for reform of state programs that in some cases inequitably compensate or support rural communities, many of which are losing population. This report was developed based on research by the Auditor's staff and responds to real public needs.

At a more technical level, I have committed to supporting municipal auditors as they conduct their important work. For example, my team will participate in the monthly MassCPAs Governmental Accounting and Auditing Committee meetings. I want my office, my staff, and the work that we do to be a resource to support government accountants and auditors day-to-day. Initiatives that bring people into the world of government auditing and evaluation and the sharing of best practices are important ways my office will be supporting local governments in implementing the progressive policies of their local and state elected officials.

6. Audits can identify important changes that need to be made in state government, but there is no guarantee that the recommended changes will be made. What steps will you take to follow up on audits conducted to ensure accountability?

The State Auditor does not make or pass policy, but it does play an important role in shaping policy before, during, and after its implementation through the administration of the executive branch. Used to its fullest potential, the office can be a powerful force for holding government accountable and making state government work better through using its platform, or "bully pulpit," as one of just six statewide officials elected by the people. The independence of this office is critical to its success, but so is its ability to work with the legislative and executive branches to actually implement needed changes.

I have a proven track record of getting big results with limited resources, and that has often meant building my own bully pulpit. No Boston Olympics started in a living room with a Twitter account and a simple webpage, and grew into an organization that was a vocal force in the future of the Commonwealth, going up against some of the most famous and expensive political consultants and public relations firms in Massachusetts. We stood up to protect the public interest with a clear, digestible analysis of the risks of the Boston 2024 Olympic bid. The same skillset is needed in the leadership of the Auditor's Office.

I will work to make sure that the findings and reports of the office are more visible, more accessible, and more effective at communicating the need for change within state government. As an advocate within state government, I will work with the public, activists,

and the media to make it clear where my office's recommendations are and are not being followed.

To support the advocacy that can result from proper use of the bully pulpit, I will establish an Action Tracker modeled on the [Action Tracker](#) produced by the GAO, the Federal auditor's office. This will help the public, advocates, and the media to check in on the progress of implementing my office's recommendations over time.

7. What is one policy pioneered by another state that you would like to see Massachusetts adopt?

I will make Massachusetts a national leader on climate by making it the first in the country to incorporate carbon accounting into audits of state agencies.

But there are policy areas where Massachusetts can make progress simply by following the lead of other states. In particular, I would like to see Massachusetts adopt more progressive housing policies that eliminate exclusionary zoning and reduce barriers to the creation of affordable housing and market-rate housing. For example, in Washington State, communities are required to plan for the growth of new housing based on a goal set by the state Office of Financial Management (OFM). This encourages communities to plan for sustainable, transit-oriented and walkable growth, rather than to only allow sprawl or to resist all new housing entirely. Current and future Massachusetts residents would benefit if all communities -- especially those in Greater Boston, Cape Cod, and other regions with housing crunches -- were required to permit/allow their fair share of the state's needed housing growth.

8. Provide an example of a time that you built a broad coalition to achieve a desired policy outcome.

As a leader of No Boston Olympics, I built a broad and diverse coalition to protect the residents and taxpayers in Massachusetts. Our grassroots campaign drew significant public attention to the high likelihood of extreme waste associated with the Olympics. The Boston 2024 proposal, pushed by powerful, connected special interests and supported by many of the Commonwealth's most influential elected officials, would have required all of us as state taxpayers to cover billions of dollars of cost overruns, draining resources away from more important public needs.

The risks and costs associated with Olympic bids are well-documented, but it is easy for a community to get caught up in Olympic gold fever. Early polling showed that the public supported the Olympic bid. But as No Boston Olympics worked to uncover and share more data with the public, the tide turned. We knew we had the facts on our side and we built a grassroots effort that made the case to the public. We ensured the media and public were aware of important details buried in agreements that were left unaddressed at celebratory press conferences held by Olympic boosters. We held public meetings open to all, and we encouraged grassroots contributions. By the end of the campaign, we had more individual

contributors to our campaign than Boston 2024 had to its campaign, even though we were outspent 1,500 to 1.

Despite criticism that we were only “10 people on Twitter,” the broad base of support we built included former Occupy Wall Street activists, housing displacement advocates, racial justice advocates, public policy PhDs, multiple municipal governments, thousands of concerned residents, and even members of conservative groups like the Greater Boston Tea Party. Within three months of the USOC awarding the bid to Boston 2024, the poll numbers had flipped and a majority of people in Greater Boston opposed the Olympics. Those numbers remained in our favor until the bid was pulled in July.

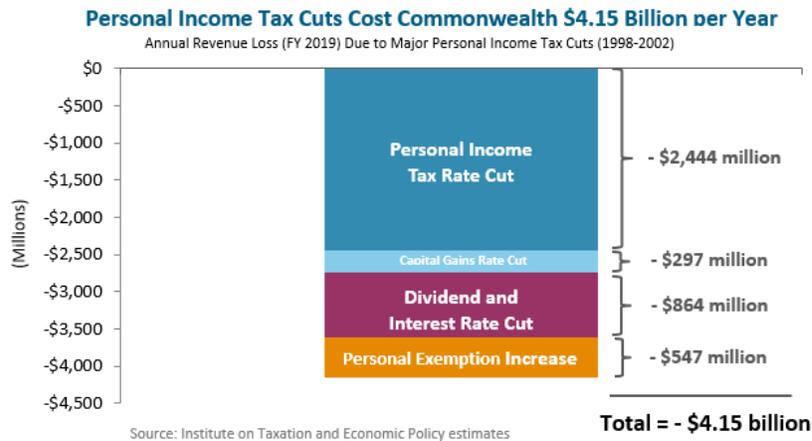
I am especially proud of how No Boston Olympics partnered with allied groups like No Boston 2024. We wouldn't have succeeded without this strong partnership and allyship. Our complementary efforts were a formidable 1-2 punch in fighting back against a corporate-backed bid that threatened the future of the Commonwealth, and I will always be grateful to No Boston 2024's leadership for their courage, hard work, and commitment to the people of Massachusetts.

II. The Issues

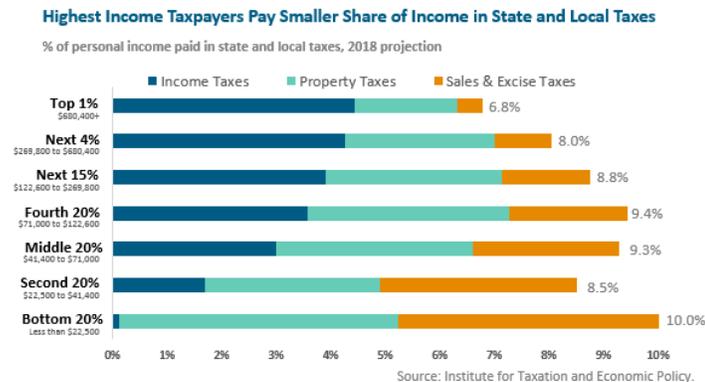
A. Revenue and Taxation

Between 1977 and 2016, Massachusetts [reduced state taxes](#) by more than all but two other states. Because of income tax cuts enacted between 1998 and 2002, Massachusetts loses over \$4 billion in tax revenue *each year*--\$4 billion that is not invested in our roads, bridges, schools, parks, and services, all of which have historically been part of why MA is a great place to live. Such cuts to the state income tax, combined with [low corporate income taxes compared to other states](#), have meant increasing reliance on fees, as well as sales, gas, and property taxes, exacerbating the overall regressivity of the system. Regressive taxation strains low- and middle-income families, and reduced revenue collection curtails our ability to invest in vital infrastructure. It also restricts legislators' ability—and willingness—to pass new and visionary legislation, as there is a continual shortage of funds for existing priorities.

Declining revenues have meant drastic cuts, limiting our ability to invest in our communities and future economic stability.



Massachusetts state and local taxes are regressive.



1. Please explain your principles and proposals relative to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).

Our current tax code reflects a hodge-podge of historical political compromises and half-measures, not a coherent, principled, consistent approach to raising the revenue we need to build a more progressive, fair, and opportunity-filled state.

Fixing this status quo will take time, and there is no consensus -- even from progressive activists -- about what the ideal tax system would be. But reform is possible and warranted.

I served as Director of the Transportation for Massachusetts advocacy coalition, which championed the Fair Share Amendment as well as broader conversations about state revenue as a step toward providing all the services Massachusetts needs. We also opposed cynical proposals to reduce the state sales tax, a proposal that a conservative minority of Democratic legislators have, in the past, supported, with seeming disregard to the harm it would bring to public education and other important public needs.

2. Corporate Tax Breaks -- Part I. Corporate tax breaks cost Massachusetts [more than \\$1 billion in foregone revenue](#) each year. Companies can secure access to such tax breaks due to political connections whether or not the promised benefits ever materialize.

Which of the following accountability steps would you support and advocate in support of legislation to enact?

- a. **Creating an easily accessible public database of all corporations currently receiving tax breaks from the state? (Y/N)**

YES.

- b. **Collecting and publicly disclosing information about the benefits to the state from any tax break? (Y/N)**

YES.

- c. **Repealing any tax break that does not provide the intended benefits in a cost-effective manner? (Y/N)**

YES.

- d. **Establishing sunset dates for all tax breaks so that they must come up for periodic review? (Y/N)**

YES.

3. Corporate Tax Breaks -- Part II. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in addressing such overuse and under-performance of corporate tax incentives?

The Auditor serves on the Tax Expenditure Review Commission, which was created

under Chapter 207 of the Acts of 2018 to review each tax break (often known as tax expenditures) every five years and evaluate its purpose, intent, goal, and effectiveness. In the spring of 2021, the Commission issued its first report -- the most robust public analysis of these tax expenditures ever conducted in Massachusetts. Incumbent State Auditor Suzanne Bump has played a leadership role on the Commission, working with Senate Revenue Committee Chair Adam Hinds in calling for the creation of a cap on the cost of certain expenditures to make each tax break/expenditure more transparent. Auditor Bump's efforts to bring more oversight to tax expenditures date back to her first year as State Auditor, and demonstrate the essential, independent role the office plays in the Commonwealth's policy debates. Whether these tax breaks are succeeding or not, the public absolutely has the right to know who is receiving them so they too can draw their own conclusions.

As State Auditor, I will push for more accountability and transparency on corporate tax expenditures that favor well-connected industries and create an unequal playing field. The creation of a tax expenditure means prioritizing corporate benefits over public goods like public education, parks, and libraries. Massachusetts residents deserve a full and robust debate about whether we want to keep these tax breaks on the books or replace them with a fairer and more equitable tax code that supports strong and efficient public services.

As Auditor, I will seek the power from the Legislature to assess the financial statements of companies that benefit from tax expenditures. These companies are receiving a public benefit, and should face the same scrutiny from the Auditor's Office that they would if they received direct funding from state government.

4. **Corporate Tax Breaks -- Part III. Often corporations secure tax giveaways from the state that only seek to pad already high corporate profits, rendering hollow any pretenses to the necessity of the public's money. Would you support legislation to give the Office of the Auditor power to investigate the finances of any corporation that receives tax breaks from the Commonwealth? (Y/N)**

YES.

5. **Fair Share. Do you support the proposed constitutional amendment to increase the tax on income over \$1 million by 4%, with the resulting revenue devoted to education and transportation needs (Fair Share Amendment)? (Y/N)**

YES.

6. **PILOT Reform. Massachusetts is home to some of the world's most prestigious cultural, educational, and medical institutions, but many of them are exempt from property taxes. Some cities and towns collect PILOT payments (Payment in Lieu of Taxes), but many institutions underpay such commitments considerably. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in PILOT reform?**

Auditor Suzanne Bump has investigated and reviewed the importance of state PILOT agreements with communities that have state-owned properties (these are particularly important in rural communities where state conservation land can account for half of all land area). As Auditor, I will assess the role that the state government plays in establishing and enforcing institutional PILOT agreements

between communities and cultural, educational, and medical institutions.

7. **Divestment. Do you support divesting public investments from private prisons, fossil fuel companies, and weapons manufacturers?** (Y/N)

YES. While this is an item outside of the Auditor's duties, I support these types of efforts and look forward to seeing progress on these items. I also support an "activist shareholder" approach that uses the power that investors have to push companies to more sustainable and equitable practices. Fundamentally, I believe it is important for our investments as taxpayers to and pension recipients to reflect the values of our Commonwealth.

8. **Cannabis Revenue. When Massachusetts legalized adult-use marijuana in 2016, state law specified that tax revenue shall be expended for five areas, including restorative justice. While states like New York are devoting hundreds of millions of cannabis revenue dollars to restorative justice and equity efforts before sales begin, it's difficult to track where ours are going even 5 years after legalization. What would you do to help ensure that marijuana tax revenue is tracked and spent as intended?**

As we continue to expand legal cannabis in Massachusetts, as we have recently done for delivery services, we have opportunities to engage in restorative justice and to learn from any missteps we have made in the initial legalization process. This is of increasing salience as cannabis tax revenue has recently surpassed alcohol tax revenue for the first time.

As Auditor, I will work to make it clear how this money is being allocated. As needed, I will use the powers of the office to preclude the need for public records requests that have been necessary in the past to understand where tax revenues are going. If the Legislature cannot or will not make these data available, I am prepared to file legislation to mandate accountability for cannabis revenue funds.

B. Jobs and the Economy

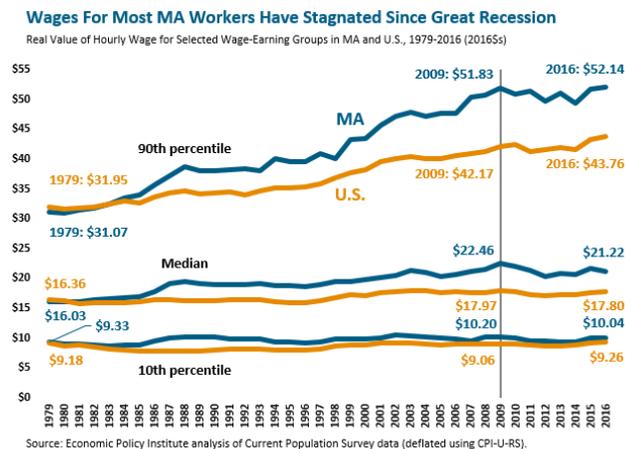
Massachusetts ranks as one of the top ten [most unequal states](#), as the gains from economic growth have disproportionately benefited the already well-off. Compounding this, we are one of the most expensive states in the country for [health care](#), [housing](#), and [child care](#), all of which strain wages. A strong economy depends on strong wages, as workers spend and help local economies thrive. Although the recently passed minimum wage increase will eventually lift the minimum wage to \$15 per hour, this is [still not a living wage](#) for many.

In recent decades, unions have been under attack. However, unions played—and continue to play—a pivotal role in creating a strong middle class. With weaker unions (or no unions at all) come weaker social and economic rights and an imbalanced economy.

Productivity has grown significantly since the 1970s, but it is not being reflected in higher wages.



Wages for most MA workers have remained stagnant since the Great Recession.



1. **Please explain your principles and proposals relative to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.)**

Growing the economy and wages in Massachusetts isn't a matter of finding the right tax breaks or giveaways to businesses seeking to exact the most they can from governments. In the long run, improvements in our standards of living for all will come through high-quality infrastructure, life-long education and training opportunities, a level playing field created by firm but fair regulations, a social safety net to come to the rescue when disaster strikes, and a social environment that welcomes and values diversity.

Focusing on these items, rather than corporate handouts and the hope they will trickle down to employees can be difficult when the business interests are headed by wealthy and powerful people able to threaten to take their business elsewhere. In leading No Boston Olympics, I was in the front lines in the battle against this type of corporate power and its distortive effect on our public priorities.

Mega-events like the Olympics, and giveaways to large corporations are the *wrong* kind of economic development. Investment in our economy will come through investing in our people and investing in the services, support, and infrastructure we all share.

2. **Economic Recovery. What are your top priorities in ensuring the sound and equitable use of funds received by Massachusetts through the American Rescue Plan Act?**

I am proud that our campaign was the first in this race to release a policy proposal that discussed our vision for the work of the office. Our first paper was on oversight of ARPA funds, and that will be a Day 1 priority in office. Please review our complete [policy paper](#) on ARPA funding priorities on our website.

The plan includes, but is not limited to: 1) Monitoring and tracking ARPA funds in real time, 2) Adopting many of the recommendations of the Racial Equity Scorecard that was developed by the NAACP, the Black Economic Council, the Massachusetts Public Health Association, and many other groups, and 3) Working with state and local partners to ensure comprehensive oversight. I strongly encourage progressive voters to read the full paper on our website, as it leaves no doubt that our agenda for oversight of federal stimulus funding is the strongest, most comprehensive, and most equitable in the race.

3. **Economic Development. In recent years, we have seen a race to the bottom between cities and states to offer special perks for large corporations considering new development or relocation. What would be your approach to such bids or proposals from cities in Massachusetts?**

Handing out public benefits to private corporations is a losing game in the long run for states and municipalities. Massachusetts can and should attract and retain businesses by providing the people and infrastructure that allow them to thrive, without tilting the playing field to companies that have strong relationships to elected leaders, or who make extravagant promises about job growth. A prepared workforce and robust public services will enable far more long term growth and

mutual long-term commitment between companies and communities than any short-term tax-break can. Our state leaders must be very skeptical of special perks and handouts for large corporations and must resist the oversold proposals produced by corporate lobbyists seeking to play one community off against another (just like the International Olympic Committee does!).

To be clear: I believe Massachusetts state government must work to support a strong environment for investment and job growth; I just believe we will achieve that by investing in people and infrastructure, not by giving handouts to chosen firms.

4. **Privatization. Privatization of state services typically leads to higher costs and worse service for residents of the Commonwealth. The Office of the Auditor oversees the Taxpayer Protection Act (Pacheco Law), the series of tests that must be passed before a service can be privatized. How would you approach this responsibility?**

Under the Massachusetts Taxpayer Protection Act (often referred to as the Pacheco Law), the Office of the State Auditor is responsible for reviewing proposals from state agencies and various state authorities that seek to privatize a service that is currently performed by public employees. In this capacity, the Auditor plays a central role in defending taxpayers against initiatives that deliver profits to private companies, often at the expense of unionized workers. As Auditor, I will bring a keen eye to these decisions, with an understanding that the law intends and requires the Auditor to reject any proposal that does not clear a high bar on both cost and quality. I will take this responsibility seriously and commit to rejecting any proposal that does not meet this bar.

5. **Closing the Racial Wealth Gap. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in addressing wide racial/ethnic wealth gaps in the Commonwealth, especially but not limited to achieving greater equity in state contracting?**

It is absolutely unacceptable -- given the diversity and talent inherent in our Commonwealth -- that an extremely small share of our public dollars flow companies and vendors led by people of color. The State Auditor has the ability to review the books and records of state agencies, but also to review the books and records of vendors to state agencies. I will use this power to ensure that the public, the media, and representatives of underrepresented communities are able to track and respond as we change this unfair and inequitable status quo once and for all.

6. **One Fair Wage. Do you support eliminating the subminimum wage for tipped workers? (Y/N)**

YES. Not only would this change benefit tipped workers, it would also simplify wage laws to reduce the opportunities for wage theft or other abuses of power by employers in these industries.

7. **Wage Theft. Do you support holding businesses responsible for the wage violations of their subcontractors when the work they do is substantially connected to the company's operations? (Y/N) If you identified such violations in state government, would you refer them to the AG's office?**

Yes. Wage theft and misclassification of workers is a significant problem across the Commonwealth. As Auditor, I will partner with labor organizations to better understand opportunities for improved enforcement, oversight, and action. As is true with any audit, if my team uncovered violations of state law we would refer them to the Office of the Attorney General.

8. **Mandatory Arbitration. Would you support legislation to prohibit the use of mandatory arbitration provisions in employment contracts, i.e., requirements that an employee forfeit the right to sue the employer for discrimination, nonpayment of wages, or other illegal conduct?** (Y/N)

YES. While this issue is outside of my control as Auditor, I understand how mandatory arbitration can be misused to favor employers and other “repeat customers” of arbitrators and arbitration services. That said, any legislation on this item must ensure that courts are accessible and with a level playing field for workers who will not have the time, resources, or lawyers available to their employer, which was indeed part of the reason that progressive policymakers have advocated for more opportunities for arbitration in past decades.

9. **Gig Economy. More than 200,000 workers in Massachusetts now work in the “gig economy,” with the rise of app-based platforms. However, their employers often seek to evade labor law in order to avoid treating them as employees and provide decent pay and benefits.**

- a. **Do you oppose the November 2022 ballot initiative backed by Uber and Lyft to rewrite current state labor law to exclude hundreds of thousands of workers from fundamental rights and protections?** (Y/N)

YES.

- b. **What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in ensuring greater accountability in the gig economy?**

Legislation and enforcement often has difficulty keeping up with rapid changes in society and technology. The gig economy has presented some people with valuable opportunities to supplement their income, to set their own schedules, or to find the mix of employment that works for them. Unfortunately, those same flexibilities have allowed some companies to exploit these technological tools and regulatory gaps to avoid playing their part in society and in an economy based on mutual benefit to their customers and workers. Many of these gig jobs are full-time roles, but without the benefits and stability that allow employees to support a family, or even make ends meet.

As Auditor, I will find opportunities to highlight both when gig economy companies are violating existing regulations laws and to identify places where our laws and regulations need to be revised to account for services delivered in ways our laws did not expect.

For example, the Auditor’s Office can review whether state agencies are utilizing gig-economy services and make recommendations for how these services could be better provided by other vendors.

10. **Public Benefits -- I. The Office of the Auditor often spends considerable resources investigating allegations of erroneously disbursed public benefits. Would your office conduct an audit of the office's work in this area, which likely spends a high share of funds relative to what it recoups? (Y/N)**

YES.

11. **Public Benefits -- II. On the home page of the Office of the Auditor is a request for individuals to report allegations of "public benefit fraud," suspicions that low-income individuals may be receiving more money than they should from the Commonwealth. What is the appropriate approach for the Office of the Auditor to this work?**

Prominent display of this function of the office does a disservice to the Auditor's office and to the people of Massachusetts who rely on public benefits to feed their families, to ensure a roof over their heads, to look for work, or to care for their children. Benefits fraud is rare (the Auditor's office identified 482 cases of fraud in Fiscal Year 2020 (the most recent full year report available)¹ and 1,077 in 2019 (the most recent pre-Covid year)². This office uses nearly 10% of the Auditor's budget to recoup funds equivalent to 0.069% of the amount spent on MassHealth benefits³ and an even smaller percentage of all available public benefits. The entirety of benefits fraud across all benefits is approximately equivalent to the amount Accounts Receivable MassHealth had not collected as documented in an audit report in 2019.⁴

The resources invested into and the stigma associated with investigations into public benefits fraud does not justify its share of budget or attention within the office compared to other sources of inefficiency uncovered by other smaller teams in the Auditor's Office.

12. **Unemployment Overpayments. During the pandemic, the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance made overpayments to some workers who were later deemed ineligible or received more money than they should have. This occurred through no fault of the unemployed workers, and the state is now seeking to collect such money back, at a time when many are still struggling to recover from the economic downturn. What do you believe the appropriate response of the state should be in such a situation?**

We shouldn't be punishing people who received this funding through no fault of their own, and who could have reasonably seen these payments as legitimate given

1

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/bureau-of-special-investigations-annual-report-fiscal-year-2020-0/download>

² <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/bsi-fy19-year-in-review>

³ Internal calculation from above BSI reports and Budget Brief from https://www.bluecrossmafoundation.org/sites/g/files/csphws2101/files/2021-08/GAA_2021_BudgetBrief_v02_Final.pdf.

⁴

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/audit-of-the-office-of-medicaid-masshealth-review-of-accounts-receivable/download>

the complexity of the federal response to the pandemic.

From the auditor's perspective, the most important long-term question is to understand how and why overpayments happened so that we can provide greater clarity to the public in the future and avoid repeat mistakes. Certainly in the fog of a crisis, there are many reasons the immediate reaction can lead to errors; but if there are long-standing, repeated, or anticipatable reasons for these errors, the Auditor's office can work to identify and remediate these problems.

C. Education

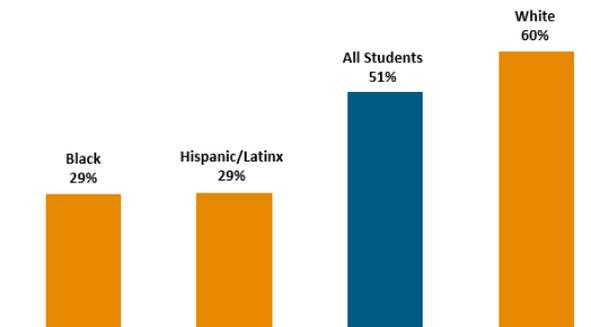
The promise of public education has always been as a gateway to opportunity and mobility for all, regardless of economic circumstances, a cornerstone of the American dream for all residents. Although our public education system gets high marks overall, it remains one of the [most unequal](#) in the country. Powerful corporate interests are promoting false solutions and working to undermine public schools, teachers, and unions. These groups invest millions of dollars to promote the expansion of privately run charter schools, which siphon money from our public K-12 districts while largely excluding students with the greatest needs. Costly, mandated standardized test results are used to label schools as “failing” and justify these privatization schemes. State receiverships in struggling school districts advance a privatization agenda by disenfranchising voters through stripping those they elect of their power to represent them.

Most of the [fastest-growing occupations](#) require education beyond a high school diploma, but Massachusetts has been disinvesting from public higher education for the past two decades. This has led to higher tuition costs, putting students at risk of long-term debt or making higher education out of reach for them entirely.

Massachusetts has significant achievement gaps reflective of resource gaps.

Massachusetts Has Significant Achievement Gaps for Youth of Color in 4th Grade Reading

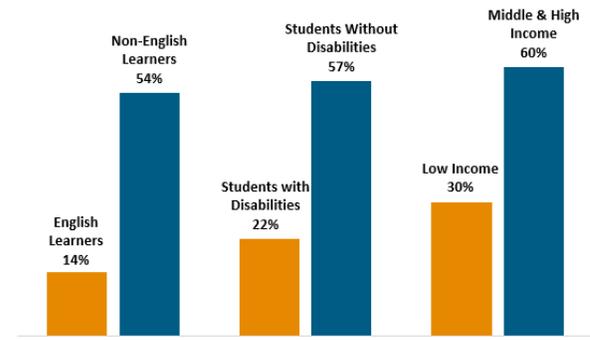
Share of MA 4th Graders Proficient on the 2017 NAEP Reading Exam, by Student Race, all students



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2017

Massachusetts Has Significant Achievement Gaps for Disadvantaged Youth in 4th Grade Reading

Share of Mass. 4th Graders Proficient on the 2017 NAEP Reading Exam, by Student Category

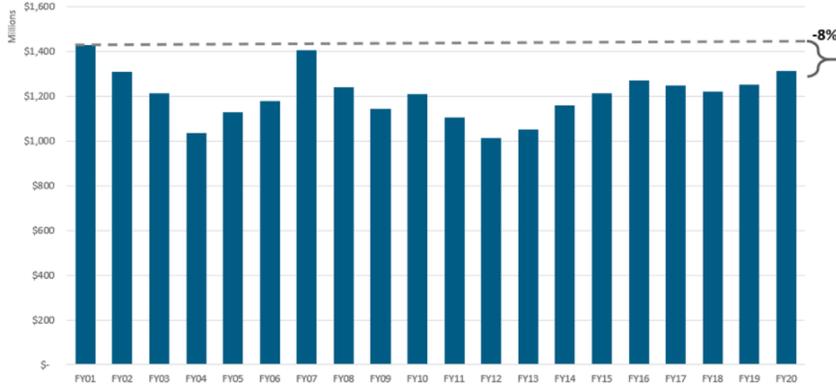


Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2017

Massachusetts has been disinvesting from higher education and shifting the cost burden onto students.

Massachusetts Has Cut Spending on Higher Ed. by 8 Percent Since FY 2001

State spending on higher education, FY 2001-2020 adjusted to inflation (2020 \$)



Note: FY 2007 total is adjusted downwards to account for the fact that significant funding during this year was for capital investments that supported activity during other fiscal years.

1. Please explain your principles and proposals relative to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).

I am a proud graduate of public schools in Massachusetts and a child of and brother to public school educators. I have witnessed firsthand the dedication and commitment of teachers to their craft, to the value of learning, and to the inner workings of the lives of their students.

While Massachusetts public K-12 schools rate highly overall, we must do more to ensure that high quality education is available to everyone. This also includes our children under five and adults seeking skills to establish, enhance, or change their careers.

The State Auditor has somewhat limited jurisdiction over education policy; but the choices we make about education for ourselves and for our families are difficult, complicated, and often high-pressure. My office will be able to assist in benchmarking our institutions and aiding these decisions.

Moreover, education of all types is the primary employer of hundreds of thousands of residents. many of whom are subject to significant workplace and safety rules (e.g., early childhood education), murky employment definition (e.g., teaching assistants), limited access to the protections of full-time employment (e.g., adjunct professors), and administrative attempts to limit access to benefits (e.g., contracted workforces to conduct building maintenance, cleaning, food preparation, etc.). We owe it to these professionals to ensure the State agencies charged with enforcing our labor laws are doing so in the most effective manner.

2. **Early Education and Child Care. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in ensuring that child care workers are being adequately paid with the money being given by the state to large child care providers?**

I will respond to any concerns or complaints about enforcement of wage and hour laws, oversight and inspection services of early childhood education centers, and to publicize the use of state funds to support private providers.

The business model of early childhood education and other child care is fundamentally broken. Due to the necessary and prudent high levels of health, safety, and staffing regulations, the services are extremely expensive to provide. They are eye-wateringly expensive for families to pay for out of pocket, and inexcusably low-paying for those who work there.

3. **Charter Schools. In 2016, MA voters overwhelmingly rejected a ballot initiative to lift the cap on charter schools given the millions of dollars it would have siphoned away from public school districts.**

- a. **Do you support keeping the cap on charter schools? (Y/N)**

YES.

- b. **What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in ensuring greater accountability for state funds spent on publicly funded yet privately run charter schools?**

Like all other state programs, we must ensure we have clear goals for these funds and metrics to measure our progress against these goals. The responsibility to set these goals rests with the State so as to ensure they include benefits for all groups and do not allow the private sector to “cream skim” or other tactics to manipulate metrics of their own design. Charter schools that fail to meet those goals, like any other private recipient of government funds, should be held accountable when they fail to deliver the promised public benefits.

4. **Receivership. The Lawrence Public Schools, Holyoke Public Schools, and Southbridge Public Schools are currently under state receivership, with a state-appointed receiver assuming the powers of a superintendent or democratically elected school committee. Would you commit to auditing the expenditure of funds by state-appointed receivers? (Y/N)**

YES.

5. **Debt-Free College. Do you support making tuition (and mandatory curriculum fees) free at public colleges and universities? (Y/N)**

[Neither YES nor NO] This is outside the direct authority of the Auditor’s office but I support state government working to dramatically reduce the cost of accessing public *and* private higher education, including options that result in debt-free graduation and elimination of fees.

6. **Higher Ed Affordability -- I.** Would you consider using the existing authority of the Office of the State Auditor, or filing legislation to expand the authority of the office, to provide reports on (1) tuition and fee rates, (2) average post-grant costs for students, and (3) student debt burdens to ensure that the Department of Higher Education and the 29 Massachusetts public higher education institutions are fulfilling their mission to provide affordable associate's, bachelor's, and postgraduate degrees to all Massachusetts residents? (Y/N)

YES.

7. **Higher Ed Affordability -- II.** Would you also commit to providing reports that inform the public as to whether efforts to keep degree programs affordable for Massachusetts residents are impacting: (1) wages and benefits for faculty and staff (e.g. increasing the number of lower-paid, poorly-benefited "adjunct"/non-tenure track positions), (2) the number of academic programs and degree programs offered by institutions (e.g. elimination of arts or language departments), and (3) the economic growth of host communities and surrounding communities for public higher education institutions? (Y/N)

YES.

8. **Student Safety and Well-Being -- I.** In 2018, there was an [auditor report](#) that showed UMass Amherst Equal Opportunity & Diversity office did not always follow its protocol for student grievances. Given the recent uptick in student activism around campus sexual harassment and sexual assault policies, would your office commit to auditing whether public colleges and universities are adequately following their own policies regarding reporting and support for survivors, and whether such policies should be changed? (Y/N)

YES.

9. **Student Safety and Well-Being -- II.** Would you commit to auditing campus police departments and whether they are adequately responding to complaints about misconduct by officers? (Y/N)

YES. My campaign has put reform of the State Police front-and-center, with a [15-point plan for auditing the MSP](#). Similar oversight and reform can be conducted for campus police departments.

10. **What other roles do you see for the Office of the Auditor in ensuring that every student is able to attain a high-quality public education, pre-K to higher ed?**

Our Commonwealth is short on natural resources relative to other states (though we have strong fishing waters and lots of wind for turning windmills!). What makes Massachusetts so special is its people, who are some of the best educated, most talented, and hardest-working people on the planet. We must increase our investment in education to ensure that everyone who grows up in Massachusetts has an opportunity to achieve their full potential and to thrive. Our State Constitution guarantees equal access to education, but we know the system we have today fails that standard. The next State Auditor must ensure that education remains a top priority for state policymakers, and must work to shine a light on the

failings of our status quo. As the son of public school teachers and the product of public schools, I hold sacred our public school system in Massachusetts, but I also demand that it be improved and supported with sufficient resources and policies that make our system more equitable and effective.

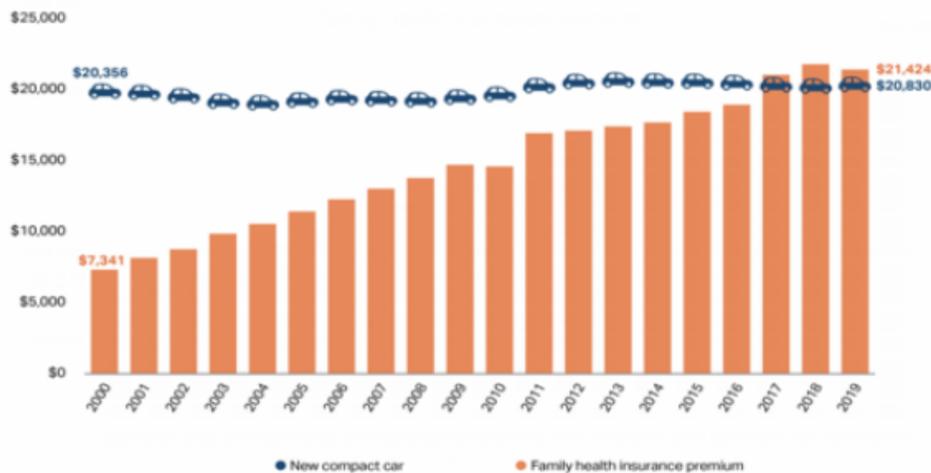
D. Health Care

Massachusetts has led the way in providing near universal health insurance coverage, with [97% of the state](#) having health insurance. But until that is 100%, we haven't reached truly universal coverage or tackled critical barriers to accessing care. Disparities in insurance coverage and health care access continue to exist along income, racial, and education lines. Premiums continue to rise, and high deductibles mean that many do not get the health care they need—or suffer from long-lasting debt if they do. We still spend an oversized portion of public and private money on health care, but without necessarily achieving better health outcomes. The pandemic has put a spotlight on these health care inequities and the need to invest in a stronger public health infrastructure and be more resilient for the pandemics and challenges of the future.

Massachusetts health insurance premiums have skyrocketed over the past two decades.

Massachusetts health insurance premiums have tripled in 19 years and consume an ever-larger portion of earnings for middle class families.

Average total cost for Massachusetts family health insurance premiums and national cost of a new compact car



The share of middle-class commercially-insured Massachusetts families with more than ¼ of total earnings going to health care rose from 28% in 2013-2015 to 33% in 2016-2018.

Notes. Data are in normal dollars of the year shown.

Sources: Family Health Insurance premiums are for Massachusetts from the Agency for Health Care Quality – Medical Expenditure Panel Survey, Insurance Component. Car cost information is based on car-specific inflation from the BLS and the compact car price index from Kelly Blue Book.

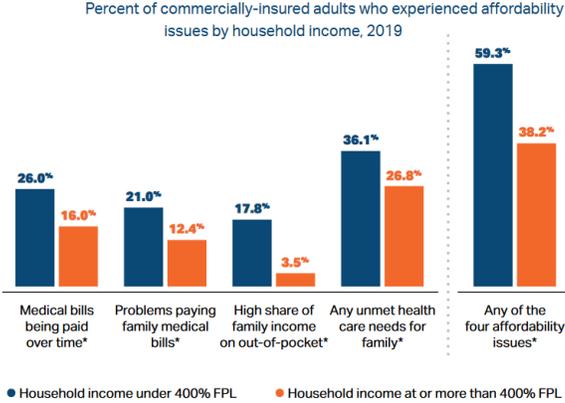
<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/average-new-car-prices-up-nearly-4-percent-year-over-year-for-may-2019-according-to-kelley-blue-book-300860710.html>

Earnings calculation includes employer premium contribution in both health care payments and in earnings total. See Massachusetts HPC 2019 Annual Cost Trends Report (p. 15)



Image41i

Many MA residents face difficulty paying health care bills.



- 1. Please explain your principles and proposals relative to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).**

Healthcare is perhaps the most critical part of our social-safety net, and everyone in Massachusetts should have access to high-quality, affordable healthcare.

- 2. Single Payer. Do you support legislation to enact a single payer health care system in Massachusetts, which would guarantee health insurance as a right? (Y/N)**

[Neither YES nor NO] My top healthcare concern is ensuring all Massachusetts residents have access to affordable health care. 100% of Massachusetts residents should be covered by robust, affordable, and reliable health insurance, whether public or private.

There is compelling evidence that a single-payer system can provide better and more affordable coverage than our patchwork system that relies heavily on employer-based coverage and leaves too many uninsured.

Our health system is complicated and an important driver of the Massachusetts economy. As we seek to cover 100% residents, either through single-payer or a hybrid system, we should do so in ways that support jobs and innovation in our bio-tech and health care sectors.

The Auditor's office plays a crucial role in making health insurance more efficient and streamlined, reducing red tape, and ensuring that providers to Mass Health are providing the best possible services to recipients.

- 3. Reproductive Justice. Do you support requiring health insurance plans to cover all pregnancy care, including abortion care, prenatal care, childbirth, and postpartum care, without any kind of cost-sharing? (Y/N)**

YES.

- 4. Pandemic Response. How would you evaluate the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Massachusetts has mounted a rather mixed response to COVID-19. Public health professionals, doctors, nurses, and tens of thousands of essential employees have done heroic work over the past two years. Massachusetts was unfortunate to be among the first outbreak locations and thus caught flat-footed in response and with a highly imperfect understanding of transmission methods, mitigations, and treatments.

The swift lockdown and high public participation rates were admirable; however our failure to adequately protect seniors and others in congregate care facilities was a preventable travesty. Our hospital system has been extremely stressed and the long term effects of these two years on our medical personnel deserve significant attention. However, our hospital system did not collapse. Despite a rocky first few weeks, our vaccination program has been successful with among the higher

vaccination rates in the country, though increased attention is necessary to reach those residents who are not yet fully vaccinated. The career civil servants behind the scenes should be applauded for the incredible and intense work they've done, many of whom have done so at risk to their own health.

Public communications, however, remain a source of confusion and a risk for further undesirable outcomes. It has never been clear what criteria have been or will be used to determine when various countermeasures are recommended or mandated or when the state would enter (or backtrack to) a particular "phase" of reopening. With the Omicron wave receding, we have appropriately removed many of current restrictions but it remains a mystery what criteria will be applied if and when things change in the future.

There have been bright spots in the Commonwealth's response -- places where communities have rallied to show what Massachusetts can be at its best. For example, more than 75% of Chelsea residents are fully vaccinated, exceeding the state average. This is a remarkable achievement given Chelsea's demographics, which includes many immigrants, poor people, and Latinos, groups that are often denied equitable access to healthcare. Chelsea's success speaks to the ability of state and local government and community groups (like La Colaborativa) to work together to reduce health inequities. These efforts should be a model for post-pandemic healthcare, rather than seen as a one-time or emergency effort.

5. **Public Health. What are the main lessons you would take from the state's experience with the COVID-19 pandemic in order to put our state on a stronger public health footing for future crises, especially as relates to protecting the state's most at-risk populations?**

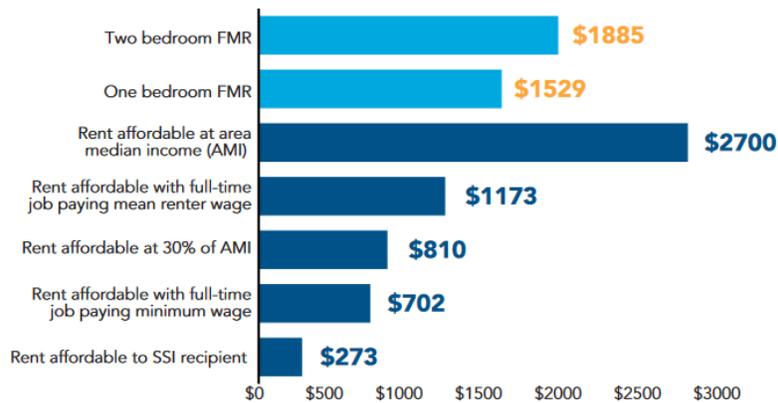
The pandemic highlighted deep inequities in our society that should prompt an all-of-government response. We must reflect on what we learned and be willing to change business-as-usual in all areas of public policy that intersect with public health -- from transportation to education.

As the most extreme moments of crisis recede, we *must* get a better understanding of our failures in congregate care settings. Even in the early days of the pandemic, when we were not yet aware of all of the information about COVID and when PPE was hard to find, our facilities were consistently failing at basic infection control. The fact that these problems predated COVID also shows that there were early warning signs. By understanding how these sub-par practices came to become standard and how failures of inspections did not lead to change pre-COVID, we can understand how we tragically failed residents and family members.

E. Housing

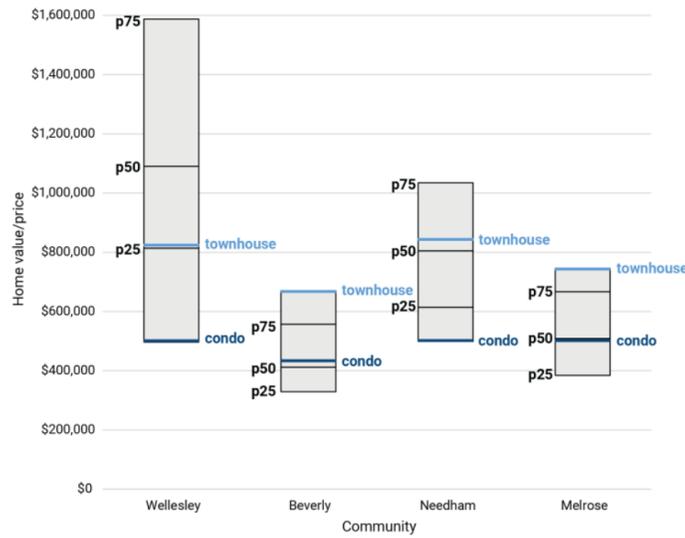
Massachusetts has a lot to offer, but that does little if people can't afford to live here. The [US News & World Report's annual state rankings](#) put Massachusetts at #40 in housing affordability (and #47 in cost of living). A worker earning minimum wage in Massachusetts would have to work [87 hours a week](#) to afford a modest one-bedroom rental home at market rate (and 107 hours for a modest two-bedroom). Over the last ten years, the need for affordable housing has increased, while funds for affordable housing have decreased at both federal and state levels. This is unsustainable. It has led to expanding economic inequality, increased homelessness, and damage to our economy, as talented workers often leave the state for less expensive regions.

With rental increases far outpacing wage increases, many are left with housing instability.



The overreliance of single-family housing in suburban development, as opposed to denser or multi-family housing, makes communities unaffordable.

Small multifamily condos expand affordability in the wealthiest communities
 Comparing prices of new townhouses and condos to existing homes



Source: Existing home values taken from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey 2014-2018. Prices for new townhouses and condos from Crump, Mattos, Schuetz and Schuster (2020). Metropolitan Policy Program at BROOKINGS

1. Please explain your principles and proposals relative to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).

I have a long and established track record of supporting pro-housing policies in my hometown. This includes supporting every 40B proposed in Brookline since I became a Town Meeting Member in 2012, including a 40B proposal at the end of the street on which I grew up. In addition, I have worked to establish zoning to promote affordable housing, reduce parking minimums, worked with petitioners on warrant articles to lead to more equitable and affordable housing, and supported the grassroots political efforts of groups like Brookline for Everyone.

These positions have not always been popular, but I believe they were the right thing to do, and I am proud to call myself a champion for more equitable housing policy in my own community and across the Commonwealth.

2. Reducing Homelessness. Would your office commit to compiling existing research and auditing current initiatives on reducing homelessness in order to promote data-backed best practices?

YES.

3. Public Housing. Massachusetts has underfunded state-assisted public housing for years and has sought to reduce the overall quantity of state public housing units. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in improving and expanding public housing, especially relating to the disposition of state-owned land for housing?

Given the Byzantine interaction of Federal, State, and local programs for housing subsidies, there is no doubt there are inefficiencies and avoidable poor outcomes for residents who qualify for benefits (especially including those who spend years on wait lists before receiving benefits). This system is not any easier for municipalities which face differing funding requirements and funding matches for building and maintaining public housing based on the original source of the funds.

I will conduct an audit of the affordable housing programs in Massachusetts to see how we can provide higher quality and more consistent options to those who need housing support.

I will also continue audits of Housing Authorities in individual communities, and look for opportunities to provide systemic support for improving the Authorities, which are often under-resourced, even in the wealthiest communities in Massachusetts.

4. **Rental Relief. Would your office commit to auditing current rental relief programs to ensure that struggling renters are able to receive the funding available and not turned away by inaccessible paperwork?** (Y/N)

YES.

5. **Tenant Protections. Would you support providing municipalities with the authority to implement rent-stabilizing regulations, just cause eviction protections, stronger condominium conversion and foreclosure protections, anti-displacement zones, and options to help tenants manage the upfront costs of leasing an apartment?** (Y/N)

YES.

6. **Eviction Sealing. Eviction records create lasting stigma, are prone to error and impair access to stable housing. Would you support legislation to seal eviction records so that both tenants and landlords can move on with their lives?** (Y/N)

YES.

7. **Zoning Reform. The Department of Housing & Community Development recently released guidelines for the 175 MBTA communities to have a zoning ordinance or bylaw that provides for at least one district of reasonable size near public transit in which multifamily housing is permitted as of right. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in the implementation of such reforms and in encouraging greater production of affordable housing across the Commonwealth?**

I have proposed that the Auditor's Office review DHCD's guidelines to determine whether they are resulting in the intended effect of creating more housing near MBTA service. Given the recent clear criteria outlined by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, my office will provide a place to track the progress of communities, not only in revising their zoning codes, but in tracking the increase in units available in these districts.

I further commit to auditing the Chapter 40B process (our "Anti-Snob Zoning Law") to determine where we may be able to aid communities in permitting and building

affordable housing as the law intends.

I am not just a champion for housing justice, but am also a champion for climate and environmental justice, and these issues are intricately linked. Exclusionary zoning, rejection of affordable housing, rejection of dense housing, and promoting housing for cars over people all have profound impacts on our emissions. Forced low-density housing and sprawl forces longer and more car-intensive journeys, forces more land to be devoted to non-permeable parking surfaces, erodes the ability of public transit to serve more people, destroys forest and other carbon-capturing greenfields, increases the carbon intensity of providing public services to far-flung communities, and dramatically increases energy required to heat and cool detached housing. I will make the State Auditor's Office the first in the country to incorporate carbon accounting into audits of state agencies (more on that below) and will push to make our housing programs more responsive to these realities.

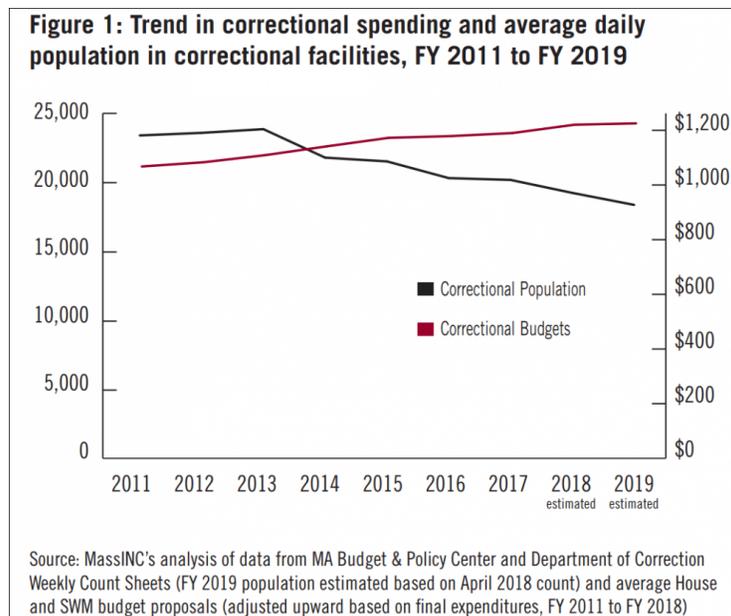
F. Racial and Social Justice

Massachusetts must continue to strive to be a state that welcomes and embraces all of its residents and combats prejudice and discrimination of all kinds, especially on the systemic and institutional level.

Mass incarceration in Massachusetts has proven socially and economically destructive, breaking apart communities across the state. From 2011 to 2016, [spending on prisons](#) grew faster than any other part of the Massachusetts budget, while funding for necessary services languished. The average cost per year to house a person in the Massachusetts Department of Corrections is [more than \\$60,000](#), money that could be better reinvested into the communities that have suffered from decades of misguided and racially discriminatory “tough on crime” policies. To achieve “justice for all,” we need a judicial system that does not disproportionately target communities of color and the poor and that does not criminalize public health issues such as addiction.

Immigrants make up 16% of Massachusetts’s population; however, demagoguery against, or indifference to, immigrant populations has historically been a mainstay of Massachusetts politics. Even though the administration in Washington has changed, we have seen a deportation agenda from both Democratic and Republican presidents, and it is important for states like Massachusetts to take leadership in protecting and advancing the rights of our immigrant communities and making clear that all are welcome.

The correctional population in Massachusetts has declined, yet the state continues to increase the Department of Corrections budget.



Significant racial disparities exist in incarceration in Massachusetts.

Imprisonment by Race/Ethnicity (2019)	
White imprisonment rate (per 100,000)	63
Black imprisonment rate (per 100,000)	466
Hispanic imprisonment rate (per 100,000)	260
Racial/Ethnic Disparity in Imprisonment (2019)	
Black : white ratio	7.4
Hispanic : white ratio	4.1
Juveniles in Custody (2015)	
Total juveniles in custody	309
Committed	168
Detained	135
Diverted	0
Juvenile custody rate (per 100,000)	0
White custody rate (per 100,000)	18
Black custody rate (per 100,000)	166
Latino custody rate (per 100,000)	117
American Indian custody rate (per 100,000)	0
Asian custody rate	0

1. **Please explain your principles and proposals relative to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).**

As the Commonwealth's Watchdog-in-Chief, I need to hear from and represent the needs and experiences of all of our residents. Diverse voices are essential to equitable policymaking. Starting with my own campaign, my staff and advisors reflect the full diversity of the Commonwealth, with members from Western Massachusetts, Black and Latinx members, immigrants, young professionals, and people in their 70s.

This diversity of perspective, viewpoint, and lived experience makes our decision-making stronger. I also rely on staff and supporters to push me to be a better candidate, a better public servant, and a better human being. I feel incredibly honored and fortunate to have them on my team.

Focusing on the events of the past few years while working with Transportation for Massachusetts, I joined Black Lives Matter marches, worked with our partners to develop and release a Transportation Justice statement, and worked with the Green Justice Coalition to petition the MBTA to prevent the police from closing public transit in the wake of protests against police brutality and not use transit as a tool of oppression.

2. **Social Cost of Overpolicing and Mass Incarceration. Would you commit to conducting a full audit of the social and economic costs of overpolicing and mass incarceration? (Y/N)**

YES. I have released a detailed plan for auditing the Massachusetts State Police which includes specific points related to complaints about bias and disproportionate enforcement as well as racial disparities in stops and arrests. Many of these commitments can be extended to our incarceration system. Incarcerating people has a large budgetary cost, but it is even more costly to society when our correctional facilities fail to prepare inmates for a better life outside of the correctional system. We must work to reduce rates of recidivism.

3. **Police Accountability. The 2020 police accountability legislation passed by the Massachusetts Legislature contained a number of steps forward, but important measures were left out. Would you support legislation to do the following?**

- a. **Eliminating qualified immunity for state and local police and correctional officers so that individuals whose constitutional rights are violated can have their fair day in court? (Y/N)**

YES.

- b. **Supporting strict regulations on government use of face surveillance like those initially enacted by the House and Senate in 2020, before Governor Baker rejected them? (Y/N)**

YES.

- c. **Requiring a vote by a local legislative body (city council, town meeting)**

before a municipality can acquire military or surveillance equipment? (Y/N)

YES.

- d. **Directing an independent investigation of the Massachusetts State Police Commonwealth Fusion Center, to determine whether it has engaged in investigations of protected First Amendment activity or otherwise improperly collected, accessed, or shared information about people not suspected of engaging in criminal activity? (Y/N)**

YES. I address this in point 13 in my [15-point plan](#) to audit the Massachusetts State Police.

- e. **Reforming the law regarding the Civil Service Commission so it no longer has power over the hiring or firing of police officers in Massachusetts? (Y/N)**

[Neither YES Nor NO] I will need to research this proposal more. In general, Civil Service protections help to ensure an appropriate separation between public employees and the whims of politicians. It also typically provides due process and a fair set of standards for public employees. I am reluctant to pull at a thread to weaken civil service protections generally (as this can be a dangerous precedent to allow right-wing extremists to undermine the functioning of government), but also understand that this process may not be working for police officers and am open to the conversation about how best to protect the public and public employees where the current process is dysfunctional.

4. **Sentencing Reform. The 2018 criminal justice reform bill was an important first step in reducing mass incarceration. However, in our “liberal” state, incarceration rates remain much higher than they are in other countries, and sentencing laws can be even more punitive than those in states viewed as conservative. Do you support the following reforms?**

- a. **Eliminating mandatory minimums for all drug offenses? (Y/N)**

YES.

- b. **Raising the age of criminal majority from 18 to 21, in line with research that shows that young offenders served by a juvenile system are much less likely to reoffend and more likely to successfully transition to adulthood? (Y/N)**

[Neither YES nor NO] This proposal is new to me. I am eager to learn more about the science and social science behind this, but inclined to support this change, at least for some offenses.

- c. **Decriminalizing consensual sexual activity between adolescents, by creating an exception to the statutory rape law for youth close in age? (Y/N)**

YES. Though only with appropriate safeguards in-place to address instances where minors are in harmful situations.

- d. **Eliminating the sentence of life without parole, which is costly and has been shown to be racist in its application?** (Y/N)

YES. Parole is already a high bar to cross for those imprisoned and to deny even the opportunity to work toward parole appears to be cruelty for its own sake.

5. **State Police Overtime Abuse. Recent scandals regarding overtime fraud in the state police show a significant lack of accountability and oversight. What do you see as the role of the Office of the Auditor in curbing such abuse?**

The history of overtime abuse within the Massachusetts State Police is troubling. These recent headlines have shocked and disturbed many Massachusetts residents and taxpayers, but the problems around a lack of supervision and lax accountability date back decades. For example, a 1996 report by international police experts John Linder and Associates identified a number of cultural issues developing at the MSP. State Police troopers and staff interviewed for that report felt a laxity threatening the MSP core, noting, "A lack of standards applies to all facets of the job;" and that, "Fairness and professionalism are organizational values receding into memory and institutional folklore."

These reports and others make clear that problems at the State Police go beyond a few bad apples or actors. The agency needs more structural change and reform if it is to live up to the high standards we should have for New England's largest law-enforcement agency.

The MSP didn't get to this place on its own. At each step, government officials responsible for providing oversight and accountability of MSP's operations and culture failed to do their jobs. In the absence of sufficient leadership from Beacon Hill or MSP management, the Auditor's Office must look at where the MSP's systems have failed our communities, taxpayers, and troopers themselves. My fifteen targeted components of my plan to audit the MSP audit are essential steps on the MSP's path to reform and cultural change that we know is needed.

As State Auditor, I will conduct a targeted audit of the State Police, with 15 key areas of evaluation and review including, but not limited to, reviews of supervision and accountability systems, administrative controls in payroll and human resources management, assessments of training and promotion criteria and systems, and inquiry into organizational support for the physical, mental, and emotional health of personnel. This proposal highlights the key role that I will play in reforming the Massachusetts State Police to make it more transparent, more accountable, and more responsive.

6. **Police Militarization. The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) 1033 Program permits the Secretary of Defense to transfer excess supplies and equipment to state and local law enforcement agencies. Would you commit to auditing the acquisition and use of such military weaponry by Massachusetts law enforcement?** (Y/N)

YES.

7. **Prison Profiteering—Part I. While Massachusetts does not have private prisons, the DOC invites private companies to profit off of the families of prisoners by price gouging inmates who have no alternatives but to buy from the sole providers of goods in prisons. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in combating such price gouging?**

When we as a society decide that incarceration is the best answer we have to address an individual's behavior, this decision must be made in service of public safety and public safety alone. We have forcibly taken people into our; we owe them their dignity and a guarantee of the fundamental human rights they do not sign away at the time of conviction of a crime. These problems are even greater when we consider the proportion of the prison population who are held in advance of trial but not yet convicted of any crime.⁵

High priced monopolies for services to imprisoned people do not serve any public safety need but seek to make extreme profit from people with no ability to exercise market power and further appear to be designed as a method for further punishment for its own sake.

As with all cases of private firms receiving a government subsidy (in this case, the right to a monopoly without sufficient oversight), the subsidy should be publicized and the public benefits and costs (including the costs to those incarcerated) should be documented.

8. **Prison Profiteering—Part II. The cost of phone calls can be as high as \$4-\$5 (or more) for 15 minutes of phone time for incarcerated individuals in some parts of Massachusetts.**
- a. **Do you support making phone calls free for incarcerated individuals?** (Y/N)
- YES.
- b. **What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in combating such price gouging?**
- See above.
9. **DOC Spending. Although the incarcerated population in Massachusetts has fallen, the Department of Corrections budget keeps rising. At the same time, investments in programs and services proven to reduce recidivism have not increased. Additionally, people inside the state's facilities are held in unsanitary conditions and are systematically denied basic medical and mental health care. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in addressing this?**

The Office of the State Auditor is about making state government work better and standing up to protect the public interest. When we spend on incarceration instead of investing in reducing recidivism, we are getting the worst of all worlds: poor use of taxpayer dollars, higher rates of crime, and an unjust system that is especially unjust for people and communities of color.

⁵ While this proportion has dropped from about [6% - about 1% in recent years](#), the issue remains just as salient for those in this position, even if there are fewer of them.

As Auditor, I will partner with advocates and institutions who have been on the front lines of reforming our criminal justice and corrections systems, and seek ways to communicate to the broader public that change isn't just possible and desirable, it is necessary. Together, we can make a strong case that continued reform of our system to make it more humane will also make it more effective and more fiscally responsible at the same time.

10. **Sheriff's Departments. Would you commit to conducting audits of individual sheriff's departments regarding use of funds (as in #9) and contracting? (Y/N)**

YES.

11. **Re-Entry for Returning Citizens. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in ensuring that funding for reentry services is achieving its purpose, and in promoting such programs?**

This area is one of many areas where the increased focus on program evaluation within the Auditor's office will be to the Commonwealth's benefit. We need to compare different interventions and support services, and be willing to adopt best practices from the rest of the country and the world. Consequently, both the departments responsible for these programs and the Auditor's office must set clear definitions of success, identify metrics that would enable measurement against those definitions, and be willing to adjust or discontinue programs that are not meeting our needs.

As Auditor, I intend for my office to be a resource for State agencies looking to conduct self-evaluations in addition to the office's official audits. This is an important cultural change as it requires an open mind to change course and to abandon instincts to treat a "failed" program as a personal or professional failure. When we can acknowledge these are difficult problems to solve and that many of our attempts may not succeed, no matter how well-intentioned, we can work together to improve the efficacy of state programs and deliver the greatest benefit to the public.

12. **Violence Prevention. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in ensuring that funding for violence prevention is achieving its purpose, and in promoting such programs?**

See answer immediately above.

13. **Safe Communities Act. Do you support the Safe Communities Act, which limits local and state police collaboration with federal immigration agents, bars law enforcement and court personnel from inquiring about immigration status, and ensures due process protections? (Y/N)**

YES.

14. **Work and Family Mobility Act. Do you support removing immigration status as a barrier to applying for a license or learner's permit? (Y/N)**

YES.

15. **Data Equity. Do you support allowing state agencies to collect, organize, and assemble public data on major ethnic subgroups for all racial groups to create more visibility for the diverse experiences within communities and enable policymakers and community organizations to be more responsive to community needs?** (Y/N)

Yes. Having data is essential to understanding how well we are accomplishing our goals. As we have many racial and equity goals, we must collect the data necessary to evaluate our progress along these goals. To that end, I absolutely support the collection of data for these purposes. I do temper this support with concerns that

a) people do not always answer demographic questions and people in historically mistreated communities are often even more reluctant to do so; any attempt to collect these data must be sensitive to the feelings and needs of those we seek to better serve and any data analytics conducted with these data must take these forms of statistical bias into account

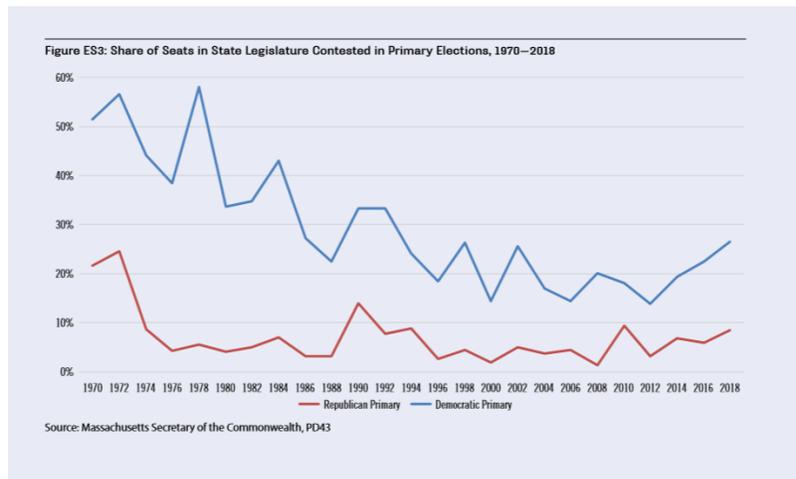
b) it can be easy to deanonymize datasets with surprisingly few variables and before we start collecting and using additional data that will be correlated with oftentimes very private information about the use of state services, we must be certain that we are not creating a privacy vulnerability for residents.

G. Good Government and Strong Democracy

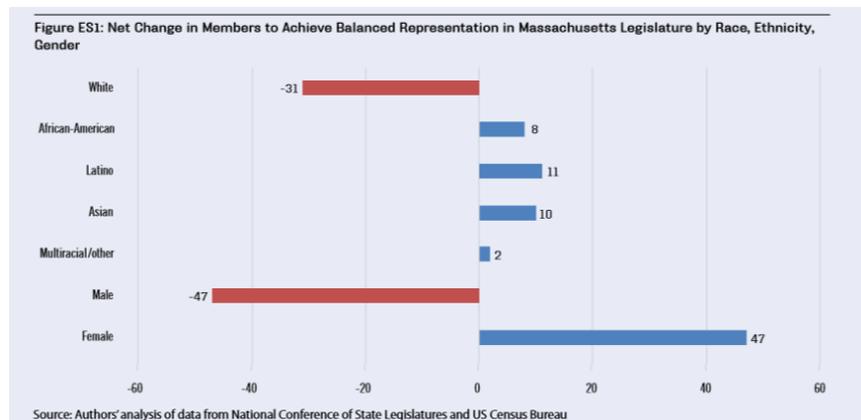
A strong democracy depends on a transparent and representative government and an engaged public. Too often, however, we see centralized, unaccountable power and barriers to participation. An undemocratic, centralized power structure on Beacon Hill makes it easier for lobbyists to target the top and undermine the system. Despite recent reforms, a weak public records system stymies government accountability: MA is one of only two states where all three branches of state government claim to be exempt. A strong democracy requires an engaged electorate, but voter turnout in midterm elections, and especially local elections, remains low. Although election modernization legislation in 2014 and 2018 helped bring much-needed reforms, we still lag behind states in New England and around the country in making voting accessible (Maine, for instance, has allowed for Election Day Registration since the 1970s).

A centralized power system, a skewed campaign finance system, and restrictive voting laws together help create a situation in which our elections are the [least competitive in the country](#).

Our elections have grown less competitive over the past four decades.



Our legislature is not reflective of the population as a whole.



1. **Please explain your principles and proposals relative to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).**

American Democracy is under threat. Too many in Massachusetts take our democracy for granted, and some even work to undermine voting accessibility and trust in our elections and the democratic process. I have seen the power of democracy firsthand, as a leader within government and of grassroots and advocacy organizations. To paraphrase Clinton and Obama Administrations official Eric Liu, "Political power is not fixed or finite...If you learn how to organize your neighbors...you've added to the net amount of power in civic life."

Throughout my career, I have worked and fought to increase this civic power. I was a Volunteer Coordinator for Deval Patrick's historic 2006 win. I have worked as a volunteer on Democratic campaigns in MA, NH, ME, GA, CA, and NV. I have worked inside of state government to make it more transparent and accessible to regular citizens. And I have stood up to protect the public interest in the great tradition of democratic activists, from those who opposed tyranny in the colonial era to those who opposed the expansion of urban highways in the 1960s and 70s (acknowledging that No Boston Olympics in no way compares to these remarkable and historic fights). I have been both a champion for democracy and a beneficiary of democracy's greatest promises, and I will bring the successes, the scars, and the lessons from those experiences with me to the Auditor's Office.

2. **Public Records Law. Massachusetts is the only state where the Governor's Office, the Legislature, and the Judiciary claim full exemptions from the public records laws. Would you support eliminating these exemptions? (Y/N)**

YES.

3. **Open Data. What would you do to promote greater data transparency in order to help external partners in academia better research state programs?**

I have been a national leader on open data in government.. When I served as Assistant Secretary of Transportation for Governor Deval Patrick, I co-founded the MassDOT open-data program, which launched smartphone applications that tell you when your bus or train is going to arrive, saving taxpayers and farepayers millions compared with more costly and cumbersome alternatives. We made the MBTA the very first transit agency on the entire East Coast to make those apps available to riders and received national attention in the Wall Street Journal and on NPR by making the MBTA a leader on real-time information. Other transit agencies on the East Coast followed our lead, and other agencies in Massachusetts state government did as well.

I know the power of open data and I know that it makes government stronger and more responsive, not weaker and more vulnerable. We must instill a culture of transparency and openness in Massachusetts state government, and I am the only candidate in this race with a demonstrated track record of getting that done, not just calling for change.

Data users cannot do their jobs when data are poorly documented, inconsistently recorded, or spread across disparate incompatible data sources. Broadly, audits,

evaluations, and functional everyday service rely on connected, documented, accessible, and secure databases. Unfortunately, across governments worldwide, data are not always able to guarantee they are all of the above.

Improvements and modernization in data collection and storage across the Commonwealth would not only result in improved quality and utility of audits from my office, but also enable state agencies to improve their own service delivery. In publishing open and transparent data, our State agencies will support the needs of the research community, advocacy groups, and residents in Massachusetts who deserve access to information.

4. **Voting Access. Massachusetts lags behind other states in making voting accessible for all. Do you support eliminating Massachusetts's arbitrary and exclusionary 20-day voter registration cutoff and allowing voters to register or update their registration at the polls on Election Day and during the early voting period?** (Y/N)

YES. I support options to make it easier to register to vote and to vote. When I worked on elections in New Hampshire over multiple campaigns, I helped voters utilize their rights to Same Day Registration and saw the substantial benefits it brought to voters directly.

That said, I understand that municipal clerks have expressed concerns about how to implement this reform, including differing suggestions about the period between day 20 and Election Day and registration on Election Day itself. We need to reduce the bureaucratic burden on voters to enable easier access to the polls but we need to hear from and work with the Clerks responsible for elections so as not to add additional bureaucratic burden to their already understaffed, underfunded, and far too often ignored offices. As the head of the Division of Local Mandates, the Auditor's Office has an important role to play in this conversation. I look forward to being an active partner and to working to get this done with a solution that works for all parties.

5. **Voting Rights Restoration. Would you support restoring the franchise to incarcerated individuals serving time for felony convictions (Their right to vote was taken away by ballot twenty years ago)?** (Y/N)

YES.

6. **Removing Barriers to Running. The cost of child care can prove prohibitive to parents seeking to run for office. Would you support legislation to explicitly allow parents running for office to use campaign funds to pay for child care?** (Y/N)

YES.

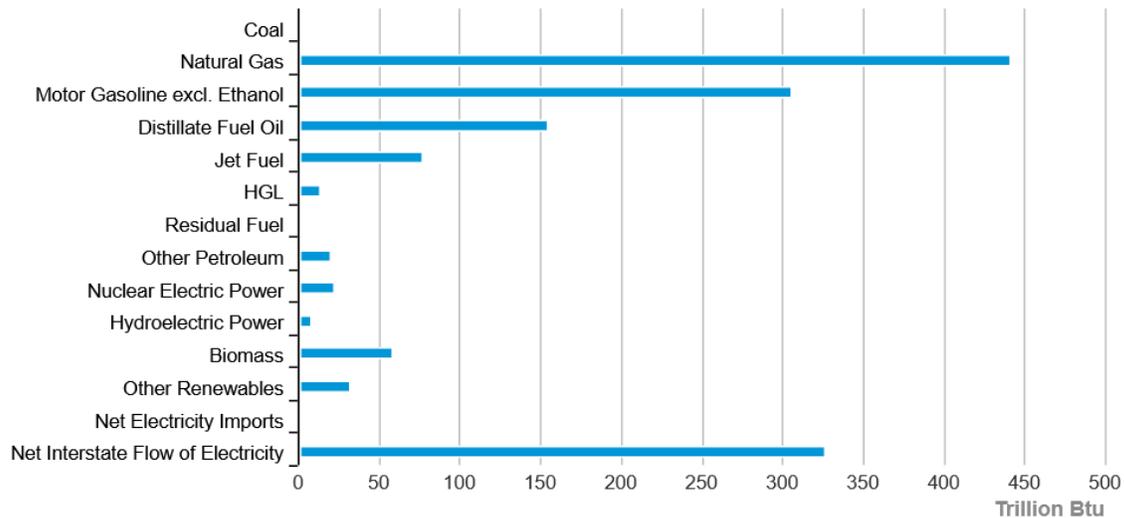
H. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection

As a coastal state, Massachusetts will be hit particularly hard by climate change, but we are not responding with the necessary urgency. In order to avoid catastrophic climate change, global carbon emissions need to be [halved by 2030](#) and brought to net zero by 2050, and affluent countries and states must go further. In 2016, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled that the state has failed to meet its legal obligation to set and enforce annual limits on greenhouse gas emissions as outlined in the 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act. Setting and reaching these goals will require the decarbonization of our state economy and a transition away from fossil fuels toward clean, renewable sources of energy. In light of congressional gridlock at the federal level, state government must take a role in incentivizing reduced carbon usage and assisting in coordination between agencies and moving forward local government understanding of looming climate threats.

Public transit must play a role in decarbonizing our transportation system, as well as advancing complementary goals of equity and inclusion. However, Massachusetts politicians have lost their understanding of public transit as a public good that benefits all residents and businesses in Massachusetts, not just those who use it in their daily lives. The greatest evidence of this is their neglect of the MBTA: its debt has grown to nearly [\\$5 billion](#), and it would need [more than \\$10 billion](#) to bring infrastructure and equipment up to a state of good repair. Regional Transit Authorities that serve communities, including Gateway Cities across the state, face enormous capital needs as well.

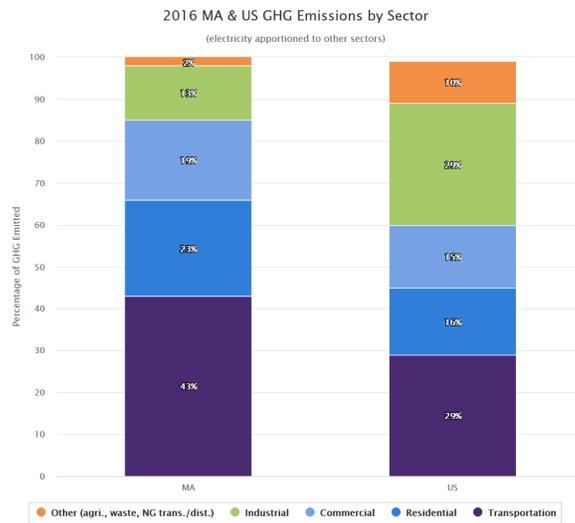
Despite recent progress, Massachusetts is still overwhelmingly dependent on fossil fuels.

Massachusetts Energy Consumption Estimates, 2019



Source: Energy Information Administration, State Energy Data System

Transportation is currently the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in MA.



(Source: <http://www.mass.gov>)

- Please explain your principles and proposals relative to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).**

Climate change is an existential threat to our way of life and I have committed to being the first State Auditor to introduce Carbon Accounting into audits of key state agencies. It is also no secret that transportation and infrastructure are items near and dear to my heart. I served as Assistant Secretary of Transportation, worked in the transportation technology private sector, led Transportation for Massachusetts, and served on my hometown's Transportation Board... so please forgive my lengthy answers below.

To save reader's the chore of hearing about my thoughts on traffic signal timing, taxi medallions, the history of trolley service on Washington Street, and proposed nose shapes on upcoming Type 10 Green Line trains, I will focus on two specific items from the recent past that combine transportation and environmental/health work.

Following the announcement of the Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI), I co founded the Mass TCI table to help ensure this program would improve equity and responsiveness to the needs of the impacted communities while also addressing climate change. In this task, I was proud that my co founding partners were Community Labor United, itself a collaboration between Labor Unions and various community groups.

While at Transportation for Massachusetts, we highlighted the impacts of transportation on Environmental Justice and public health outcomes. Land use decisions about where to locate transportation infrastructure (and the industry to support it) has direct health impacts on the nearby communities. Similarly, policies like redlining and modern policies that maintain the status quo it created lead to

significantly inequitable quality of life, health, and economic outcomes today.

2. **Next Generation Roadmap. At the start of this legislative session, the Legislature passed a bill that requires emissions reductions of 50% from 1990 levels by 2030, 75% by 2040, and at least 85% by 2050. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in ensuring that the state achieves—or exceeds—these goals?**

We cannot underestimate the importance of addressing climate change in the coming years. I released a [policy paper on Climate Change](#) nearly a full year before the election and before any other candidates in this race had released a policy paper of any kind.

I will make the Massachusetts State Auditor's Office the first in the country to incorporate carbon accounting into audits of relevant state agencies. The Commonwealth will not achieve its own mandates for emissions reductions unless state agencies and programs are monitored and our progress is tracked. For example, I will incorporate emissions and local air pollution metrics into audits of the Massachusetts Highway Division to bring accountability and transparency to Highway Division decisions that have historically moved us in the opposite direction from our climate and environmental justice goals.

3. **Fossil Fuel Infrastructure. Do you oppose the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure in the state? (Y/N) If so, what steps would you take to do so?**

YES. One major way to reduce our habit of defaulting to using fossil fuels is to make clear the costs of using them. My commitment to [carbon accounting](#) will make explicit the tradeoffs we make every time we use the power of the state to select fossil fuels or not encourage others to select alternatives. With the help of our next Governor, the Legislature, and other regional partners, I will track the increase of these costs as we implement solutions like the Transportation and Climate Initiative, Carbon Taxes, or other direct disincentives to the use of fossil fuels.

4. **MBTA Board. Would you commit to auditing the MBTA Board to assess whether it is meeting its stated goals? (Y/N)**

YES.

5. **MBTA Contracts. Would you commit to conducting a thorough audit of the MBTA's contracts with Keolis and Cubic, which have been plagued by insufficient transparency? (Y/N)**

YES. I have noted in prior public interviews that I am especially concerned with the MBTA's AFC 2.0 project for which Cubic is the vendor. The project is hundreds of millions of dollars over budget and years delayed. It does not have the proper oversight required at the MBTA, and the State Auditor must step in to review this project.

6. **Decarbonizing Public Transit. The MBTA is replacing clean trolley electric buses with electric battery buses that also have to run on diesel to keep the heat functioning in cold months, replacing a clean tech with a hybrid tech and working against the state's emissions goals. Would you commit to auditing the MBTA's**

approach to reducing carbon emissions? (Y/N)

YES. It is baffling how the MBTA arrived at a decision to prioritize electrifying its bus fleet by replacing the only existing 100% electric portion of the fleet. Even had these buses been able to operate in the winter without Diesel heaters (and, as noted, they cannot) and had they been able to operate the same number of hours a day as the trolleybus fleet (which they cannot), this would be a costly investment for no net improvements.

A full audit of the carbon impacts of these decisions must include the following tradeoffs:

- What are the costs of carbon associated with 100% Diesel temporary replacements of the trolleybus fleet?
- What are the costs of carbon associated with long-term use of Diesel heaters when battery only buses are eventually procured (and what are the risks of later delivery of these vehicles)?
- What is the reduction in service and/or additional bus procurement necessary due to the inability of battery-only buses to run a full day without a lengthy recharge?
- What is the impact of any reduction in service quality on ridership, especially if some of those riders switch to car trips with greater carbon emissions per trip?
- What is the comparative benefit of using these funds to improve service quality on other routes (including non-electric buses) if it encourages mode shift from cars to transit, given transit's far lesser emissions per trip?
- What is the source of the electricity that will be used to charge these battery buses and will emissions from those sources be a net decrease over the current status quo?
- What alternative solutions are possible with "In-Motion Charging" vehicles that allow trolleybuses to operate with a (small) battery and to charge while working under the wires? Would they address the concerns about inability to route around incidents or roadworks? Would they allow an expansion of the trolleybus network? Are there economies of scale available for these buses that were not present with traditional trolleybuses due to the purchase of new In-Motion Charging vehicles by the Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority?

To the degree that battery-only buses are a viable option for the MBTA now or in the future, the MBTA *must* consider Environmental Justice concerns and prioritize use of emission-free vehicles in communities already subjected to the worst impacts of our previous decisions.

7. **Transit Fares. Would you commit to auditing the total cost of installing the new "AFC2" fare collection system for buses in order to determine whether or not it would be more cost effective to simply not collect fares and not pay for the costs of fare collection? (Y/N)**

Yes. I would commit to an audit of AFC2 as this program has had multiple major difficulties that have increased costs, delayed benefits, required the agency to maintain obsolete systems, and added confusion and dysfunction to other sorely needed MBTA projects that relied on AFC2.

The best possible outcome for the MBTA and fare collection is a system that is:

- low-cost for all,
- significantly discounted or free for those with low incomes,
- easy to use,
- supportive of higher frequency and faster service through all-door boarding,
- comfortable and safe for all without the risk of fare inspection escalating into a dangerous police incident, and
- functional and linked across all modes (including provisions for future high-frequency Regional Rail) so as to help the MBTA create a service network that matches mobility needs rather than favoring one type of service over another.

We must do what we can to deliver these benefits given the current situation, whether the path forward is the current AFC2 plan or not, and learn the lessons about how this project got out of control. The MBTA must undertake many more large capital projects to maintain, improve, and expand the system (especially in the face of climate change). We need the MBTA to do better.

8. **Free Public Transit. Do you support making public transit in the Commonwealth fare-free? (Y/N) If so, what role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in making the case for it?**

[Neither YES nor NO] As stated above, we absolutely need an equitable fare collection system that accommodates everyone, with special provision for low-income riders. Mayor Wu, Congresswoman Pressley, former Mayor Janey, and others have driven this conversation forward dramatically in the last year, following on the work of the FMCB which pushed hard for low-income fare programs prior to its dissolution last year. I applaud those who have put this idea forward and started a conversation about the costs of transportation. We make choices as a society to charge for all or a portion of some public services, while others are free. A stone carving above the entrance to the Boston Public Library says, "Free to All". Why shouldn't the entrance to Copley Station have the same sign?

Mayor Wu and others have rightly challenged a status quo that has raised the price of transit while making driving relatively cheap. MBTA fares have increased 200%-300% since 1991 (far more than inflation generally) while the gas tax has risen only 14% in the same period of time. Given the income distribution of riders and drivers, not to mention the environmental, climate, congestion, and land-use implications of this difference, this is an extremely inequitable situation and deserves immediate attention

For the MBTA, fares broadly need to be lower, including free where appropriate and with lower multiples between the cost of a monthly pass and a one-way fare. For the RTAs where the costs of fare collection make up a much greater proportion of the fares collected, making service free may be an easy net win for the agency and the public.

I support piloting and testing of free-fares, especially on buses, where fare payment is often a significant impediment to reliability and speed. Let's continue to gather data from these pilots and foster a robust conversation about how we want to pay for transit as a Commonwealth.

9. **Infrastructure Spending. Massachusetts is expected to receive \$9 billion from**

President Biden's infrastructure bill.

- a. **Would you advocate for using funds for measures like bike infrastructure, pedestrian crossings, bus rapid transit, and other measures to reduce reliance on automotive transit? (Y/N)**

YES. I will be the first statewide elected official to commute daily by transit since Governor Mike Dukakis left office in 1991.

- b. **What would be your priorities in ensuring the equitable and climate-conscious use of such funds?**

My [ARPA oversight](#) and [Climate Change](#) policy papers cover my plans for these important items.

Past and current decisions by state government on where to locate industry, route highways, and allow various forms of pollution have led to disparate impacts for communities of color and vulnerable populations (low income, linguistically isolated, the very old and very young, etc.).

We have a unique opportunity to utilize federal stimulus funds to set a higher standard for fairness and equity so that every community benefits from federal spending and the communities hardest hit by the pandemic receive the help they need. Under my leadership, audits of federal dollars spent by the state will incorporate clear equity goals and measures to accompany them, including tracking how funds flow to historically marginalized communities, Gateway Cities, and areas that have suffered from compounding harms like public disinvestment, air pollution, and lack of access to healthcare.

This will be aided by my creation of an Auditor's Commission on Environmental Justice, composed of representatives of communities that are hit hardest by climate change and by local environmental pollution. Understanding the costs of these forms of environmental injustice and redressing them requires hearing directly from those most impacted. Knowing their experiences is essential to building the right sets of goals and measurements in our climate and environmental programs. This Commission will inform the work of the Auditor's Office before, during, and after state audits that cover agencies that impact climate, emissions, and pollution.