



PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS
2022 Attorney General
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate: Shannon Liss-Riordan

Office Sought: Attorney General

Party: Democrat

Website: www.shannonforag.com

Twitter: @ShannonForAG

Facebook: @ShannonForAG

Instagram: @Shannon4AG

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. Jobs and the Economy
- B. Education
- C. Health Care
- D. Housing
- E. Racial and Social Justice
- F. Good Government and Strong Democracy
- G. 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?

I'm running for Attorney General to ensure that our laws work for regular people, and not just the rich and powerful. Right now, the people of Massachusetts really need some results. From corporate-bad actors taking advantage of workers and consumers in our rapidly evolving economy to systemic racism, threats to reproductive freedom, the childcare crisis, and climate change, hardworking families are struggling just to keep up. They need someone to have their back, and that's exactly what I'll do as Massachusetts' next Attorney General. I have been working effectively as a private Attorney General for the last 20 years and am excited for the opportunity to take this work to the next level with the power of the state behind me. My top three priorities (if I have to pick just three!), which I have outlined in more detail below in the relevant sections, are:

1. Combatting wage theft
2. Strengthening consumer protection
3. Rooting out systemic racism and enhancing civil rights enforcement

2. What prepares you to serve in this capacity?

I have been a practicing attorney for more than 23 years. For decades, I have taken on some of the most powerful interests in the country, including Uber, Lyft, Amazon, Starbucks, IBM, FedEx, American Airlines, my alma mater Harvard University (which I've proudly sued at least 4 times!), and many more. For my entire legal career I have represented all kinds of working people, from Uber drivers, waitresses, construction workers, janitors, strippers, and more, and helped them recover hundreds of millions of dollars that corporate America stole from them.

I am the only candidate in the race who has managed a law firm and led teams of lawyers to deliver results for the people. I have made national headlines over the years, leading my firm of about a dozen lawyers, regularly taking on the biggest challenges and routinely winning David vs. Goliath battles against some of the largest, most well resourced corporations in the country. I have also coordinated with the Attorneys General across the country, including in Massachusetts, New York, and California on a host of impact litigation cases over the course of my career. I have won the jury trials and the appeals that have helped shape our laws to better and more fairly serve the people.

The cases that I have won have not only put money back in employees' pockets but have changed corporate practices and moved industries. These victories for workers in Massachusetts have spread around the country. Three examples highlight well the impact my work has had: a string of cases I brought to stop the systemic theft of tips; cases I brought on behalf of vulnerable immigrant workers who were being sold jobs under the false pretense of owning their own business; and my decades-long fight against Uber and other Big Tech companies (Lyft, DoorDash, GrubHub, Amazon, and others) over their misclassification of workers as independent contractors.

Back in 2001, I started getting calls from wait staff who weren't getting all of their tips because management was taking a cut of them. These were hardworking people – they paid

their rent, put food on the table, and supported their families by counting on the generosity of the public they served. Their bosses were taking away their hard-earned tips to subsidize their business costs and line their own pockets. I knew that was wrong, so I took on that first case based on an obscure law that had been on the books in Massachusetts since 1952, but had never been enforced and wasn't widely known. I lost the first two cases I brought under that law, but I kept fighting. And then I started winning case after case on this issue. That string of cases changed the service industry in Massachusetts and established the law that tips are for workers, not for owners. But I didn't stop there. This fight went nationwide. Now, every restaurant, hotel, airline, and gig economy company knows they better not touch workers' tips, because, if they do, I'll come after them.

In another long-running string of cases, I took on the janitorial industry for preying on immigrant workers. A host of companies deceptively charged thousands of dollars to these workers, under the pretense that they would have the American dream of owning their own business. In reality, these companies were charging workers for the privilege of cleaning toilets in office buildings. I won these cases and got the Supreme Judicial Court to rule that, in Massachusetts, it illegal to sell a job. These companies do not do this any more in Massachusetts.

Perhaps most notoriously, over the last decade, I have taken on Uber, Lyft, and the entire gig economy for misclassifying their workers as independent contractors. By misclassifying them, they have saved massively on labor costs by avoiding giving their workers any employment benefits and protections whatsoever. My work in this area, which I initiated, sparked a national conversation about the importance of ensuring employment and labor protections for these workers. I introduced the [Massachusetts' "ABC" test](#), the strongest misclassification test in the country, in California, where the Supreme Court adopted it. This led to the California state legislature then codifying this test into law with [AB 5](#). Uber, Lyft, and other gig economy companies struck back with Proposition 22 in 2020, a ballot initiative through which these companies bought themselves an exemption from all labor and employment laws for the price of more than \$200 million, which they spent to sow misinformation and trick voters.

Those same companies are now attempting to undermine Massachusetts' strong employment laws with [another expensive, deceptive ballot initiative this year](#). I am proud to have been a founding board member of the growing coalition of workers rights, consumer rights, and civil rights advocates to oppose this ballot initiative, now called [Massachusetts Is Not For Sale](#).

In taking on these big fights against some of the national's most powerful corporations, I've earned my share of nicknames, including "Uber's worst nightmare," "Gigzilla," "the most reviled woman in Silicon Valley," and "Sledgehammer Shannon." But these fights and victories are also why I have been called [The Worker's Champion](#) time and time again.

I am ready on day one to step into the role of Attorney General and lead the People's Law Firm and continue using the law as a tool to improve people's lives.

3. The Attorney General has a powerful platform for influencing state legislation. What would be your top legislative priorities if elected, and how would you work to pass

them?

I will aim to be an activist Attorney General and greatly increase the office's work and partnerships with the legislature. There are a number of bills I would like to see passed, and I will work with legislators, community groups, unions, and activists to see them succeed, including:

1. **Wage Theft.** Strengthen enforcement to stop wage theft and ensure the Attorney General's Office has increased resources and funding, particularly for the Fair Labor Division.
2. **Improve the standard for joint employment liability.** Companies exploit this loophole to delegate employment responsibilities to intermediaries in order to avoid being held accountable for their actions.
3. **Private Attorney General Act (PAGA).** Massachusetts needs a Private Attorney General Act to aid enforcement of wage theft and other employer abuses as the Supreme Court has been taking away the rights of private attorneys to assist Attorneys General in these enforcement actions.
4. **Require all housing to be de-leaded.** Currently, our state law only compels landlords to ensure homes are free from lead if there are children under the age of 6 living in the property. This partial measure has resulted in rampant discrimination against families with children and the continued presence of lead in housing throughout Massachusetts has disproportionately impacted communities of color. This isn't just a housing issue—it is a pressing racial justice and health equity issue.
5. **Just Cause Eviction.** Just cause would put an end to “no fault” evictions and allow a landlord to initiate eviction proceedings only under specific circumstances that violate the terms of a lease.
6. **Tenant Right to Counsel.** Ensuring tenants have legal representation during eviction cases will help correct the power disparity between landlords and tenants and keep tenants in their homes.
7. **Eviction Sealing.** Greater protections, such as those included in the HOMES Act, are needed to protect tenants with eviction records and pending eviction cases.
8. **Allow public employees the right to strike.** The right to strike, and be protected from retaliation for discussing and planning strikes, is a critical labor protection that public employees should also enjoy.
9. **Establish a Green Bank.** Using penalties collected from environmental enforcement and other public investments, a Green Bank could fund environmental justice projects, clean infrastructure projects, and other similar initiatives.
10. **Limit the use of facial surveillance technology by government agencies and law enforcement.** I support H. 135 / S. 47 currently pending in the State House, which would ensure critically needed safeguards against widespread use of this technology.
11. **Safe Communities Act.** We must prevent local law enforcement from working with ICE to carry out federal immigration laws.

4. What do you view the role of the office of the AG in protecting Massachusetts's interests on the national level?

Massachusetts can and should be a national leader on the issues we face. Attorney General Healey has done great work to make Massachusetts a national leader in holding the fossil fuel industry accountable with her litigation against Exxon and taking on opioid manufacturers. I have spent years coordinating with AG offices, including in Massachusetts, California, and New York. As Attorney General, I would be a leader among AGs nationwide.

My decade-long battles against Uber, Lyft, and the gig economy are especially relevant here. Regardless of what happens with the Big Tech ballot initiative this year—which Uber and Lyft plan to spend \$100 million on to buy themselves an exemption from our employment laws—this will not be the last we hear on the issue in Massachusetts—and nationwide. It is critically important to have an Attorney General who knows this fight inside and out and who can lead the fight nationwide alongside other AGs. Having been in a chess match with this industry for a decade, I am ready to assume that leadership on day one.

5. What are your thoughts on striking the appropriate balance between the Attorney General's role as the lawyer representing the state's officials and the AG's role as an independently elected government official? For example, under what circumstances would you as AG decline to follow the wishes of a state client?

While I recognize the constitutional duty of the Attorney General's Office to represent the state, there are cases in which the state's conduct is indefensible and it is not in the best interest of the people to have the Attorney General defend those actions. I will not allow taxpayer dollars to be spent defending the wrong side of a lawsuit. My job would be to keep state agencies out of trouble - and fix and prevent issues from occurring, before they turn into lawsuits. If they do, I would focus on resolving cases that should not be defended - and, in those instances, where a resolution cannot be reached, I would appoint a special Attorney General to represent the state while I took the side of the plaintiffs.

For example, the Attorney General's Office is currently defending the Commonwealth's ongoing use of a discriminatory civil service exam to determine hiring and promotion of police officers and firefighters. Massachusetts is the only state in the country that continues to use this discriminatory exam and there is no reason to dedicate taxpayer dollars and state resources to defending this lawsuit. Massachusetts is also defending a case challenging the discriminatory impact of its housing deleading law on families with children. As AG, I would work to solve these issues, rather than spend public dollars fighting these important challenges.

6. The Attorney General is the state's top law enforcement official and, in that role, will often partner with state police for investigations and prosecutions. This creates an inevitable conflict with relation to investigating actions done by state police. How would you address this conflict?

I have never been afraid to hold the state accountable for its actions, and that includes the state police. In fact, [I am currently representing state troopers](#) in a lawsuit against the state police for violations of Massachusetts' Paid Family and Medical Leave Act. While the Attorney General often does and must partner with state police for investigations and cases, I will

continue my long streak of holding them accountable when they are in the wrong, including mediating disputes before they rise to the level of litigation and, when necessary, appointing a special Attorney General to represent the state if/when I find their conduct indefensible.

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

As discussed above, I have been in hand-to-hand combat with Uber, Lyft, and the gig economy companies for more than a decade. This fight has led to the current Big Tech ballot initiative designed to give the gig economy companies a carve out from our state's strong employment protections. I am proud to be a founding board member of the coalition to fight back against this ballot initiative, now called [Massachusetts Is Not For Sale](#). As a founding officer of this coalition, I worked closely with the AFL-CIO and a large number of workers' rights, civil rights, and consumer protection groups to raise awareness of the issue and gain buy-in from stakeholders across Massachusetts.

8. Did Attorney General Healey join any amicus briefs with other attorneys general that you would not have joined or vice versa? Which one(s), and why?

While amicus briefs are an important way for the Attorney General's Office to weigh in on cases, it is more important to call out what cases the office has brought and litigated and where the office is in the wrong with its own cases and investigations. Defending the discriminatory civil service exam, as I discussed above, is a perfect example. As Attorney General, I will be very intentional about knowing what cases the state is asked to defend and ensure that taxpayer resources are not going to defend the indefensible.

As for amicus briefs, I am very proud to have coordinated with the Attorney General's Office on important litigation and have the office submit amicus briefs in support of my cases. Most recently, the Attorney General's office supported a case I have pending before the Supreme Judicial Court regarding 7-Eleven and whether a corporation can defend itself against misclassification claims by designated workers as franchisees. In the past, the office has submitted other amicus briefs in support of my cases, including protecting workers from tip theft.

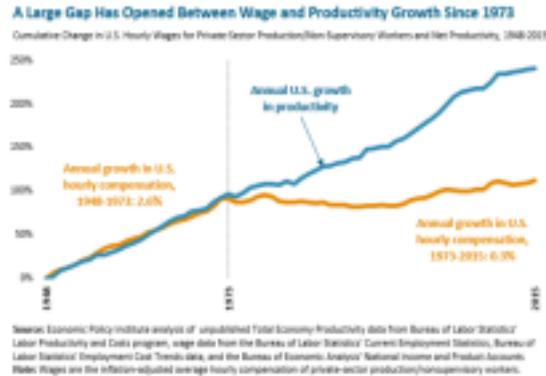
II. The Issues

A. Jobs and the Economy

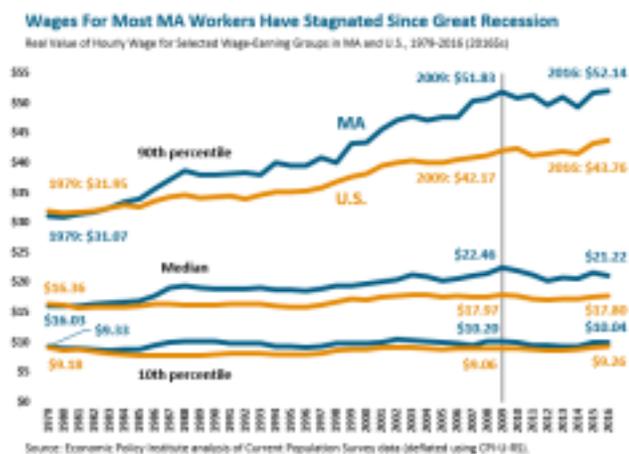
Massachusetts ranks as one of the top ten [most unequal states](#), as the gains from economic growth have disproportionately benefited the already well-off. Compounding this, we are one of the most expensive states in the country for [health care](#), [housing](#), and [child care](#), all of which 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.)

Wage enforcement is critical, and Massachusetts has strong tools that need to be used more robustly and aggressively to combat systemic wage theft and put money back into the pockets of workers. As I lay out in more detail below, I will ramp up enforcement and develop new tools for the Attorney General's Office to hold bad actors accountable and ensure our wage laws are vigorously enforced.

I have spent my entire legal career of more than 23 years representing working people, including litigating wage enforcement cases, collecting overtime wages, stolen tips, and fighting companies for misclassifying their workers as independent contractors. Through this work, I've been widely recognized through the national legal community for having developed laws across the country to strengthen wage enforcement and other worker protections. I have worked in partnership with worker centers across the state, such as Justice At Work, the Brazilian Worker Center, and the Metrowest Worker Center, to educate workers, especially immigrant workers, about their rights and help recoup wages that have been stolen from them. Additionally, as mentioned above, I have worked closely with the AFL-CIO, civil rights groups, and consumer advocates to co-found the coalition now known as "Massachusetts Is Not For Sale" to fight back against the Big Tech ballot initiative to undermine employment laws.

I have been widely recognized for my work as a labor attorney, having been recently selected by Benchmark as the top employment lawyer in the country in 2020 and as one of the three Top Women of Law (Circle of Excellence) by Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly in 2021. [More information about my background and legal victories can be found on my law firm's website.](#)

2. Combating Wage Theft. The Attorney General's Fair Labor Division ensures workers are paid the wages they are owed and that businesses that play by the rules don't get undercut by competitors who save costs at the expense of their workers. The AG's office has succeeded at collecting funds from employers from employers who violated the law and returned the money to impacted workers; however, for many workers, the money comes months after they have earned the wages. What would you do as AG to prevent bad employers from continuing to operate and deny workers the wages to which they are entitled?

As Attorney General, I will take a multi-pronged approach to combating wage theft and ramping up enforcement of our wage laws, including (1) Adding resources to the Fair Labor Division; (2) Expediting the enforcement process; (3) Bringing criminal charges against repeat bad actors; and (4) Advocating for a new fund to ensure workers with wage theft claims get the money they're owed upfront.

While the Fair Labor Division is a critical means of enforcing our wage laws, the Division needs additional resources to deliver more money back to workers more urgently. I will divert additional resources to the Fair Labor Division (including

resources that can be obtained through litigation) and work with the legislature to secure additional funding for the Division and advance legislation to ramp up enforcement powers. Additional funding is particularly important to ensure the Division can hire multilingual investigators, attorneys, and support staff to pursue cases on behalf of workers who fear seeking restitution.

In addition to new resources and funding, I will aggressively pursue systemic enforcement, undertaking comprehensive efforts to root out wage violations in industries where violations are rampant and partner with unions and worker centers to uncover violations. I will also expedite the enforcement process of our wage laws, cut through administrative red tape, and deliver money back into workers' pockets more quickly. Instead of relying primarily on issuing citations to employers and allowing them to drag out the administrative process, I will take employers who steal wages directly to court, seek triple damages, and implement debarment proceedings for repeat offenders.

The Attorney General's Office also has the power to bring criminal charges against employers who steal wages from their employees. Wage theft runs rampant in many industries, with many employers receiving minor slaps on the wrist or waiting out the administrative process. I will use the full force of the office to bring criminal charges against the most egregious violators and repeat offenders.

Finally, I will seek to restructure the way recovered wages are paid out to workers who bring wage theft claims. Instead of requiring workers to wait months or even years to receive their stolen wages, I will seek to establish a fund to pay out claims upfront to workers who bring evidence of a wage theft violation while the Attorney General's Office goes after violators in court.

3. **Protecting All Workers. Declining union density—private-sector union membership was a mere 6.2% in 2019 (BLS 2020)—increases the risk of labor law violations: Workers not covered by union contracts are almost twice as likely to experience minimum wage violations as those in a union or covered by a union contract. Meanwhile, available resources for enforcement of workplace laws are insufficient, both at the federal and state levels. What will you do to protect and defend wage protections for nonunion workers?**

Nonunion workers deserve strong protections, just as union employees do. Much of my work throughout my career has been on behalf of workers who are not privileged to belong to a union. In one current example, [I am representing Whole Foods workers](#) from more than a dozen stores across the country, who were unjustly disciplined and sent home without pay for wearing Black Lives Matter masks at work. As Attorney General, I will vigorously enforce our wage laws and hold bad actors accountable, regardless of whether their workers are unionized or not and fight to ensure that all workers can act in a concerted fashion to advocate for better working conditions.

4. **Union Protections. How will your office expand the rights of unions to represent**

and organize workers?

Having represented workers and unions for more than 20 years, I know firsthand how important collective bargaining and unionization are to improving working standards, raising wages and benefits, and protecting working class families. I will use the bully pulpit of the AG's office to trumpet the importance of unions and the right to organize. Throughout my career, I have taken every opportunity I can to try to connect workers who are interested in furthering their collective power with union representatives, in order to encourage organizing new workplaces. As Attorney General, I will continue to use the bully pulpit to further this advocacy and loudly and clearly call out companies who engage in union busting activity to try to thwart their workers from organizing. Importantly, I will strongly support legislation to allow public employees to engage in strikes in Massachusetts.

5. **Occupational Safety. Assuming the recurrence of another pandemic, what role can the AG play in expanding enforcement of existing occupational safety and health laws?**

Enforcing occupational safety and health laws has been a major problem throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. On the federal level, OSHA was virtually silent - and useless - when workplaces needed to rapidly adopt stringent workplace safety standards. Going forward, in such a situation, the state must step in and fill the gap. We should be putting together an emergency response team and be available to answer questions and guide employers on how to enact protective measures and ensure they are adhered to. These efforts can and should involve working closely with unions, worker centers, community groups, and workers themselves.

6. **Unsafe Workplace Conditions. AG Healey established a process by which workers could report concerns about unsafe working conditions, with the option to remain anonymous. How will you expand the ability of workers to report conditions without fear of reprisal?**

It is vital to ensure that the Attorney General's Office has the resources it needs to make this process effective. I will act promptly on these calls and investigate them as quickly as possible. I will also ensure enforcement of anti-retaliation protections and make examples of any employers who try to take action against employees who make complaints. Having won many important retaliation cases on behalf of workers as a private attorney, I know how important proper and timely enforcement is in these cases.

7. **Fighting Discrimination in the Workplace. How will your office strengthen enforcement of laws ensuring that individuals are not being discriminated against in hiring or promotions for reasons of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, or national origin?**

As Attorney General, I will increase enforcement efforts of our civil rights laws and pursue greater systemic enforcement throughout industries where discrimination

is most pernicious. I would seek to ramp up the Civil Rights Division's efforts to focus on impact litigation, including cases to root out discrimination of all types. This type of litigation has been a major part of what I have done throughout my career, and I will draw on this experience to target industries where these issues are most pronounced.

There are many emerging discrimination issues that I will ensure the Civil Rights Division investigates, such as tech companies (and others') use of customer survey information (which has shown to have a discriminatory bias), rampant age discrimination in the tech industry, violations of the Paid Family and Medical Leave Act, and enforcement of Massachusetts' new equal pay law.

8. **Fighting Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. How will your office strengthen protections against sexual harassment?**

The fight against sexual harassment is another prime example of how vigorous enforcement can be utilized to make deterrent examples of the worst bad actors. It is also important to increase education about sexual harassment in the workplace and how employers can focus their efforts on preventing it rather than defending it after the fact.

My work on this issue goes back to my activist days as a women's rights organizer, just after college when I worked for the legendary Bella Abzug. In 1991 I coordinated a conference on sexual harassment featuring Anita Hill, shortly after she testified that then-Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas sexually harassed her. In organizing this conference, I worked with a broad coalition of women's rights groups to debrief, raise awareness of the issue, and plan how to address it going forward. I carried this work into my legal career, having represented workers who were victims of sexual harassment.

9. **Disability Rights in the Workplace. How will your office strengthen the opportunities afforded to people with disabilities during the pandemic, such as access to remote work?**

We've learned a lot from the pandemic, including that remote work works for employees in many industries and provides a means for greater flexibility and accessibility to the workplace. These lessons should be carried forward, especially the ability of employees to work productively from home. This transition has made it much easier for people with disabilities to participate in the workplace, and they should be provided with the ability to keep this flexibility if it works well for them. Employers should be encouraged to continue allowing such flexibility for all of their employees.

The conversation around disability rights in the workplace is of course more expansive than just access to remote work. Throughout my legal career, I have won major rulings in court on behalf of people with disabilities and know firsthand how important it is to champion these issues. In one of my first cases,

working closely with the Disability Law Center, I won a federal trial that got a deaf airline mechanic rehired by American Airlines. In other, the Supreme Judicial Court issued a landmark decision establishing the strength of Massachusetts law protecting workers against disability discrimination.

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

YES. In fact I have testified in favor of the One Fair Wage bill in the legislature. Not only is the subminimum wage unfair and unworkable, it also has a stark racial impact, and its elimination would help remedy these disparities. Ending subminimum wages must also include ensuring that incarcerated people are not exploited for their labor.

11. **Wage Transparency. Would you support legislation requiring the submission of wage data to a public database maintained by the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and broken down by gender and race?** (Y/N)

YES. In this area, and many others, my legal work in California over the last several years has made me familiar with that state's creative and very progressive laws protecting workers, a number of which could serve as good models for discussion in Massachusetts.

12. **Fair Scheduling. Many workers in the service sector face irregular working hours, making it difficult to plan for other life events. Would you support legislation providing workers the right to 14 days advance notice of hours and the right to request specific hours without retaliation from the employer?** (Y/N)

YES. It is extremely difficult for low wage workers to manage their jobs and their family responsibilities with erratic last-minute scheduling. Many workers are trying to juggle multiple jobs in order to pay the rent and their basic necessities, which is all but impossible with predictability in scheduling. Workers of color are often the most impacted by this issue.

13. **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. A major focus of mine over the last decade has been fighting forced arbitration in the courts. After winning some significant victories in this area in the 2000s, I have run into the brick wall of the U.S. Supreme Court's increasingly hostile rulings, compelling workers to arbitrate their claims in private individual settings, which effectively prevents employees from enforcing wage laws and discrimination laws through systemic enforcement. While I have made some

inroads on this issue in recent years (including winning landmark victories against Amazon against forced arbitration for its drivers), I think it is absolutely critical that Congress reverse the Supreme Court's hostility to the courts; the House's recent passage of the FAIR Act was a significant step forward. In the meantime, in Massachusetts, we need to pass a Private Attorney General Act - and shape it in a way that will avoid a preemption ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court.

14. **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. I am a founding board member of the coalition that is fighting the initiative.

- b. **How would your office work to expand the rights of such gig workers?**

I would continue to pursue the same type of aggressive impact litigation on this issue that I have led for more than a decade and ensure the Attorney General's Office has the resources it needs to pursue this issue on a systemic level. Massachusetts is now ground zero in the national battle over the future of the gig economy. We have the strongest law in the country to protect these workers, but it needs to be vigorously enforced. I am ready to step into the shoes of the Attorney General to take over the current litigation against Uber and Lyft, which will be a continuation of a battle I have been fighting for years.

This issue goes well beyond Uber and Lyft drivers; in fact, they are just the tip of the iceberg. If these companies win a carve-out from our employment laws, every industry in the country will be lining up to be the next one to try to exempt itself from the responsibilities all employers hold. The future of employment itself is at stake here. Having been deeply embedded in this fight for over a decade, I am ready on day one to take on this battle on behalf of workers across Massachusetts.

15. **Corporate Consolidation. What would be your office's approach to the increasing monopolization of numerous sectors of the economy, which is bad for workers and consumers?**

The Attorney General's Office holds a great deal of power with respect to health care and hospital mergers. As discussed in the health care section below, I am particularly concerned with the consolidation of hospitals and health care being concentrated in the hands of a few major players.

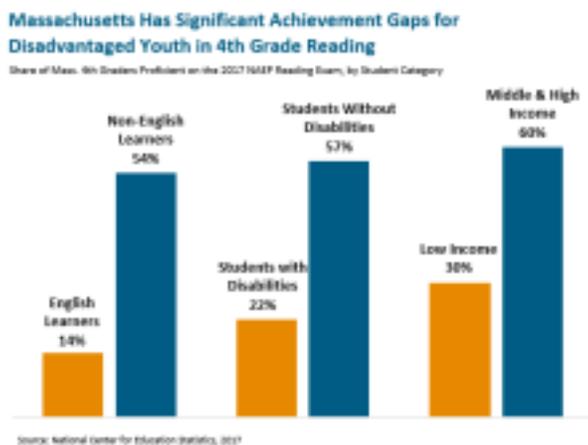
I am also particularly excited by the appointment of new FTC chief Lina Khan, who has been bringing forward many creative litigation theories, like I have been doing for years in private practice to make the law work for working people, not giant corporations. I believe there are many opportunities for collaboration with the FTC, which I look forward to pursuing.

B. 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.

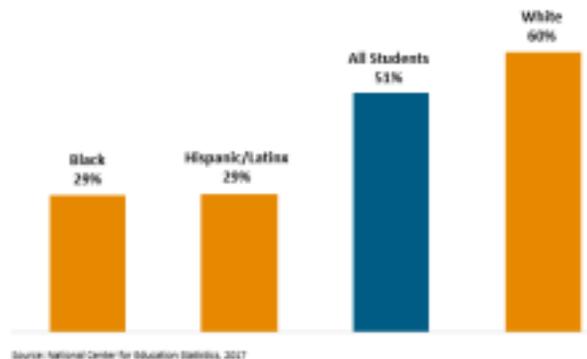
Most of the [fastest-growing occupations](#) require education beyond a high school diploma, but Massachusetts has been disinvesting from public higher education for the past two decades. This has led to higher tuition costs, putting students at risk of long-term debt or making higher education out of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

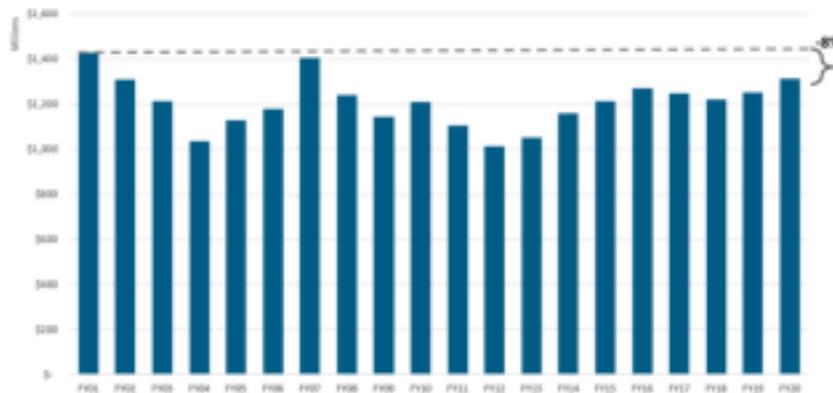


Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2017

Massachusetts has 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 (2001 \$)



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 have been a strong supporter of public school education for my entire life. I come from a family of public school teachers, including my mother, grandmother, brother, cousins, and mother-in-law. My mother-in-law was active in initiating new community programs in public schools in San Francisco, serving first as a bilingual teacher and counselor, and then founding a program to ensure that parents in the community were connected to resources for health, mental health, and parental education classes on how to support their children in school. My family's background has made me a lifelong champion of public education and strengthened my commitment to fighting for our public schools, students, and teachers.

As Attorney General, I will use all relevant powers of the office to support public schools, students, and teachers and partner with the legislature and teachers'

unions to pass needed legislation. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it clear how vital it is to ensure that teachers have safe and supportive working environments and the resources they need to do their critical jobs of educating our children. I am a strong supporter of the Fair Share Amendment, which will raise much needed revenue to help guarantee that public education gets the permanent funding it needs. Revenue from the Fair Share Amendment will go a long way towards reversing decades of austerity and budget cuts.

I will also work to oppose receiverships. Schools should stay under local control. Stripping school districts of their democratically-elected representation and imposing a state-appointed receiver eliminates local control. This practice is harmful and carries a racist legacy.

I will also work with the legislature to pass legislation to protect teachers and strengthen their labor rights. This includes ensuring that municipal employees are covered by the state's minimum wage and Paid Family and Medical Leave laws, as well as legislation to allow public employees, including educators, to strike and ensure their free speech is not restricted for discussing a strike.

2. **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. I am a strong supporter of this ballot initiative.

3. **Equal Education Access for All. What would your office do to protect the right of all children to a high-quality public education?**

First and foremost, we must support and further our investments in public schools and protect against privatization. Any increase in privatization comes at the direct expense of our public schools, teachers, and students, and that is unacceptable. Ensuring that the Fair Share Amendment passes and is implemented properly must also be a top priority.

As Attorney General, I will also vigorously investigate cases of disparate discipline rates within schools. Research consistently shows that students of color are unfairly disciplined more than white students, often leading to a pipeline of negative outcomes and rooted in structural racism. I have sued the Commonwealth and the City of Boston over their use of discriminatory civil service exams for the hiring and promotion of police and firefighters, which have succeeded and led to the hiring of Black and brown police officers and firefighters across Massachusetts. As Attorney General, I will use the full force of the office to bring similar cases against school districts engaged in racist disciplinary actions or other patterns of behavior.

In fact, I am now working on filing a case in Georgia against a school district for discriminating against Black students. This school district prohibited students from wearing Black Lives Matter t-shirts, while white students wore Confederate flag clothing and paraphernalia without incident. We are challenging the disparate discipline the Black students received, including being suspended for planning a peaceful protest of this disparity.

4. **Education Privatization.** 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. I strongly support the cap. Public funds should go to public schools, not private charter schools.

b. **Existing charter schools in Massachusetts have been known to have notoriously high suspension rates and questionable real estate practices. How would your office ensure greater accountability for the charter school sector?**

As Attorney General, I will advocate for greater transparency from charter schools. Charters should be required to report their statistics on a variety of metrics, including enrollment, suspension rates, disciplinary actions, racial demographics, and graduation rates.

5. **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. The state takeover has not produced sustainable gains and has at times been characterized by chronic mismanagement. Would you support ending the practice of state receivership and returning power to democratically elected school committees? (Y/N)

YES.

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

YES. Debt-free education shouldn't just be limited to public colleges and universities. We must also work to ensure that Massachusetts has universal pre-k. In addition, college is not for everyone. There are good paying jobs and careers that don't leave students saddled with debt. We need to support and encourage students to learn about other paths, including opportunities in the trades and apprenticeship programs that can lead to good union jobs with benefits. Vocational schools and community colleges also provide strong options. We need to encourage outreach to communities of color and others about these alternatives to college that can lead to a good paying job.

7. **Student Borrowers -- I.** The Student Loan Borrower's Bill of Rights (SLBBOR) has been implemented, and the Student Loan Ombudsperson Office now exists within the Office of the Attorney General. What are your plans to ensure strong enforcement of the SLBBOR?

With the recent implementation of SLBBOR and the Student Loan Ombudsperson, it is vital that we ensure that both receive the resources and funding they need to be an effective resource for student borrowers. More than one million student loan borrowers in Massachusetts deal with a predatory

student loan servicing industry who routinely work against borrowers' best interests and steer them into options that add even more interest to their loans. Research has further shown that the student loan debt crisis disproportionately impacts Black borrowers, with one recent study finding that young Black adults take on 85% more education debt than their white counterparts, further exacerbating the already obscene racial wealth gap.

As Attorney General, I will ensure that the Ombudsperson Office has the resources it needs to resolve complaints from student borrowers and monitor student loan servicers. I will also work to increase this office's outreach to student borrowers, particularly in communities of color that have been disproportionately impacted by the student debt crisis.

Further, both the growing number of state-level student loan ombudspersons and the recent momentum around student debt cancellation present valuable opportunities for collaboration with other states and for our state's office to be a national leader on this issue. The Attorney General has done important work to get student debt canceled for students who were scammed by for-profit colleges. I would seek to expand on this work by growing the Ombudsperson Office and ramping up enforcement efforts.

8. **Student Borrowers -- II. Would you be willing to decertify private servicers of federal student loans with records of state SLBBOR violations and poor behavior even if that may cause legal conflicts with the US Department of Education?**
(Y/N)

YES.

9. **Student Borrowers -- III. Would you be willing to file legislation to provide additional authority to the Office of the Attorney General to address student loan-related issues if you felt existing authority was insufficient?** (Y/N)

YES. It is important for the Attorney General to play a bigger role with the legislature and help get such legislation passed.

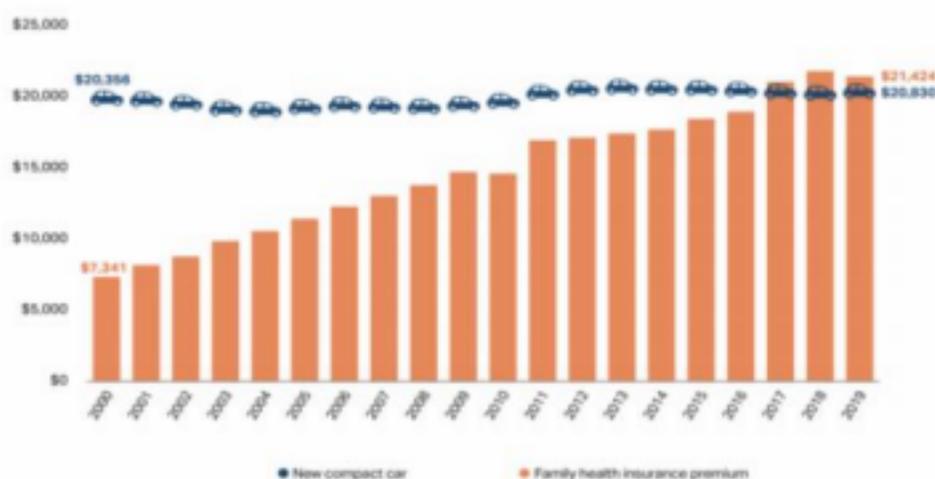
C. Health Care

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 nominal 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 Kelley Blue Book.

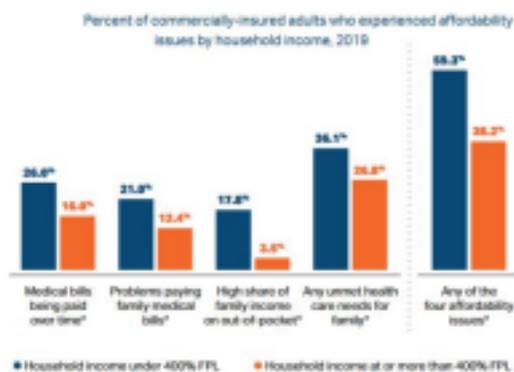
<https://www.provosts.com/news-releases/average-new-car-prices-up-nearly-6-percent-year-over-year-for-may-2018-according-to-kelley-blue-book>

<https://www.hpc.org/annual-cost-trends-report> Earnings calculation includes employer premium contribution in both health care payments and in earnings total. See Massachusetts HPC 2019 Annual Cost Trends Report (p. 11)



Image 41

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.).

I have been a longtime advocate of Medicare for All and have long stressed the need for single payer health care. While Massachusetts has made excellent progress towards universal health care coverage compared to other states, it is long since time for us to move toward a single payer system.

I have also been a longtime advocate for reproductive justice, going back to my time as a women's rights organizer after college and my time working for the Center for Reproductive Rights while in law school, where I worked on litigation to advance reproductive freedom. This work has continued, and I have been a strong supporter for reproductive justice groups, including supporting their efforts to pass the Roe Act.

As Attorney General, I will fight to ensure that we have health equity at every level of government and that we tackle systemic racism within the health care system. I will also fight to ensure that Massachusetts remains a beacon of hope in the fight for reproductive justice, as the Supreme Court seems poised to roll back nearly 50 years of reproductive freedom.

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)

YES.

3. Hospital Consolidation. What would you do to bring greater scrutiny to hospital mergers and ensure that patients do not have to travel extraordinary distances for care?

An important power of the Attorney General's Office is to oversee and approve hospital mergers. While we of course want to see more access to care statewide, it should not be concentrated in the hands of the few biggest providers. This type

of concentration leads to more and more corporate abuses of power and anticompetitive practices, both of which have severe negative impacts on affordability for patients, as well as the cost to the state for reimbursing health care costs.

The glaring inadequacy of our health care system was clear long before COVID laid bare the gaps in our social safety net and public health system. It is critical that we expand the number of, and access to, community health centers across the Commonwealth.

4. **Reproductive Justice—I. Would you support legislation 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. This is a women's rights discrimination issue too – if certain care that women need requires additional payment that men don't have to pay for, that's a major issue. All of these services are health care and should be basic rights.

5. **Reproductive Justice—II. Would you support the creation of an uncompensated care program to reimburse abortion providers for services they provide to individuals without other means of paying for care, including those individuals traveling from out of state howould have qualified for MassHealth if they lived in the state? (Y/N)**

YES. Absolutely.

6. **Menstrual Equity. Would you support providing access to free menstrual products in schools, shelters, and prisons? (Y/N)**

YES.

7. **Crisis Pregnancy Centers. Crisis pregnancy centers present themselves as information resource centers for pregnant individuals, but instead seek to dissuade individuals from having abortions, often by giving them medical misinformation in addition to moral pressure. What is the role of the AG in countering such misrepresentation and misinformation?**

Massachusetts law prohibits businesses from engaging in unfair or deceptive acts or practices, which is exactly what crisis pregnancy centers do. The deceptive activity these centers engage in is both an issue of consumer protection and access to reproductive health care. As Attorney General, I will work to ensure that people seeking abortion care are aware of the true nature of these centers and will work to hold them accountable under our consumer protection laws and shut them down.

8. **Opioid Crisis. What do you view as the role of the AG in the state's response to the opioid crisis?**

First and foremost, the state's response to the opioid crisis must be a public health response focused on providing access to treatment, rehabilitation, and resources, not incarceration. I will work in close partnership with District Attorneys across the Commonwealth to ensure they have the resources they need to address this issue through the lens of public health and equity.

The current Attorney General has done important work in holding opioid manufacturers accountable through litigation. However, this work is far from over. This type of large scale litigation is precisely the kind of impact litigation I have been engaged in for more than 20 years and I am ready to take over these efforts on day one. It is critical that we hold these corporations accountable for the opioid epidemic that has ravaged our communities and channel the resources recovered to provide care and treatment for its victims.

9. **Harm Reduction. An essential part of addressing the opioid crisis, safe consumption sites allow medical professionals to respond to overdoses and engage participants in medical and behavioral health services. Would you support the legalization of SCSs? (Y/N)**

YES. SCSs are critical to saving lives and have been proven to do so in cities that have piloted them. They present an opportunity for medical professions to engage with people suffering from addiction and help connect them to services, treatment, and care. SCSs are also an important means of reducing mass incarceration and addressing substance use disorder through a public health lens.

10. **Pandemic Response. How would you evaluate the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic? What role do you see for the AG in ensuring a better response to future crises?**

Massachusetts' response to the pandemic left much to be desired due to multiple failures from the Baker Administration that caused communities of color to face disproportionate rates of infections and deaths. Notably, Massachusetts failed to collect racial demographic data on infection and death rates for a long time and never bothered collecting this data for LGBTQ individuals.

There are a number of things the Attorney General can do to ensure a better response for future crises. First, many relevant regulations have not been updated in decades. It will be important to take full stock of the totality of this pandemic to see what needs updating to ensure better preparedness going forward. Second, we must ensure that the state engages with all communities – particularly frontline communities where the pandemic spread more widely due to underlying health and environmental factors – and ensure they are part of the decision making process, not treated as an afterthought. Third, we must support frontline workers with real and sustained policies. It isn't enough to simply call them heroes; we need to ensure that they have safe workplace protections going forward, health care access, and are being paid properly for their work. The Attorney General also has important oversight capacity here in ensuring a better response. With proper

regulations in place to ensure equity and a more comprehensive response, the Attorney General can vigorously enforce them and make sure data is being collected to allow us to measure our successes and failures.

11. **Community Benefits.** As AG, you are responsible for oversight of public charities and hospital community benefits. A few years ago, the AG created a task force to review hospital community benefits and align investment with the social determinants of health. While some hospitals have improved community benefits investment in key areas, overall investment in critical areas such as housing, addiction services, and mental health has not increased. What would you do as Attorney General to encourage greater investment in community benefits by non profit hospitals?

As Attorney General, I will continue the office's outreach to stakeholders to evaluate what has been working well here and what else needs improvement. This is another instance where the power of the bully pulpit and a strong working relationship with the state legislature can help move the needle. I will be intentional about using both avenues.

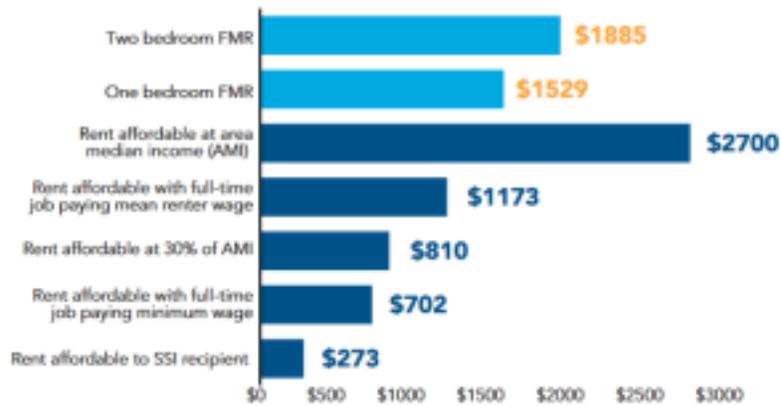
12. **Health Equity.** In 2020, the AG's Office issued a [report](#) on building toward racial justice and equity in health. How would you build on such work?

This report highlighted many key action areas for improving health equity, particularly the need for better demographic data collection to identify the root causes of disparities. I would partner with the legislature to pass legislation to ensure health equity is incorporated into every level of government, such as H. 2373 / S. 1388 currently pending in the legislature.

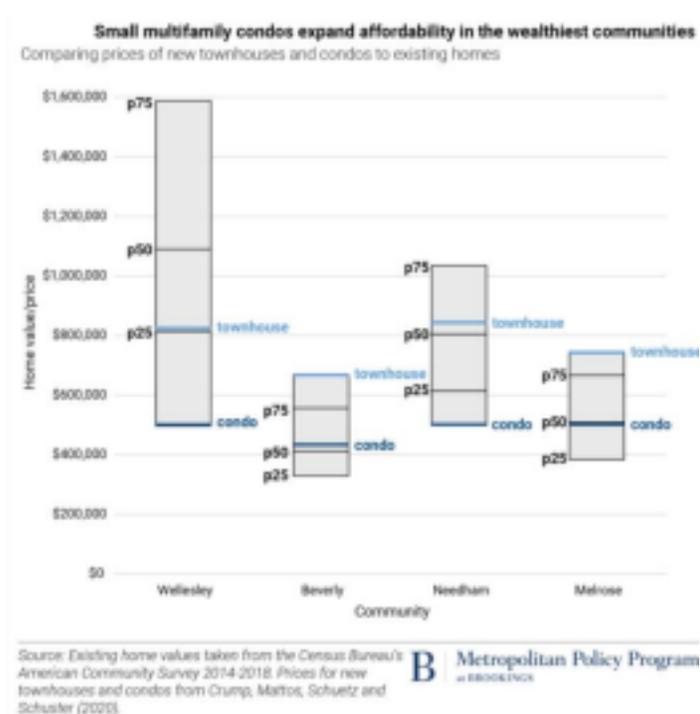
D. Housing

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.



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.).**

Housing is a human right, and there is no doubt that Massachusetts is in the grips of a debilitating affordable housing crisis, impacting renters and homeowners alike. As Attorney General, a top priority of mine will be to establish a division within the office modeled after Washington, DC's Office of the Tenant Advocate to provide more resources and legal assistance for tenants, help mediate disputes between tenants and landlords, connect people with emergency housing services, and engage in policy advocacy. Part of being the People's Lawyer must involve balancing the power disparities between landlords and tenants, and I am eager to take on that challenge. Further, as discussed in my legislative priorities above, I will work with the legislature to pass critically needed legislation to enhance tenant protections, such as just cause eviction, right to counsel, eviction sealing, and more.

2. **Reducing Homelessness. What role can the AG play in reducing the number of individuals experiencing homelessness and addressing the daily indignities and systemic problems unhoused individuals face?**

This is another area where a strong partnership with the legislature is needed to address these issues with legislation. I support legislation to create a bill of rights for people experiencing homelessness, such as that proposed in H. 264 / S. 142 currently in the legislature. Also, mediating disputes in housing court will allow more tenants to stay in their homes.

3. **Tenant Protections. Would you support legislation to provide 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. The Attorney General's Office also needs new and stronger resources to enhance tenant protections, like an office modeled after DC's Office of the Tenant Advocate.

4. **Tenant Opportunity to Purchase. Would you support legislation to provide tenants of small, medium, and large multifamily properties with right of first refusal when the owner plans to put a building on the market, provided that they can make a bona fide offer to match the asking price in a reasonable period of time? (Y/N)**

YES.

5. **Right to Counsel. Would you support legislation to provide legal representation for low-income tenants in eviction proceedings? (Y/N)**

YES.

6. **Eviction Protections. What would you do to prevent extralegal evictions and other abuses of tenant rights that are a particular problem for immigrants and people who sublet rooms from intermediaries (often referred to as "encargados")?**

Unfortunately, housing courts are largely eviction mills where the disparity in resources and power between landlords and tenants is on full display. With a division in the Attorney General's Office dedicated to tenant advocacy, I would ramp up investigations into illegal evictions and provide greater access to legal representation for tenants in these situations.

7. **Voucher Discrimination. What would your office do to combat discrimination against individuals with housing vouchers?**

This issue again comes down to the need for greater systemic enforcement of our civil rights laws. As Attorney General, I will aggressively pursue this enforcement and dedicate greater resources to the AGO's fair housing efforts.

8. **Safe Housing. What would your office do to hold accountable landlords who are repeatedly found to violate the state sanitary code, endanger safety and health of tenants and communities, etc?**

This is a prime example of the need for a new division within the office to advocate for tenants and tenant rights. With a new division and additional resources I will crack down on slumlords and absentee landlords who leave tenants in unsafe housing situations. I will also advocate for new legislation to

ensure that all of our housing stock is free from lead. Currently, our state law only compels landlords to ensure homes are free from lead if there are children under the age of 6 living in the property. This longstanding partial measure has led to rampant housing discrimination against families with children, as well as the continued presence of lead in housing, which has disproportionately impacted communities of color. This isn't just a housing issue—it is a pressing racial justice and health equity issue.

9. **Predatory Lending. What would your office do to address predatory lending practices, such as those that gave rise to the foreclosure crisis of the late 2000s?**

This is the type of impact litigation I have pursued throughout my legal career. As part of our commitment to ensure consumer protection, we need to stop predatory lenders from their exploitative practices with aggressive systemic enforcement.

10. **Eviction Sealing. Eviction records create lasting stigma, are prone to error and impair access to stable housing.**

- a. **Would you support legislation to seal eviction records so that both tenants and landlords can move on with their lives? (Y/N)**

YES.

- b. **Would you support, even without new legislation, forcing the courts to create a process to remove from public online court records the names of minors who are erroneously named as defendants in eviction cases?**

YES.

11. **Discriminatory Zoning. What is the role of the AG in preventing discriminatory zoning and land use practices at the municipal level?**

Local control should not translate into municipalities turning to abusive and discriminatory practices on zoning, yet this has been an ongoing issue for generations that has locked people of color out of housing and fueled the racial wealth gap. As Attorney General, I will work with municipalities to combat racist zoning laws and advocate for legislation to address this at the state level.

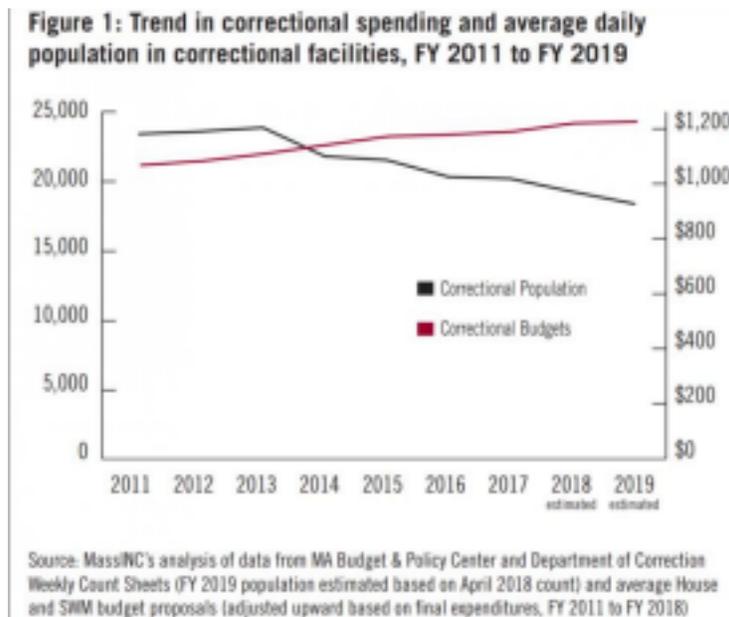
E. Racial and Social Justice

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 an individual 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
Juvéniles 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.).**

I have taken on civil rights and discrimination cases throughout my legal career and know firsthand how important it is to have aggressive, systemic enforcement of our civil rights laws. I have successfully litigated cases against state agencies and private industries for racist hiring practices and have gotten them to change these practices. As described above, I have also taken on industries that have preyed on vulnerable immigrant workers by charging them thousands of dollars for a job and have established the law in Massachusetts through the courts to make it illegal for companies to sell jobs.

As Attorney General, I will be a firm advocate for criminal justice reform and work to reverse the tide of mass incarceration through both the Criminal Division and in partnership with District Attorneys across the Commonwealth. I will pursue policies to expand access to expungement and compensation for people impacted by marijuana convictions and false convictions that have unjustly damaged their lives.

2. **Reform-Minded DAs -- I. The past few years have seen a growing effort for reform in District Attorney Offices around the country. What lessons from such effort would you incorporate into your work as Attorney General?**

It is critically important that we have District Attorneys who recognize that criminal enforcement is not a tool that should be widely used for all offenses. Rachael Rollins'

reforms in Suffolk County provide a good model for systemic reforms. The Attorney General's Office and District Attorneys need to focus on the real bad actors who are causing actual harm to communities, not locking up people who need rehabilitation and other services.

3. **Reform-Minded DAs -- II. What would you do as Attorney General to support the efforts of reform-minded DAs at the county level to adopt more holistic approaches to public safety?**

I will work closely with DAs to ensure that the resources of their offices are focused on prosecuting the crimes that are actually causing harm in communities. I will also work to ensure that the state provides them with the resources they need to provide people with access to treatment and care for those who are caught up in the criminal legal system due to addiction, poverty, and homelessness.

4. **Gang Databases. Would you support municipal efforts to end local police departments' gang databases, which have been documented to be highly inaccurate and racist? (Y/N)**

YES. The type of data police departments should be keeping is data on how they're doing their jobs and interacting with residents, racial breakdowns of arrests and stops – that's the most important data we need to see coming out of police departments, not false compilations of who they consider to be threats simply based on their identities.

5. **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)**

[Neither Yes nor No] I believe that qualified immunity for police and correctional officers needs to be rethought and reformed. The legislature has a duty to act decisively on this issue. As a federal law clerk who drafted decisions in this area, I understand how the qualified immunity doctrine has prevented victims of police misconduct from obtaining justice. A huge problem in this area is that there are not enough written decisions and standards defining what conduct crosses the line. Without clear legislation and guidelines, case law will continue to be murky and allow police officers who break the law to get away with not being held accountable for their actions.

- 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.

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)

YES. I have sued the Commonwealth on this exact issue. I have spent many years fighting this discriminatory civil service system that relies on written pen-and-paper exams, which no other state in the country continues is relying on to determine who is hired and promoted. My litigation in this area has led to the hiring of Black and brown police and firefighters across Massachusetts, and I will continue to seek reform of this practice as Attorney General.

6. Alternative Crisis Response. Would you support legislation creating a grant program through the Executive Office of Health and Human Services to increase funding for non-law-enforcement, unarmed community-based response personnel to respond to emergency calls? (Y/N)

YES. The ACES Act from Rep. Lindsay Sabadosa is an excellent model here.

7. 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)

YES. Raising the age also provides mandatory access to rehabilitative programming and education, which is extremely difficult to access in the adult system.

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

YES. This issue has long been rife with discriminatory enforcement against youth of color and LGBTQ youth.

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

YES.

8. Civil Asset Forfeiture. Do you agree that Massachusetts civil forfeiture laws do not provide appropriate due process? (Y/N). If so, what reforms do you propose?

YES. It's very easy in Massachusetts for prosecutors to hold onto money and assets indefinitely once they are seized due to the low burden of proof required and the fact that DAs do not have a deadline to notify individuals that they intend to keep those assets. At a minimum, reforms should raise the burden of proof required here and impose clear guidelines and timelines for DAs.

9. Solitary Confinement. In Massachusetts, prisoners can be sentenced to 10 years of solitary confinement—per infraction. The UN defines holding someone in solitary confinement for more than 15 days as torture. Do you support banning the use of long-term solitary confinement? (Y/N)

YES.

10. Prison Visitation. Maintaining connections with friends and family outside prisons is one of the most important factors in ensuring successful reentry. In March 2018, the DOC severely limited the ability of prisoners to receive visits and the rights of family and friends to visit their loved ones in prison. ([Read more on this here.](#)) Would you advocate for the ending of these restrictions? (Y/N)

YES.

11. Prison Profiteering—Part 1. 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. Would you support legislation to prevent the price gouging of

inmates by the DOC for necessary items and to require the DOC to adequately supply inmates with the basic requirements necessary for life and maintain good health and hygiene? (Y/N)

YES.

12. **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. Would you support legislation making phone calls free for incarcerated individuals? (Y/N)**

YES.

13. **Prison Moratorium. Would you support a moratorium on the construction of new prisons and jails in the Commonwealth? (Y/N)**

YES. We have lots of funds for construction, which should go to housing, not prisons.

14. **DOC Reform. Numerous reports (such as the recent *Falcon* and DOJ reports) have highlighted a culture of unchecked institutional violence in the Massachusetts Department of Corrections. What is the role of the AG in protecting the rights of those incarcerated and in changing the culture of the DOC?**

This is perhaps the most notorious example of a state agency not providing clear and accessible data on the issues facing the institution and those they are designed to serve. I will vigorously use the power of the bully pulpit to hold DOC publicly accountable and work with the state house on legislation to reform DOC and ensure that incarcerated individuals are treated humanely and with dignity.

15. **Clemency. Would you support pardoning all individuals convicted of non-violent cannabis offenses, whether formerly or currently incarcerated, as Senators Warren and Markey have called on President Biden to do? (Y/N)**

YES. This should not stop with non-violent cannabis offenses; it should apply to other non-violent drug offenses and should include financial compensation for people wrongly convicted.

16. **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.

17. **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.

18. **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.

19. **Combating Gun Violence.** As Attorney General, what would you do to improve our state's efforts in preventing gun violence?

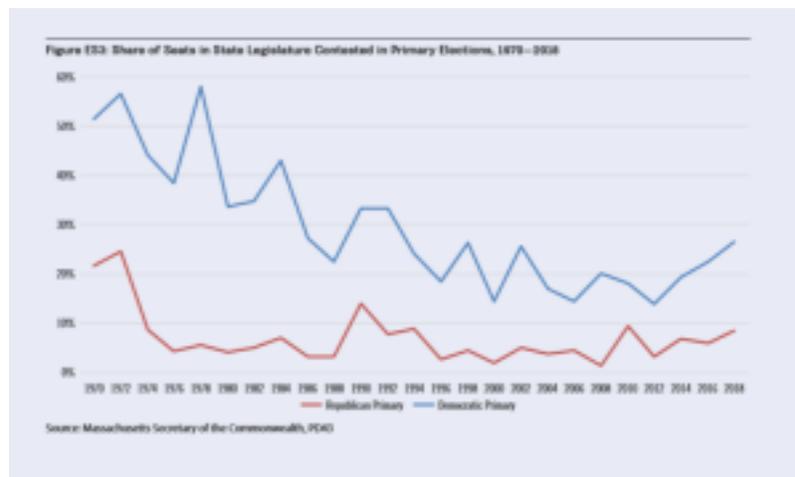
Attorney General Healey has done some great work on combating gun violence in Massachusetts. I will seek to build on this work and hold gun manufacturers accountable and ensure that we treat gun violence as the public health epidemic that it is.

F. 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.).**

I have never shied away from holding our state agencies and institutions accountable and pursuing aggressive, systemic litigation when necessary. As Attorney General, I will prioritize rooting out public corruption on Beacon Hill and across the Commonwealth. I will invest in a Public Integrity Unit that will investigate public officials accused of violating the law and ensure that nobody, including elected officials, is above the law. Additionally, I will work with municipal officials to strengthen our public records system and ensure they have the resources they need.

2. **Anti-Corruption. What would your office's priorities be in investigating and prosecuting public corruption?**

As Attorney General, I will invest in a new Public Integrity Unit to tackle public corruption and investigate and prosecute public officials accused of violating the law.

3. **Campaign Finance. What would your office's priorities be in enforcing campaign finance laws?**

Massachusetts is lucky to have some of the strongest campaign finance laws in the country. As Attorney General, I will investigate ways that these laws could be strengthened and pursue enforcement for campaign finance violations.

4. **Public Records Law -- I. 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.

5. **Public Records Law -- II. How would your office strengthen enforcement of the state's public records law?**

Ensure that agencies understand the Attorney General's commitment to enforcement of these laws. I am in the process of bringing claims against municipal entities for not responding to public records requests for data regarding policing, racial disparities in stops and arrests, and police officers' disciplinary records.

6. **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.

7. **Jail-Based Voting. Individuals incarcerated with non-felony convictions maintain the right to vote, but that right often does not exist in practice. What would your office do to protect the voting rights of incarcerated individuals?**

As Attorney General, I would ensure that incarcerated individuals can exercise their voting rights by publicizing these rights and working with prisons to ensure access to voting for those who are eligible.

8. **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.

9. **Reining in Big Tech. Tech companies have outsized power, threatening both individual rights and our democratic process. What would you do to rein in the power of big tech and to empower ordinary users of modern technologies to assert control over their privacy and personal information?**

I have been in hand to hand combat with big tech and gig economy companies for more than a decade on workers rights issues. I will continue this fight to rein in these abuses of power through impact litigation-on behalf of workers and consumers-and partnerships with legislators to pass stronger laws protecting our privacy and personal information.

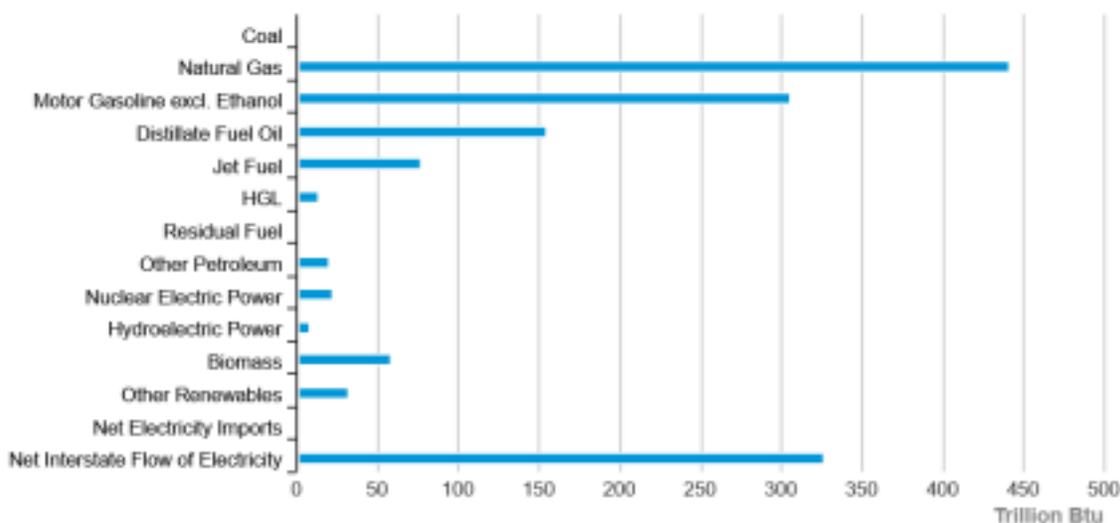
G. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection

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.

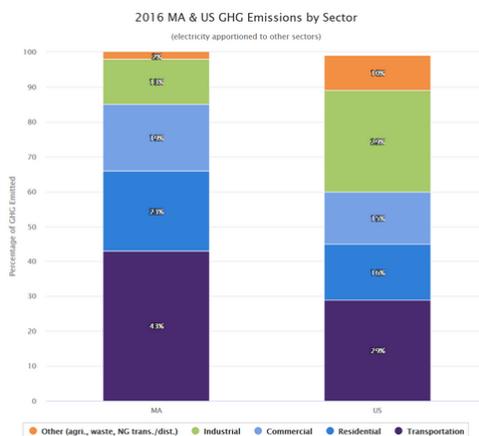
Despite recent progress, Massachusetts is still overwhelmingly dependent on fossil fuels.

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>)

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.).**

Massachusetts cannot afford to wait around for Washington, DC to act aggressively on climate change. We need a comprehensive Green New Deal for Massachusetts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, guarantee a just transition to a green economy with good paying jobs, expand access to clean public transit, and ensure environmental justice is incorporated in every step of the process.

I will be a strong advocate for a Massachusetts Green New Deal as Attorney General and use the full power of the bully pulpit and work with the legislature to pass the laws we need to ensure a livable future. An idea I am particularly interested in pursuing is the creation of a Green Bank. Using penalties collected from environmental enforcement and other public investments, a Green Bank could fund environmental justice projects, clean infrastructure projects, and other similar initiatives.

I will also continue the work Attorney General Healey has done to hold Exxon and other fossil fuel companies accountable for deceiving the public for decades on the realities and impacts of climate change. Having spent decades fighting against the biggest corporate bad actors, I am ready on day one to pick up the fight against the fossil fuel industry for their deceptive practices.

2. **Next Generation Roadmap. At the start of this legislative session, the Legislature passed a bill that requires gross emissions reductions of 50% from 1990 levels by 2030, 75% by 2040, and at least 85% by 2050, as well as net zero by 2050. What do you view as the role of the AG in enforcing this law?**

As Attorney General, I will ramp up enforcement within the environmental protection division. I know first hand from my work as a labor and civil rights attorney that having good laws on the books does not mean they will be enforced.

Laws are not self-enforcing. We need an Attorney General with a strong record of enforcement to ensure the roadmap bill gets us to where we need to be. I will also ensure that Massachusetts remains a national leader in the fight against Exxon and other fossil fuel companies for their deceptive practices.

3. **Just Transition. Do you support the creation of a Just Transition Office to assist workers that are displaced in the transition from fossil fuels to clean energy?**
(Y/N)

YES.

4. **Office of Ratepayer Advocacy. The Office of the Attorney General has a dedicated unit, called the Office of Ratepayer Advocacy, that participates in dockets at the Department of Public Utilities, particularly on behalf of residential utility ratepayers. How do you envision using this office to protect customers while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and modernizing our energy systems?**

I believe it is important for this office to actively go into communities and inform the public of this work and the ways in which the AG advocates on behalf of ratepayers. I will seek to enhance the office's outreach and public education efforts in partnership with community organizations and establish strong information and feedback pipelines.

5. **Transitioning Away from Fossil Gas. How will your office ensure that utility companies stop investing in gas pipes to the tune of 20 billion and instead focus on repairing leaks and equitably transitioning to non-emitting renewable thermal and efficient electric technologies?**

It is critical to ensure that we have a just transition as we move away from fossil fuels and that new green jobs are good, well paying jobs that provide good benefits. We cannot allow our transition to a green economy to be an excuse for corporations to replace good union jobs for low paying jobs with weak employment protections.

6. **Gas Leaks. A Harvard study showed that there is 6 times more atmospheric methane than what is calculated by gas utilities and the DEP because they use outdated leak factors and national leak ratios. What would you do to ensure that our emissions accounting is accurate given our leaky gas system?**

Transparency and reliable public data are critically important here. I will push for stronger data collection and transparency mechanisms and partner with DEP and environmental advocates to ensure we are holding our state accountable on this front.

7. **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. We need to ensure that jobs in new, green infrastructure industries are good jobs that pay well and provide good benefits for their workers to ensure a just transition. I will work in partnership with legislators, state agencies, and unions to ensure this transition is both climate- and worker-focused.

8. **Utility Influence.** Throughout the country, scandal after scandal has revealed how investor-owned utilities shape our energy and environmental laws to their private advantage, instead of the public interest. In Massachusetts, studies have shown how our utilities **spend** major money on political influence, through lobbying, donations, and **revolving door hiring practices** between state government and the utilities. How would you work to level the playing field and stop the utilities' shady tactics?

This issue boils down to corporate bad actors having too much power and influence without being held accountable. My entire legal career has been about holding corporate bad actors accountable, and I will continue to do so here by fighting for stronger transparency mechanisms and strengthening our laws in partnership with the legislature.

9. **Environmental Justice.** What would your office do to ensure compliance with environmental justice protections by both state agencies and private companies?

This issue again goes back to ensuring that we have robust and aggressive enforcement of our environmental protection laws and that we integrate environmental justice every step of the way. I will work with all stakeholders, especially in communities of color that continue to disproportionately suffer environmental harms, to investigate how our environmental policies are affecting communities and ensure these communities have a meaningful seat at the table. With respect to private companies, I will not hesitate to pursue aggressive litigation and enforcement against companies that engage in environmental violations, including bringing criminal charges through the office's Environmental Crimes Strike Force.

10. **Free Public Transit.** Do you support making public transit in the Commonwealth fare-free? (Y/N)

YES. We need to greatly expand public transit across the Commonwealth.