



PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS
2022 SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate: Tanisha Sullivan

Office Sought: Secretary of State

Party: Democratic

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OVERVIEW

We view our questionnaire as an educational resource, for both candidates and voters, on progressive approaches to the issues. It provides candidates the opportunity to go into greater depth on important issues 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](#).

*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. Voting Rights and Civic Engagement
- B. Campaign Finance & Disclosure
- C. Open Government & Public Records
- D. Census, Redistricting, & Maps
- E. Massachusetts History
- F. Shared Prosperity

I. About You

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

Our democracy is at an inflection point. I truly believe that proactive leadership in the Office of the Secretary of State could help to address many of the racial, social, and economic justice issues I have spent my life fighting to advance.

As a civil rights leader, I believe that Massachusetts has the potential to be a beacon in our country for what a strong democracy can be for all of us. In order to transform Massachusetts into the beacon, the blueprint for the rest of the nation, I will (1) **champion** the advancement of voting rights, and fight to ensure that we have safe, secure and inclusive elections, (2) **advance** policies that will tackle economic inequality and promote economic opportunity in our municipalities, and (3) center communities to foster and build trust by **increasing** information transparency and working with communities to make information accessible and deepen civic participation.

2. What prepares you to serve in this capacity?

The secretary of state is the chief democracy officer in the Commonwealth. This requires leadership that is connected and committed to empowering people and communities and requires an expansive vision for what is possible.

I'm in my 20th year of legal practice, the former Chief Equity Officer in the Boston Public Schools, and a civil rights leader.

I have a track record of working with and in impacted communities to deliver meaningful progress on issues related to racial, economic, and social justice issues. My work in communities and within the private sector informs how I view this office and what is possible. There is no office in state government that has a more important role, than the secretary of state, for supporting and empowering our local communities to tackle the real quality of life issues facing families across the Commonwealth but it requires that the office expand beyond its administrative functions and be transformed to a more engaged, opportunity-driven hub. If we are going to have a democracy that works for all of us, this moment demands more. The status quo is counter to the interest of an inclusive democracy. Our communities have waited long enough to experience the democracy we deserve.

3. How would you explain the function of the Secretary of the Commonwealth's office to a voter?

I encourage people to think about this office as the Chief Democracy Officer as the office is the hub of our democracy and a gateway to opportunity. There are very few aspects of your life the office does not touch. Everyone who votes, fills out a census, opens a business interacts with the office.

The secretary of state has several responsibilities including those related to:

- Chief elections officer. Responsible for supporting local elections officials in the

- administration of elections, and for ensuring the advancement of voting rights.
- Chief information officer. The office portfolio includes our historic archives, the MA historical commission, and public records. The office helps to ensure the accessibility and transparency of public records.
- Chief corporations' officer. If you want to do commercial business or operate a non-profit in Massachusetts you must go through this office to register, file reports, and pay fees. Currently it is transactional in nature.

4. The Secretary's office is most known for its work on voting and elections infrastructure, but it contains much more than that. What is one other department in the office where you see some of the greatest potential for progress in the next four years?

An informed public is essential to a working democracy. The Public Records Division is crucial to providing transparency to the workings of our government. Massachusetts still has among the weakest public records laws in the country. I will tirelessly advocate for reform to public records laws to increase transparency and give the public greater access to public records. We need to modernize the systems used by the public to access data, and we need to ensure that we are supporting "everyday" people in raising their understanding of how to use the information.

5. What would be your top 3 legislative priorities as Secretary, and how would you work to pass them through the Legislature?

Election Day Registration/Same Day Registration: A top priority will continue to be election day registration. More than 20 states across the country have access to some form of same day voter registration, including our sister New England states.

Municipal autonomy/civic engagement: A strong democracy reflects strong communities and empowered people. Given how young our democracy is, we should do more to support municipalities that want to expand opportunities for people to engage as democracy incubators. For example, municipalities that want to lower the voting age should be granted the autonomy to make those decisions to encourage civic participation as part of the learning process.

Economic Opportunity: This is an area of untapped potential for the Secretary of State's office. With deep economic inequality in Massachusetts, this office must leverage its full power to help close economic gaps between within rural and urban communities, and low income and wealthy communities. This could be done today by using the powers in the historic, corporations and securities division.

Public records reform: All public information should be readily accessible to the public. We need to ensure that any exemption for access to public records is limited to balance individual privacy interests.

6. What role do you see for the Secretary of the Commonwealth in advancing a progressive agenda on the federal level?

For the past 18 months I have served as a national racial equity fellow in CEO Action for Racial

Equity. The fellowship was launched in 2020 following the murder of George Floyd to work within the business community to promote public policy designed to advance racial equity. As a leader in the fellowship, I've had responsibility for supporting several fellowship areas, including voting rights and civic engagement. Based on the work I've done nationally, I see a great deal of potential for this office to be actively engaged on the national level, but first we must catch up. We need to modernize elections in Massachusetts and catch up, so we are able to lead, and be a beacon of democracy for the rest of the country.

Specifically, at a time when civil rights leaders and voting rights organizations are fighting to protect against voter suppression, our nation is desperate for a beacon, a blueprint for the advancement of voting rights.

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

For over 25 years the NAACP Boston Branch has consistently sought to restore the right for Boston residents to elect our school committee members. About 3.5 years ago, we brought together several organizations and stakeholders to lay the groundwork for restoration of that right, either through a binding ballot question or our city council. After years of coalition building, across diverse communities, in 2021 we put a non-binding question on the ballot and worked with our city councilors to advance an ordinance that would restore an elected school committee in Boston. The ballot measure received overwhelming support in every ward and precinct across Boston, unified support. The ordinance is still moving through our city council but has a promising future. Restoring the right to vote will be a righteous win, but the way we were able to progress, through intentional coalition building, is just as significant.

II. The Issues

A. Voting Rights & Civic Education

With 76% turnout in the 2020 presidential election, Massachusetts has one of the highest voter turnouts in the country. But 76%, a C, is little to be proud of. First of all, that statistic fails to include the nearly 700,000 citizens eligible to vote who remain unregistered. And second, [racial and income disparities](#) in registration rates remain persistent. We can, and must, do better. Massachusetts took important steps toward modernizing our elections with the 2014 election modernization bill and the 2018 Automatic Voter Registration bill, but we lag behind other states both nationally and regionally when it comes to expanding access and removing barriers to voting.

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.).

At a time when the nation is focused on protecting communities from voter suppression, our Commonwealth should be a beacon in the fight to advance voting rights. I believe Massachusetts can and should be that beacon. But first we need to catch up. That begins with good data. As a civil rights leader focused on racial justice, I am concerned with the voter turnout in 2020, particularly the rates in communities of color and working-class communities.

As president of the NAACP Boston branch, I have been a vocal advocate for the advancement of voting rights in Massachusetts. I have advocated for legislation like the VOTES Act and served as a co-chair for the Ranked Choice Voting efforts in Massachusetts. Through my professional work, I have worked to advance voting rights at the federal level, specifically working to restore section 5 of the VRA.

2. Automatic Voter Registration. In 2018, Massachusetts passed legislation to automatically register citizens who interface with the RMV and Mass Health unless they opt out.

- a. **Do you support changing the law to clarify that AVR is meant to be "[back end](#)" not "[front end](#)" (i.e., that an eligible voter is *automatically* registered upon interacting with a designated state agency and given the opportunity to opt out afterwards, as opposed to being asked to opt in during the interaction itself)? (Y/N)**

YES. And I would go beyond that. I support a system like the one successfully enacted in Oregon, where all residents are automatically registered to vote on their 18th birthday, unless they opt out.

- b. **Would you consider expanding the number of agencies to which the law applies? (Y/N) If so, which agencies?**

YES. The Brennan Center provides a list of government agencies that could be access points in Massachusetts. Some suggestions from the report (linked below) include health benefits offices, public assistance offices, unemployment benefit offices and government offices that provide job training and placement. That said I believe the office should consistently look for new

access points to reach new constituencies.

<https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/automatic-and-permanent-voter-registration-how-it-works>

3. **Same Day Registration. Same Day Registration is one of the best-proven methods of increasing voter participation in elections. Do you support allowing voters to newly register or re-register at the polls on Election Day and during the Early Voting period?** (Y/N)

YES. And we need to ensure that the office is providing support, both financial and resource support to municipalities for implementation for early voting periods.. This is one of the areas where MA needs to catch up to the rest of the country. 20 other states plus Washington, DC have same day voter registration. Massachusetts is behind on this issue.

4. **Vote-By-Mail. Do you support universal vote-by-mail, in which every voter is mailed a ballot in advance of the election?** (Y/N)

YES. I strongly support vote-by-mail, and we need to ensure that the office is providing support, both financial and resource support to municipalities for implementation. This is yet another reform on which Massachusetts is behind. Over 30 states, including Georgia, have vote-by-mail.

5. **Vote-By-Dropbox--Access. Do you support requiring one drop box for every 25,000 voters in a municipality?** (Y/N)

YES. And we need to ensure that the office is providing support, both financial and resource support to municipalities for implementation, and that implementation includes access at our colleges and universities, as well as houses of correction.

6. **Vote-By-Mail--Awareness. What steps would you take to make sure that all voters are aware of opportunities to vote by mail?**

We've seen some amazing examples of campaign communication in Massachusetts recently, but communication from the secretary of state's office hasn't changed much over the past several decades.

Innovative, creative strategies for communications extend beyond vote-by-mail to all aspects of elections. In an era of big data, we can hypertarget low voting communities to reverse this trend. We can give resources and incentives to town clerks to come up with innovative solutions in their local communities that can be replicated.

I also believe there is much to learn from the Census process, which aims to have 100% of our population counted. They work with local organizations, known in communities where there is a risk of undercounting to craft locally driven, community-centric solutions.

Similarly, there are nonprofit leaders nationally such as America Votes and the League of Women Voters who are using technology and innovative campaigns like Vote411 to reach voters.

7. **Paid Time Off to Vote. Would you support providing two hours of paid leave for any eligible employee to vote?** (Y/N)

YES.

8. **Voting Rights Restoration. In 2001, the Massachusetts Constitution was amended to prohibit all prisoners who are incarcerated for a felony conviction from voting in any election. Would you support ending that prohibition? (Y/N)**

YES. I support ending this prohibition and restoring the system that was in place prior to 2000.

9. **Democracy Behind Bars. Individuals who have finished serving their time for a felony conviction, individuals who are serving a misdemeanor sentence, and individuals who are civilly committed have the right to vote in Massachusetts. How would you rate current efforts to ensure they are aware of their rights and exercise it? What additional steps would you take to improve upon existing efforts?**

We can and must do more.

As Secretary of State, I would work to ensure a coordinated approach with each Sheriff's Office and town clerks to ensure that incarcerated citizens are reliably made aware of their voting rights, provided with absentee ballots, provided with regular information about the candidates, and given the opportunity to exercise their voting rights. I would advocate for candidate forums to be held at correctional facilities.

Additionally, I would advocate for incorporating the department of corrections into automatic voter registration processes and making registration part of the re-entry process.

10. **Immigrant Rights. Municipalities like Amherst, Brookline, Cambridge, Newton, Somerville, and Wayland submitted home rule petitions to the Legislature to allow non-citizens, such as green card holders and students with visas, to vote in municipal elections. Would you support legislation to enable municipalities to adopt such policies on the local level? (Y/N)**

YES. With appropriate legal guardrails, I believe municipalities should have autonomy to expand democracy. Particularly, for green card holders, this is particularly acute because of the failure of the federal government to address comprehensive immigration reform.

11. **Language Access. In 2016, the Census Bureau determined that Massachusetts has two municipalities that must provide language assistance during elections in Chinese and one municipality in Cambodian under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act. Both Chinese and Cambodian written languages do not use Romanic characters. Do you support transliterating the names of candidates on ballots in cities that must comply with Section 203? (Y/N)**

YES. A full and vibrant democracy is one in which all voters can make their voices heard at the ballot box—no matter what language they speak.

Election materials and outreach must reflect the diversity of languages spoken by our electorate. I support transliteration of names as part of that effort.

Given the technology that has become available for automatic transcription, voice to

text, text to audio, and much more, there is no excuse for not making voting information available in as many languages as we can as well as broader accessibility considerations for individuals with different abilities. These technologies should significantly reduce the cost of providing these services.

12. **Youth Participation. Young people consistently vote at lower rates than other age groups and are less likely to be able to be registered to vote. How would you rate current efforts to engage young people? What additional steps would you take to increase voter registration and participation among young voters, especially high school, and college students?**

Current Grade: F

We need to cultivate a culture of civic participation in Massachusetts. This requires us to deepen our commitment to civic education, and community engagement. As secretary I will actively engage with our educators to ensure they have access to the resources and supports needed to implement civics education in K-12 to help excite our young people about our democracy and instill in them a sense of pride in engaging in our democracy. Given the number of colleges we have in Massachusetts, it is critically important that we are doing all we can to break down barriers to access on college campuses. To that end, I would work with local election officials to ensure we have drop boxes and polling locations accessible to college campuses.

13. **Youth Participation--Local Elections. Would you support legislation to allow municipalities to lower the voting age to 16 for municipal elections? (Y/N)**

YES. Engaging youth early in the democratic process is critical for long term engagement, but it can't stop with voting. Young people need to be trained on how to effectively engage with the government to develop and advance public policy solutions designed to improve quality of life for all people.

14. **Student Access. Do you support requiring cities and towns to have at least one drop box and polling location available at, or within minimal distance from, any college or university campuses in the municipality?**

Yes. We need more drop boxes and polling locations, especially in cities with college campuses. My organizing director tells the story of trying to get a polling location on campus while he was a student at UMass Dartmouth in 2016. Those vested in voting access and equality have been attempting this for decades in Massachusetts.

15. **Improving Turnout. What other steps would you take as Secretary to increase voter turnout, especially among historically marginalized and low-turnout populations?**

We need to move beyond voting being an isolated moment in time. We need to cultivate a culture of civic participation...which is more than voting...it's voting PLUS. This requires that the secretary's office move beyond the four walls of a building into communities to build relationships and foster trust.

This office is the chief democracy office. Democracy is about communities and people. I see an office that has a unit of people who are working in communities alongside community members and local organizations to help educate, raise awareness, and provide support. The goal being a strong democracy where all people know and understand how government works, and our role in it, one that motivates

them to not only vote but to remain engaged after they vote.

16. **Accurate and Comprehensive Voter Lists.** Until March of 2017, Massachusetts was part of the [Interstate Crosscheck system](#), which states use to identify potential double registrations but which has increased the risk of purging legally registered voters, especially people of color. ERIC, or the Electronic Registration Information Center, a program developed by IBM and the Pew Charitable Trusts, offers an alternative. Rather than just matching the voter's name and date of birth, ERIC also looks at a voter's driver's license number or Social Security number, and it provides officials with lists of potentially unregistered voters as an outreach opportunity as well. The 2018 Automatic Voter Registration law required Massachusetts to join ERIC, but the state has not yet joined. Would you commit to enrolling Massachusetts in ERIC? (Y/N)

YES. I will ensure Massachusetts complies with the law and is actively looking for ways to ensure security in our elections.

17. **Election Security.** Would you support legislation to require risk-limiting audits, which require an audit of enough ballots to find strong statistical evidence that outcomes are correct, and which are widely considered the gold standard of post-election audits? (Y/N)

YES. We need to do all possible to ensure that our elections are safe, secure and instill trust.

18. **Local Election Information -- Part I.** Massachusetts has 351 cities and towns, each with its own elections calendar. Would you support the creation of a central calendar on the Secretary's website to make such information more readily available? (Y/N)

YES. This is just one of the ways that we can make the Secretary of State's office an everyday resource to the residents of Massachusetts.

19. **Local Election Information -- Part II.** The [PD43+ website](#) is a vital resource for obtaining information on past national, state, and county elections in Massachusetts. Would you support the expansion of the site to include municipal elections? (Y/N)

YES.

20. **Civic Education in Schools.** In 2018, Massachusetts passed a law creating a civic education requirement for public school students. How would you envision the Secretary's office serving as a resource for schools regarding civic education? What steps would you take to expand civic education for young people both inside and outside the classroom?

We need to cultivate a culture of civic participation in Massachusetts. This requires us to deepen our commitment to civic education, and community engagement. As secretary I will actively engage with our educators to ensure they have access to the resources and support needed to implement civics education in K-12 to help excite our young people about our democracy and instill in them a sense of pride in engaging in our democracy.

21. **Civic Education for All Ages.** What steps would you take to improve public

understanding of how to effect change at the state and local level and of the powers that lie within different offices?

We need to cultivate a culture of civic participation. This requires that the secretary's office move beyond the four walls of a building into communities. This office is the chief democracy office. Democracy is about communities and people. I see an office that has a unit of people who are working in communities alongside community members and local organizations to help educate, raise awareness, and provide support. The goal being a strong democracy where all people know and understand how government works, and our role in it.

22. **Breaking Down Barriers for Candidates. What steps would you take to break informational barriers about running for office faced by candidates from historically marginalized communities?**

The office can serve as a resource by building trust in marginalized communities, first by showing up. It remains striking just how many people are unfamiliar with this important office, especially historically marginalized communities that are most adversely impacted by the bureaucratic and transactional stance of the current office. Additionally, the office can be a resource on, and connector to, information and supports to help diverse candidates run for office. Here again is an opportunity for the secretary to move beyond the administrative functions and help address a crisis in under-representation that we are experiencing in Massachusetts. If we are going to be a national leader on democracy, we need to have elected officials who reflect the rich diversity of the Commonwealth.

B. Campaign Finance & Disclosure

The outsize role of big money in our elections remains a threat to the promise and practice of democracy. In 1998, Massachusetts voters backed the creation of a public campaign financing system by 2 to 1. Five years later, the Legislature repealed this “clean elections” law. Massachusetts does have some of the [strongest campaign finance regulations](#) in the country, including [dark money disclosure regulations](#) passed in 2014, but [loopholes abound](#), allowing candidates and donors to circumvent regulations and to take advantage of the laxity of federal campaign finance law.

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 believe we should strive to make our elections fair and equitable. That said, we need to focus on both the principles of legislation and on the impact of implementation on vulnerable communities.

Looking at this issue through a gender, economic and racial equity lens, we need also to address the intersections of the documented challenges that women, people from low-income communities, and people of color have raising early money, and the benefit of incumbency absent requirements to “use or donate” campaign funds.

2. **Citizens United. The 2010 *Citizens United vs. FEC* ruling from the US Supreme Court eliminated restrictions on independent expenditures by corporations, leading to a [flood of dark money](#) in our elections. Do you support the repeal of *Citizens United*? (Y/N)**

YES. But such repeal would require either a United States Constitutional amendment or reversal by the United States Supreme Court, neither of which are realistic in the current environment. Until a change in the Supreme Court precedent is possible, it is crucial that Massachusetts further strengthens disclosure requirements and eliminates loopholes to at least add as much sunlight as possible to minimize the role of dark money.

3. **Campaign Finance Loopholes. Charlie Baker’s “[Massachusetts Victory Committee](#)” fundraising arrangement with the Republican National Committee exploited loopholes in state campaign finance laws, if not openly violating them. Do you support legislation to prohibit state candidates from soliciting political donations for any entity in amounts greater than the limit on donations for such donations under state law? (Y/N)**

YES. That said, I support closing loopholes where the impact is not aligned with the purpose of the legislation. Looking at campaign finance reform through a racial, economic and gender equity lens, we need to ensure any legislation designed to help “level the playing field” takes a holistic view and addresses not just money coming in, but money that is already in the accounts of incumbents otherwise reforms can actually have an adverse impact on already vulnerable communities.

4. **Dark Money -- Enforcement. In 2016, Families for Excellent Schools-Advocacy, a pro-charter school nonprofit, was hit with the largest fine in the history of the state Office of Campaign and Political Finance. FES had been anonymously receiving major checks from Baker administration officials and financiers for prohibited electioneering activity around Question 2 on the 2016 ballot. What**

steps would you take to prevent such dark money schemes?

I support transparency in campaign contribution disclosures. Violations of the law should continue to have financial penalties.

5. **Corporate Transparency. Would you support legislation requiring a vote from the shareholders of a corporation before said corporation is able to contribute to a political candidate or campaign via independent expenditures?** (Y/N)

NO. This is not a realistic expectation of public companies; however, I fully support the spirit of the idea. To that end, I support requiring companies to disclose to shareholders when the contributions are made, in what amount and what corporate interest is protected/advanced.

6. **Working Parents. Would you support legislation to allow working parents to use campaign funds for childcare expenses?** (Y/N)

YES. I would also include elder care and other living expenses.

7. **Municipal Campaign Finance Disclosure. How would you help smaller cities and towns, which are not covered by OCPF reporting laws, to develop standardized and transparent ways of making campaign finance data available to the public?**

I believe that OCPF is a standout success for the Commonwealth in the realm of transparency. There is an unnecessary burden placed on municipal election offices and candidates due to antiquated or manual systems. We should not just standardize municipal reporting but give municipalities the tools to do their recordkeeping and reporting as efficiently as statewide candidates. As secretary of state, I would seek to expand OCPF's reporter system to municipal election offices and provide all necessary training. Supporting deployment of the system and training necessary for municipal election officials would not just make candidates' and clerks' jobs easier, it would be an investment in holding all elections in MA to the same high standard of transparency.

8. **Public Funding of Elections. In 1992, Massachusetts voters passed a ballot initiative for public funding of elections for the State Legislature in recognition of the impact incumbency has had on limiting competitive elections and offering a choice for voters. The Legislature refused to fund this mandate and ultimately overturned the initiative. Would you support a robustly funded public financing system for Legislative elections?** (Y/N) **If so, what opportunities do you see for progress in light of such history?**

YES. We need to encourage people to run and elect people who are committed to a full democracy and leveling the playing field. Even if we make small progress, forward movement is the goal.

C. Open Government

In 2015, the Center for Public Integrity gave Massachusetts an F for public access to information. The [2016 public records reform law](#) contained many vital reforms to increase transparency and public accountability. Despite such advances, Massachusetts still lags its peers. Massachusetts, for example, is [one of only two states](#) that exempt the Governor's Office, Legislature, and judiciary from public records law. And any advances in open government only matter to the extent that public records law is vigorously enforced.

- 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.).**

Government shouldn't happen to us; it should happen with us. We need to do more to ensure Massachusetts residents are empowered with reliable access to the information we need to participate and hold our government accountable. As Secretary, I will work to create greater access to and ensure the transparency of our public records, to support a more expansive and inclusive democracy. I want journalists, advocates, and the general public to see the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth as an ally and a champion of transparency as opposed to an obstacle. We need to do all we can to ensure that public records are accessible, transparent, and that we have the support in place to ensure that folks know how to use that information.

- 2. Exemptions. Do you support ending the aforementioned exemption for the Governor's Office, Legislature, and judiciary? (Y/N)**

YES. The most powerful public servants in MA can't continue to routinely deny requests for even the most basic information. They should be subject to the same rules as every other state agency or office.

- 3. Access to Records. The 2016 public records reform bill allowed state agencies to contract out to vendors to store records, raising the potential that a nongovernmental entity could hinder access to records. How would you address this discrepancy?**

It is critical to reduce all hindrances to accessing public data. Any approach I would take as Secretary of the Commonwealth would include tracking performance of the office or external vendors in delivering services. Delays are unacceptable and would be grounds for terminating external vendor relationships. We would need to extend similar criteria for evaluating internal performance.

4. **Open Data. What steps would you make to increase the availability of data to external researchers in academia, foundations, and media?**

An important step to increase access is reform to the public records exemption.

5. **Data and Accountability. The Secretary's office houses data on state procurement. What steps would take to improve tracking and presentation of this data in order to advance goals of good government and equity in state procurement?**

The secretary's office must ensure that the data is disclosed, accessible and reliable to foster trust and allow for greater accountability for meeting our procurement goals.

6. **Conflicts of Interest. Would you commit to lobbying the State Ethics Commission to make Conflicts of Interest Law disclosures available online in a digital database (with private information duly redacted)? (Y/N)**

YES. With private and personally identifiable information redacted.

D. Census, Redistricting, & Maps

The Census influences the foundation of representative democracy: how the lines of districts are drawn (at all levels), as well as how many Congressional seats and funding a state gets. Making sure that everyone gets counted is essential to securing adequate federal resources, many of which are allocated on a per capita basis, as well as to maintaining accurate data on public health.

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.).**

For over a decade I have worked to ensure we are educating communities of color on the importance of the census and redistricting process and fostering trust in the process. In 2010, I led a grassroots effort to encourage more people to complete the census through our barbershops and beauty salons. In 2018, I led the branch in filing a lawsuit against Trump to amplify the need for census preparedness in hard to count communities. In 2020, despite the public health pandemic we worked through the NAACP on our census efforts. The implications of under and incomplete counts impact the communities within the constituency of the NAACP, so this work has been and remains a priority for us, not only in census years, but well before the official start of the count.

2. **How would you evaluate Massachusetts's work on the 2020 census, and what lessons would you take away for 2030?**

Under my leadership the NAACP Boston joined a lawsuit against the Trump administration to require it to invest in census preparedness. Our concern as a civil rights organization was that the administration was withholding funding that would result in undercounts in communities of color. In March 2022, the census bureau released a report indicating that there was an undercount, and that it is a bigger undercount than we've experienced in the past. While we wait for state level data, the initial reports are unacceptable and send a clear signal that we must start preparing now for 2030 by fostering deeper relationship of trust in historically undercounted communities.

3. **Redistricting. Would you support legislation to codify the goal of creating influence districts, crossover districts, and coalition districts in order to expand opportunities for representation and voice for communities of color? (Y/N)**

YES. Massachusetts must confront and address the lack of diverse representation in our elected offices across the Commonwealth.

4. **Maps. The Secretary's office is home to the collection of state maps, including maps for Congressional and legislative districts. What steps would you take to make these more accessible for educators and for everyday residents of the Commonwealth?**

Another opportunity to move MA into the 21st century and leverage up-to-date technology to build a state government that better serves all.

An updated website, thoughtfully designed to bring these important resources to every classroom in MA or anyone who's interested in learning about our commonwealth.

Maps are visual, therefore design can't be an afterthought and must be user centered, i.e. who wants the information and how do they want it?. We'll implement established design best practices to make maps more accessible for all. Accessibly designed maps using fonts, colors, symbols, and other visual best practices will help people navigate or share complex information in simple and easy-to-understand ways.

We would also aspire to create tools for developers to work with these data and create their own improvements.

E. Massachusetts History

The Secretary of the Commonwealth oversees the Historical Commission, the Commonwealth Museum, and the State Archives. Fostering a diverse and welcoming society for all, including historically marginalized communities and persons, entails making sure that all are reflected in how we teach our Commonwealth's history. How we tell our history—whose stories get heard, who hears them, and what we remember and what we center—is filled with vital questions that shape who we are as a Commonwealth and who we become.

- 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.).**

My advocacy work in the education space has been rooted in equity and ensuring that we have culturally relevant curriculum and instruction, which includes what our children are exposed to through history curriculum. As the Chief Equity Office in Boston Public Schools, I worked to ensure that curriculum was reviewed for rigor, veracity, and bias, and that the district was advancing toward its teacher diversity goals.

- 2. A Full and Diverse History. How would you seek to diversify the voices featured in our telling of the Commonwealth's history? Are there any exhibits you would like to bring to the Commonwealth Museum?**

Massachusetts has a rich history that is captured in both oral and written form. We need to be more intentional about capturing the fullness of our history by partnering with communities to capture and tell it in an authentic voice. We are in a constant state of learning, and it is important that we are consistently updating and adding to our history, without judgment, as new information comes to light. We need to know, understand, and share our past truth, in order to strengthen our future.

- 3. Digitization of Records. Would you support the digitization of a greater number of the records in the State Archives? (Y/N)**

YES.

- 4. Expanding Access. How else would you seek to expand access to the Commonwealth Museum and the State Archives?**

We need to market these rich resources to our schools and communities, so people know they exist and are accessible to all of us.

- 5. Commonwealth Flag & Seal. In 2021, the Legislature created a commission to discuss changing the state's flag and seal. As the Secretary is the keeper of the flag and seal, what would be your priorities in this process?**

I have always advocated for racial justice and will continue to advocate for a state flag and seal that are inclusive and celebrate the diversity of our state.

- 6. Historic Tax Credits. What would be your priorities when awarding applicants for the Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program?**

HTCs could be used to help promote smart development, address our housing crisis, and increase DEI.

There is great opportunity to make this process more transparent, accessible, and equitable. Modernizing the application process is a starting point, creating a public facing dashboard to track applications, awards, and use of HTCs is also in the public interest. I believe these funds could be a catalyst for economic opportunity utilized to address the extreme wealth gaps in the Commonwealth.

F. Shared Prosperity

Massachusetts ranks as one of the top ten [most unequal states](#), as the gains from economic growth have disproportionately benefited the already well-off. The office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth has often overlooked potential in helping to steer our economy toward broadly shared prosperity. The Corporations Division oversees reporting for approximately two hundred and seventeen thousand active corporations, one hundred sixty-five thousand active LLCs, and twenty thousand other entities organized or registered to do business in the Commonwealth. The Securities Division is responsible for protecting investors from unscrupulous behavior. The Secretary of the Commonwealth also oversees the Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program (MHRTC), which funds the rehabilitation, reuse, and revitalization of historic properties across the Commonwealth, and the Registry of Deeds, which oversees land records.

- 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.).**

Economic inequality impacts families and communities across the Commonwealth. As the gateway to business in Massachusetts, the Secretary's office should take a leading role in tackling this issue. As Secretary, I'll promote and support small business development, protect investments from fraud, and use an equity lens to develop and implement policies that improve quality of life for all of us.

- 2. Removing Barriers. What steps would you take to remove barriers for women and minority-owned businesses filing with the Corporations Division?**

There is an opportunity for the office to provide greater support to small, micro main street businesses in the application process by ensuring that they are connected to government and non-profit resources equipped to provide access to funding and technical support. We also see opportunities to connect companies to each other to support supplier diversity goals.

- 3. Accessibility of Documents. What steps would you take to make sure that all necessary documents are more accessible to the public, in terms of availability in plain-English and in other commonly spoken languages in the Commonwealth?**

This is low hanging fruit that could happen today. Specifically, as Secretary I will prioritize funding for this work in the office budget and will advocate to ensure we get the funding.

- 4. Alternative Ownership. What steps would you take to promote alternative forms of ownership, such as cooperatives?**

This is another example of where education and partnership are important. The secretary of state's office is the chief democracy office in the commonwealth. Strong democracy is about strong communities and empowered people. As secretary I will expand the reach of the office into communities to help ensure people have access to the information, they need to make informed decisions impacting their lives, and that includes understanding the different corporate structures available.

- 5. Workplace Democracy. What steps would you take to incentivize corporations to enable workers to elect at least some members of the corporation's board?**

Public companies could and should do this today. We need to ensure that shareholders are exercising their right to vote for board members. We could do more to ensure that shareholder notices are proper and timely, and the consequences for not disclosing meeting information are a strong deterrent.

6. **Benefit Corporations. In 2012, Massachusetts legalized benefit corporations, a structure that allows a for-profit entity to also adopt a social and environmental mission. What would you do to promote this new form of governance, and how would you ensure that such corporations deliver on their proposed missions?**

Massachusetts is one of a few states that recognizes this form of business. We need to promote and encourage businesses to convert to B-corps. B-corps make a public commitment to prioritize policies and practices that are environmentally and socially conscious. We need to make sure people know about this form of governance and look at both financial and non-financial incentives to bolster their use. I am excited about B-corps and see them as a vehicle for strong public/private partnerships to accelerate the advancement of values driven goals across the Commonwealth.

7. **Diversity on Corporate Boards. What steps would you take to increase the reporting and/or requirements around diversity on corporate boards, particularly large for-profit corporations?**

Given that companies must register through the secretary's office to do business in Massachusetts, I would like to use the executive authority of the office to facilitate diversity disclosures for board membership of corporate and large non-profit corporations.

8. **Investor Protections. What would be your office's priorities in the work of the Securities Division? Namely, what role can the office's enforcement capacity play in ensuring a more equitable economy?**

The division must continue its vital enforcement work to ensure that assets are protected, and people are protected from fraud. Additionally, this is an opportunity to work with industry through public/private partnerships to help educate communities about securities and encourage more diverse participation in securities markets.

9. **Registries of Deeds. What would be your priorities in working with the Commonwealth's Registries of Deeds? For example, how do you envision the office working to advance the goal of affordable home ownership?**

The registrar of deeds is an elected position, and I respect the will of the voters. As secretary, I will support the work of the registrars by ensuring they have access to the funding they need to operate modern, public serving offices. I would like to explore streamlining information infrastructure and access across these offices as I have outlined for voting data and campaign finance across jurisdictions. I will also serve as a thought partner for breaking down structural barriers to improve access for all people.

10. **Fair Share Amendment. 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.

11. **Gig Economy. 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 oppose the initiative. I have always stood with labor and will continue to do so.

III. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS***Limit answer to 150 words or fewer.***

Use this space to add any other issues important to your vision for Massachusetts or any other matter you think progressive voters should know about your candidacy.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this questionnaire. While I am very excited about the vision we have for the secretary of state's office, I am most excited about what I believe is possible when we work together, with intentionality, to build a stronger, more vibrant, and expansive democracy. There is too much at stake, we can't continue to delay progress. Together, we can build the democracy we all hope for, dream of, and deserve.