



PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS
2022 LEGISLATIVE
RE-ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate: Becca Rausch

Office Sought: State Senator

District: Norfolk, Worcester & Middlesex

Party: Democratic

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I. About You

1. Why are you running for re-election, and what would be your top 3 legislative priorities if re-elected?

I am running for reelection to continue putting my proven leadership to work successfully advancing justice, fairness, and equity for all and delivering tangible, meaningful results for the people I am privileged to represent in the Senate. My legislative priorities include:

1. **strengthening personal and public health** (including direct access to physical and mental health care, reproductive justice, and immunization infrastructure);
2. **bolstering our democracy** (including improved voting rights, supports for marginalized candidates running for office, better government information management, and direct civics educational experiences); and
3. **furthering climate action** (including curbing carbon emissions, reducing plastics, and numerous other environmental protection policies that come before the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture, which I chair).

2. What do you view as the biggest obstacles to passing progressive policy at the state level, and how will you continue to work to overcome them?

The consensus-building that must happen in order for any policy to pass. I approach this challenge through conversations with colleagues in the building, activists, and constituents.

II. The Issues

1. **Please detail what advocacy you have done in support of the bills listed in Progressive Mass's [2021-2022 Legislative Agenda](#).**

I am proud of my consistent A+ rating from your organization and honored to be named a 2021 Progressive Mass Awardee. I am the lead Senate filer of several bills incorporated into your legislative agenda as endorsed legislation, including local option ranked choice voting, protecting against identity-based harassment and assault on Beacon Hill, public records reform, decriminalizing consensual sexual activity, banning tear gas, and the COVID Vaccine Equity Act. I cosponsored nearly all of the bills on your primary agenda this term, and several of the legislative components in your recent scorecard were my direct work (e.g., amendments to strengthen the VOTES Act in the Senate) and positions I advanced (e.g., voting no on the Congressional redistricting map). My advocacy for progressive policy is multifaceted, including cosponsorship and direct advocacy for advancement to the floor.

2. **What legislation have you filed to advance the goals stated in our [Progressive Platform](#)?**

Nearly all of the legislation I filed advances the goals of the platform. More information about my forward-thinking portfolio can be found at www.beccarauscha.com/legislation, with a complete list of my bills available at <https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/RLR0>.

3. **In 2019, the Massachusetts Legislature passed the Student Opportunity Act, updating a 25-year-old education funding formula. Notably, the bill was a promise of future investments in public schools and not the appropriation of funds themselves. How will you ensure that the Legislature keeps the promise it made to students, teachers, and community members with the Student Opportunity Act?**

I was proud and thrilled to vote YES to pass the Student Opportunity Act and I continue to collaborate with colleagues to ensure that the critical equity-focused funding commitments made in that game-changing legislation are fulfilled in each budget cycle.

4. **Recent comprehensive bills passed by the Legislature (such as the 2018 Criminal Justice Reform law, the 2020 police reform law, and the 2021 Next**

Generation Roadmap law) require significant follow-up steps in implementation. What will you do to ensure that such bills are implemented as intended and built upon?

I continue to collaborate with colleagues, experts, and advocates to ensure that the laws already passed are implemented and file legislation or otherwise use my voice to push for further progress. For example, I am the Senate lead file on legislation to actually enforce and implement the anti-shackling law for incarcerated individuals giving birth.

5. How would you evaluate the Commonwealth's response to the COVID-19 pandemic? What policies should the Commonwealth put into place in order to be more resilient in the future?

Lousy. The Governor persistently refused to follow or implement public health guidance and recommendations from the CDC, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and relevant experts from across the Commonwealth. This refusal not only continued to put all Bay Staters in avoidable harm's way but also hurt communities, small businesses, schools, and families, especially among marginalized populations such as communities of color and low income communities. The administration even refused to spend the quarter-million dollars I secured for the Department of Public Health to combat vaccine disinformation.

I have filed numerous bills and legislative amendments to help us get to the other side of COVID and help stave off the next pandemic, including the [COVID Vaccine Equity Act](#) and my signature legislation, the [Community Immunity Act](#), which would create the infectious disease prevention infrastructure that we so desperately lack in youth programs throughout the Commonwealth. I also collaborated with experts and advocates to launch the COVID Action Plan during the initial stages of the Omicron variant. Several pieces of my legislative work have been enacted into law, and much more remains to be done. The Community Immunity Act, filed even before the onset of COVID, has been and remains one of my top priorities.

6. With Roe vs. Wade under attack with an increasingly right-wing Supreme Court, what steps would you advocate for to ensure that reproductive rights are protected here in the Commonwealth?

I have always been, and intend to always be, a fervent, fierce, successful champion of reproductive health and justice. I have secured budget

amendments that take aim at fake women's health centers and support research on the intersections between pregnant women and criminal prosecution. I also crafted and filed robust reproductive justice legislation, the [Pregnant Persons Health Act](#), which would build on the abortion access law my colleagues and I passed last term by vesting rights in pregnant people and striking judicial bypass entirely, among other important policy elements. My legislative work on this issue continues to evolve as the destruction of Roe v. Wade unfolds in other states across the nation.

- 7. The Massachusetts Legislature suffers from an overcentralization of power in Leadership and a lack of transparency in operation. What steps have you taken to advance the goals of transparency and shared power, and what steps do you plan to take in the next legislative session?**

I am proud to be the foremost successful champion of transparency in the Legislature. I launched the transparency pledge back in 2018 and since my election I have boosted support for roll calls, published all of my votes, changed committee rules to ease access to committee voting records, and even created a short [video series](#) on how Beacon Hill actually works. I've also spoken with countless advocates and engaged Bay Staters on ways to support more robust transparency and accountability in our government structures.

III. The Ballot

- 1. 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)?**

YES.

- 2. 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?**

YES.

IV. State House as Workplace

- 1. Do you support the unionization effort of the Massachusetts State House Employee Union?**

YES.

- 2. If elected, are you committed to creating a safe work environment for all of your employees in which harassment, especially sexual harassment, is not tolerated?**

YES.

- 3. Do you support the creation an independent commission to investigate and report on complaints of workplace and sexual harassment in the Massachusetts Legislature?**

YES. It's my bill!

IV. Additional Comments

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.