



PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS
2022 Legislative
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate: Heather May

Office Sought: State Representative

District: 9th Middlesex

Party: Democrat Party

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OVERVIEW

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

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

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

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

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

Issue Subsections:

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

I. About You & Your Governing Approach

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

I'm running for office because I spent my life watching my father and grandfather advocate for access to healthcare for the rural community I grew up in and the surrounding communities in the states of Nebraska and Kansas. I saw them listen to those who were struggling while they spoke their truth with the hope that what they said might make a difference. And I saw my dad and his dad speak, time and time again to the powers that be in Washington, only to be ignored, belittled and in some cases ridiculed, for daring to speak out for the wellbeing of our farmers and agricultural workers. From these experiences I have developed a very deep and sacred belief that everyone deserves to have access to the democratic process. Our State House has become an insiders only institution. Those in power have created, and continue to create, rules that limit the public's ability to engage in the process, and in fact limit the Representatives ability to fully understand the intricacies and nuances of bills that affect our lives on a daily basis. The people who serve as elected officials have a responsibility to be accountable to their constituents, and to advocate for what their community needs. The people with the most influence on what you do as a legislator should always be the community - not the speaker, not donors, not lobbyists. It's called, "The People's House", for a reason.

- 1) Transparency
- 2) Housing and Food Stability
- 3) Sustainability in Construction (Climate Change)

2. What prepares you to serve in this capacity?

I have had a love for politics since high school. I nourished this love through debate. I debated in HS and College. I've also spent most of my life arguing with, listening to, and challenging my very conservative Republican family. These things have cultivated in me an ability to listen to those I disagree with on a policy level and find the core values around which they are feeling threatened. I have been an educator (higher ed) most of my adult life. I started out as an adjunct, with no job security, no benefits, teaching anywhere from 8-10 classes at 4-5 colleges in the Boston area, every semester - and barely making ends meet. I now teach at a private liberal arts college in Boston as a full-time "term" faculty (meaning I cannot be awarded tenure and have to reapply for my job ever 3 years... so making my case for the same job every 2 years won't be an issue!) term faculty at Emerson College were not unionized when I started, and I was a leader in the organizing advisory chapter of term faculty at Emerson which eventually gained us membership in the Full-time faculty union, the ECCAUP. For the last 2 years I have served as the chair of the faculty at Emerson College, working - during a pandemic - to fight for equality, to build partnerships and collaborations between faculty and administration, and to move forward policies in our faculty assembly that are now codified in our faculty handbook and

benefit all at Emerson. I believe that these experiences have prepared me well to serve as a state rep.

3. What do you view as the biggest obstacles to passing progressive policy at the state level, and how do you plan to overcome these obstacles?

1) Lack of transparency. I have no idea how the public is supposed to trust their representatives let alone hold them accountable, if we are not privy to their votes. When the public doesn't know what their reps are doing, then they may very well believe that their progressive voices are being listened to, without having any certainty around what their reps actually voted for. Because progressive policies are often seen as "controversial" - although I would argue many are not if we look at the polling numbers - I can imagine reps "falling in line" in committee for this very reason, and we would never know.

2) Power of the Speaker: the stories of the power of the Massachusetts Speaker of the House are legendary - and not for good reasons. We need term limits, we need to find ways to balance the power in the house, such as raising the base stipend and getting rid of incentive pay for various committees and chairmanships etc... Perhaps then we can get more progressive candidates interested in running. Right now, as a Progressive, it doesn't just feel like an uphill battle, it often feels like an uphill battle, in the dark, with no flashlights or weapons.

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

SAME DAY VOTER REGISTRATION (something the incumbent is against).

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

In 2005 I was hired as term faculty at Emerson College. While Emerson is a private college, it is one of the few in the country that has a unionized faculty. In the early 2000's only the full-time faculty was unionized. In early 2005 the term faculty (which is full-time faculty, but not tenure track so we "reapply" for our jobs every 3 years.) asked the Tenured faculty to join their union. There was considerable concern that in order to join the ECCAAUP we would need to open up the Union contract and that the administration could choose at that time to invoke *Yeshiva* and dissolve the union entirely. In order to make our case we needed to do a card drive and get as close to 100% of the faculty to sign as we could. We spent over 2 years organizing, having one on one meetings with our colleagues and going to meetings where a member of the administration would sit outside and make notes of who attended. It was a scary time, but it felt very important to protect ALL of our faculty (at this same time we were helping the affiliated faculty organize as well.). We were able to get an amazing 97% of faculty to sign cards, the overwhelming support from faculty sent a clear signal to the administration that the union was stronger than ever and there to stay. We were able to open the contract and include the term faculty in the union. The

ECCTAUP is now stronger than ever and we were able to get some significant gains in salary and benefits for term faculty and tenured faculty alike - this also led to gains for the affiliated faculty including guaranteed classes, and health insurance. To this day, working as one of the original organizers of the ECTAC (Emerson College Term Faculty Advisory Chapter) group and gaining membership in the ECCTAUP is one of the professional accomplishments that I am most proud of in my 20 + years at Emerson.

6. (For incumbents only) Each year, Progressive Massachusetts compiles a scorecard of key roll call votes, available at <https://scorecard.progressivemass.com>. Please use this space to explain any discrepancies between your votes and the progressive position.

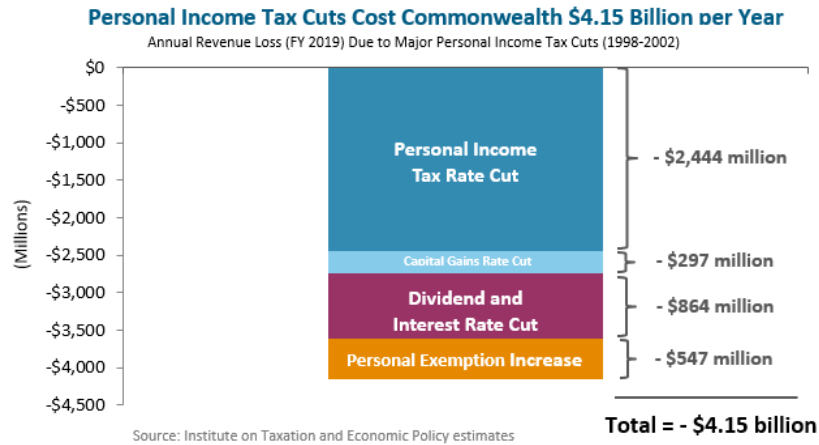
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II. The Issues

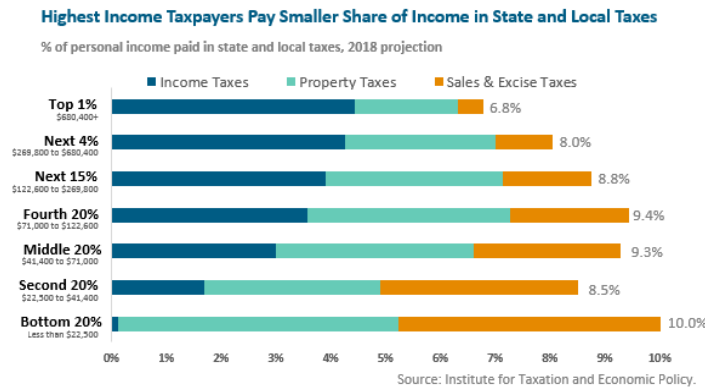
A. Revenue and Taxation

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

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



Massachusetts state and local taxes are regressive.



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

One reason people give for implementing regressive taxes is that they encourage people to work harder and earn more money. As a progressive I hold the belief that this is simply not something people 1) have much control of in modern society and 2) reinforces to the wealthy that wealth should be accumulated and hoarded. Neither of these reasons are good for Massachusetts. I've heard some people say that, "we should all contribute equally" - but they rarely explain what they mean by that. Do they mean a "flat tax"? If so, this doesn't mean we contribute equally, and in fact my understanding of a flat tax is that it often ends up being regressive because it's a percentage. Regardless, regressive taxation puts the burden on the poor. Full stop. I do not believe that money equals worth, or success. I always think about the question, "If money was no object, what would you do with your life?" People often have really inventive, fulfilling, community oriented answers to that question. If we had a base universal income, I believe it would open up doors. Not just doors to move people out of generational poverty - which it would - but it would also lower the stress and pressure of making ends meet and allow more people to follow the dreams that they have, dreams that are often very beneficial to our communities and economy. I believe very strongly in the Fair Share Amendment and I've worked during my time as chair of the Waltham Democratic City Committee to bring awareness and support to the amendment.

2. Corporate Tax Breaks. Corporate tax breaks cost Massachusetts [more than \\$1 billion in foregone revenue](#) each year. Companies can secure access to such tax breaks due to political connections whether or not the promised benefits ever materialize. Which of the following accountability steps would you support?

a. Collecting and publicly disclosing information about the benefits to the state from any tax break?

YES.

b. Repealing any tax break that does not provide the intended benefits in a cost-effective manner?

YES.

c. Establishing sunset dates for all tax breaks so that they must come up for periodic review?

YES.

From my experience discussing corporate taxation/tax cuts with colleagues who are economists, some of the predominate arguments for corporate tax cuts seem to, 1) rely on economic theories which new research is quickly proving wrong. 2) They believe that corporate taxes are double dipping - we tax the corporations and then tax the dividends. And 3) I remember reading an article that basically stated there is an underlying, sometimes almost subconscious argument being made by economist that we should get rid of

corporate taxes entirely, that we should go soft on corporate tax evasion, and that we should be thankful because they pass the savings on to employees via higher wages therefore stimulating the economy (spoiler, they don't).

For the most part these are red herring arguments. Back in 2011 the The Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy said that corporate income tax was one of the most progressive taxes. The wealthiest taxpayers also tend to own the most stock. Additionally, these taxes essentially protect us from losing more income tax revenue. If we cut corporate taxes to zero then wealthy individuals reclassify their earnings as corporate income. We have extensive proof of this in Massachusetts over the last decade.

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

YES. I 100% support the Fair Share Amendment. I also believe we need to ensure that the revenue from this amendment does not find itself being used for things other than transportation or education. These two areas stand to gain the most long term from the Fair Share amendment revenue.

4. **Progressive Revenue.** The Fair Share Amendment ballot initiative will raise much-needed revenue for our commonwealth, but we will require more resources to meet current needs. Do you support the following measures to make a more progressive tax code?

- a. **Raising the corporate minimum tax for larger companies? (The corporate minimum tax is currently only \$456.)**

YES.

- b. **Imposing a tax on the portion of corporations' US profits that are shifted to offshore tax havens?**

YES.

- c. **Raising the corporate tax rate from 8% to 9.5% (where it stood in 2009)?**

YES.

- d. **Raising the tax on long-term capital gains from 5% to 8.95%, in line with states like New York and Vermont?**

YES.

- e. **Levying a modest tax on university endowments greater than \$1 billion?**

YES.

5. **PILOT Reform.** Massachusetts is home to some of the world's most prestigious cultural, educational, and medical institutions, but many of them are exempt from

property taxes.

- a. **Do you support enabling cities and towns to require large tax-exempt not-for-profit institutions (i.e., with property valued at or above \$15 million) to make payments in lieu of taxes to the municipality equal to 25 percent of the amount that would be paid if they were not exempt?**

YES.

- b. **Would you support requiring the Department of Revenue to regularly collect the data on the financial impact of lost tax revenue from tax-exempt institutions?**

YES.

6. **Public Bank.** Do you support the creation of a Massachusetts [public bank](#) that would make loans to small businesses, local farmers, cooperatives, community development financial institutions, community development corporations, and municipalities?

YES. I'm constantly amazed to find that people think small businesses can't gain access to capital (loans) simply because they aren't viable businesses, or don't have a good business plan etc... My husband is a small business owner of a very successful design and build company. and we have never, in the 15 years he's been in business, been able to secure a small business loan. Managing cash flow to pay employees and vendors is a constant source of stress for him and many business owners like him. It seems that the reluctance to loan to many small businesses is because in various sectors, like construction, agriculture, community development etc., what's happening on paper and what's happening in real life are very different things and you need loan officers that understand the industries as well as the money! Traditional banks do not like to lend to businesses that have fluctuating incomes (often seasonal in nature). I would support any progressive policy that seeks to make access to capital easier, and more transparent. I would also like to see this applied to TRULY small businesses. We may need a tiered approach - often small businesses end up being defined as 50-100 employees (approx). The businesses that need access to loans the most are the ones with under 25 employees. These businesses are basically left out in the cold when we discuss business finance.

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

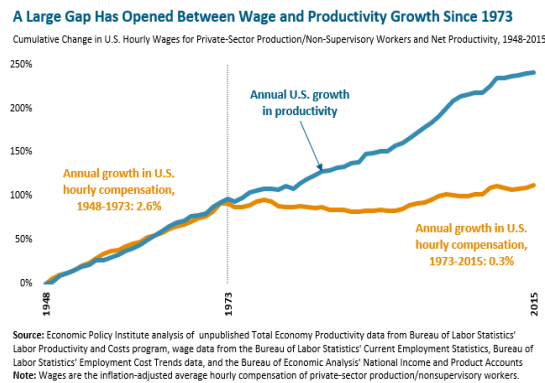
YES. I do not believe that any of the 3 listed above are necessary in modern society, therefore we should stop investing our time, talent and money into these industries.

B. Jobs and the Economy

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

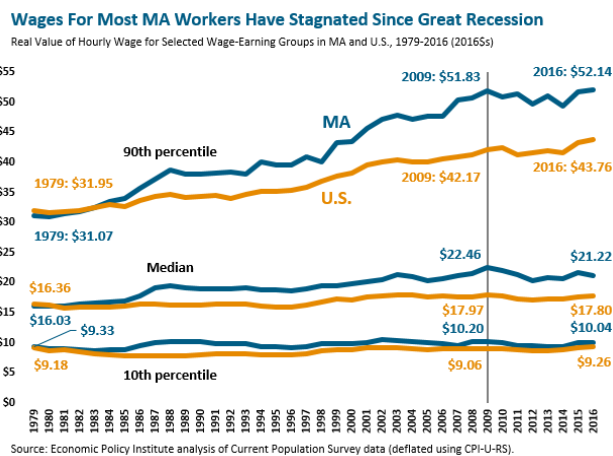
In recent decades, unions have been under attack. However, unions played—and continue to play—a pivotal role in creating a strong middle class. With weaker unions (or no unions at all) come weaker social and economic rights and an imbalanced economy.

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



<https://archive.massbudget.org/reports/swma/>

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



<https://archive.massbudget.org/reports/swma/wages-income.php>

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

As stated earlier I have worked hard personally to establish a union at Emerson College that was able to increase wage parity between term faculty and tenured faculty, and bring our benefits in line with tenured faculty as well. I believe that unions are essential to keeping workers protected, in a myriad of ways, and strong unions are necessary to regrow our middle class.

2. One Fair Wage. Do you support eliminating the subminimum wage for tipped workers?

YES.

3. Wage Theft. Do you support holding businesses responsible for the wage violations of their subcontractors when the work they do is substantially connected to the company's operations?

YES. In my district I am aware of one such company whose practices include either paying migrant workers subminimum wages, or NOT paying them at all. I've spoken to several of my city councilors about this issue, but we need the teeth of legal repercussions to bring a stop to this practice.

4. Wage Transparency. Would you support 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?

YES. The first thing I learned when working on wage parity with my union was that the "don't tell people how much you make!" taboo only served those in management as a way to keep wages low.

5. Fair Scheduling. Many workers in the service sector face irregular working hours, making it difficult to plan for other life events. Do you support providing workers the right to 14 days advance notice of hours and the right to request specific hours without retaliation from the employer?

YES.

6. 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?

YES. I've experienced mandatory arbitration with our union and administration during union grievance processes. It is still currently in our CBA and we are trying to eliminate it during our next round of negotiations (Fall 2022) because we have never seen it benefit the employee.

7. Paid Vacation Time. The US is the only advanced industrial country to not guarantee workers paid vacation time to use as they wish. Would you support making

Massachusetts the first state to require employers to provide paid vacation time to their workers?

YES.

8. **Paid Leave for Municipal Workers.** In 2018, MA passed the strongest paid family and medical leave law in the country. However, the law did not include municipal workers. Would you support extending the law to make sure that municipal workers have access to these vital benefits?

YES. It simply makes no sense that municipal workers were left out of this law.

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

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

YES.

- b. **Will you oppose all legislation that weakens Massachusetts’s labor law protecting employees from being misclassified as “independent contractors”?**

YES.

This is just another ploy by large corporations to avoid their financial responsibilities to their workers, and the communities in which their workers live. I've been noticing the ads popping up on Facebook and Instagram recently though, so we as Progressives need to ramp up our educational campaigns and find ways to counter their misinformation.

10. **Worker Ownership.** Do you support allocating state funding (grants, loan guarantees, technical assistance funds) to support worker-owned and governed businesses and cooperatives in Massachusetts?

YES. My husband is currently exploring a co-op model for his business. It's been very interesting and it's something I'm just learning more about - but so far everything we've researched seems to be very positive in the experience of the workers.

11. **Worker Governance.** Would you support incentives and/or requirements for large MA corporations to allow workers to elect at least some members of the board?

YES.

12. **State House as a Workplace.** Although the Legislature voted in 2017 to increase legislators' pay, the Legislature has not taken necessary steps to ensure staff are being properly compensated. Staff are often overworked and underpaid, leading to burnout and making it difficult for the State House to retain diverse talent.

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

YES.

b. **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.

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

YES.

Harassment of any kind has no place in the workplace. It's bad for workers, absolutely, it's also bad for business.

C. Education

Public education plays a fundamental role in democracy, cultivating informed, well-rounded community members and providing the knowledge and skills needed for economic mobility and opportunity. Although our public education system gets high marks overall, it remains one of the [most unequal](#) in the country, with significant opportunity and resource divides based on income and race. In 2019, Massachusetts passed the Student Opportunity Act to update the formula for state aid to public school districts and correct these inequities, but schools have faced added strains due to pandemic.

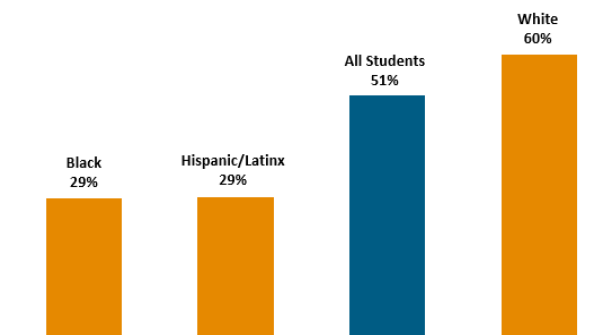
Public education has also been under attack by powerful corporate interests seeking to undermine public schools, teachers, and unions. These groups invest millions of dollars to promote the expansion of privately run charter schools, which siphon money from our public K-12 districts while largely excluding 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 take power away from communities and often facilitate privatization schemes that could never achieve democratic support.

At the same time, our understanding of education has also broadened. No longer do we only talk about K-12 education; rather, most of the [fastest-growing occupations](#) require education beyond a high school diploma. Massachusetts has been disinvesting from public higher education for the past two decades, leading to higher tuition costs and putting students at risk of long-term debt (if they are even still able to attend). Our public colleges and opportunities are an economic engine for local economies as well as a pathway to economic opportunity, and when that opportunity is cut off for students, we all lose out.

Massachusetts has significant achievement gaps reflective of resource gaps.

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

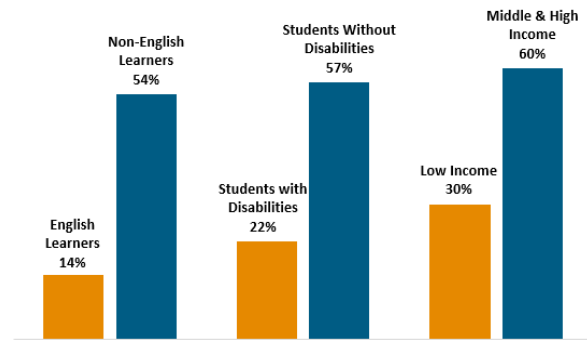
Share of MA 4th Graders Proficient on the 2017 NAEP Reading Exam, by Student Race, all students



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2017

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

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



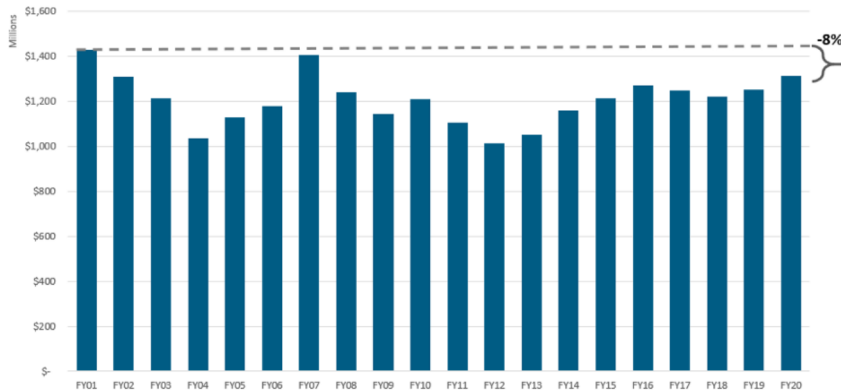
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2017

https://archive.massbudget.org/report_window.php?loc=Towards-Equity-School-Funding-Reform-in-Massachusetts.html

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

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

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



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

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

My son does not go to public school. As a product of public schools, as an educator and as a parent, this breaks my heart. But during the pandemic we found it impossible to manage our son's (who has ADHD) online learning (in the first grade) and our own livelihoods. He was 6 years old, and couldn't read. We had asked to hold him back a year and were told no. So he was supposed to be able to navigate an online learning experience without being able to read, by himself. What ended up happening was me sitting in his room trying to work and manage his engagement in the classroom at the same time. My husband and I both have good paying, stable, salaried jobs (we don't have to deal with the stress of shift work) and we couldn't do it. We have reliable and fast home wifi, and we couldn't do it. We eventually moved him to a Waldorf school that was meeting in person. They spend more time outside during the day than inside, they do project based learning and story based learning. Within a month he was reading TO us and not even just with us. He went from dreading school, to honest to god bouncing out of bed in the morning and getting himself ready for school - happily! We were amazed. What breaks my heart is that ALL students deserve an education this tailored to their needs developmentally. We don't just need education reform, we need education revisioning.

It has to start with our teachers. The educators, the people IN the classroom know what works and what doesn't, what they need and what they don't, they know if they actually have time to plan, and grade, and talk to parents, and still spend time with their families. They know if they can afford to buy a house, or pay their bills on their current salary. And I am tired of people who don't know a classroom from a boardroom telling our educators that THEY know what they need better than our teachers and educational support professionals, and specialists, and librarians.... because clearly, they do not.

Beyond that our MA representatives have let our educators down, they've passed bills and not funded them. Or they create plans to fund them, but they have refused to put some badly needed bills like those dealing with MCAS and retirement up for a vote and instead send them to study where they die in darkness. Our current representative in the 9th Middlesex, for the most part votes like a Democrat - which means he supports most educational reform bills, however he does not fight for our educators or our schools. He is not an advocate, he has refused over and over to stand up and demand transparency in our state government. He has been happy to go along to get along. And that is behavior that I cannot condone when we have SO MUCH on the line.

Finally, there is one piece of reform that I have been carefully instructed by Democrats, progressive and centrists alike, not to talk about... SRO's. We MUST remove police from our schools. This was the deciding factor for my husband and I - we refused to let the first person who greets our child each day be a police officer. In addition to useless, outdated, racist test like the MCAS, and the archaic funding of schools through property taxes, the presence of law enforcement in our schools does nothing to help us bridge the gaps in achievement and performance in our students and instead sets many of our students of color up for failure, and reinforces the idea that guns keep us safe. I wholeheartedly reject this argument. Excellence in education, fair wages, good jobs, stable housing and access to healthcare these things make society safer, they help our students succeed and they should be our focus as we re-envision what our educational system looks like in Massachusetts.

2. **Early Education and Child Care.** Do you support the Common Start Coalition's proposal to establish a robust system of high-quality, affordable early education and care for children from birth through age 5, as well as after- and out-of-school time for children ages 5-12, and for children with special needs through age 15?

YES. As a family that has had to pay for daycare/preschool/afterschool care for the last 15 plus years, these expenses are astronomical. They place a particularly hard to overcome burden on low-income families, and those who depend on shift work etc... as their livelihood.

3. **Standardized Testing.** Massachusetts is now one of just 10 states for which an assessment like the MCAS is a condition for graduation. Would you support ending this requirement and allow students, especially students with disabilities, to have several pathways to demonstrate that they have met required competency standards?

YES. I had an opportunity to speak at a recent Waltham Educators Association meeting, and I heard them loud and clear: they want the MCAS gone! As MTA president Merrie Najimy has been quoted as saying, "The implementation of the MCAS and other standardized tests has had the exact opposite effect of what was supposed to occur when the system was introduced more than 20 years ago," 20 years is long enough to assess whether something is working or not. The MCAS is NOT working.

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

from public school districts.

- a. **Do you support keeping the cap on charter schools?**

YES.

- b. **Would you support legislation to bring greater accountability to charter schools by requiring them to adhere to the same disclosure and disciplinary standards and offer the same support for English Language Learners and students with disabilities as public school districts?**

YES.

As I stated, my son does not go to public school. Therefore, we pay over \$22k a year for him to go to school. Charter Schools want to have all the money, pick and choose their students, kick out those they don't want (but not till after Oct. 1st!) and have absolutely NO oversight by the state. On the taxpayer's dime. It's antithetical to the basis of public education in the US and I feel we need to focus our time, energy and money on public education - not funding a private school system.

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?

YES. As I stated above, the educators, the people IN the classroom know what works and what doesn't, what they need and what they don't... I am tired of people who don't know a classroom from a boardroom telling our educators that THEY know what they need better than our teachers and educational support professionals, and specialists, and librarians.... because clearly, they do not.

6. **Comprehensive Sex Education.** Do you support requiring public schools that teach sexual health education to provide age-appropriate, medically accurate information that is inclusive of all sexual orientations and gender identities and includes topics such as consent and the effective use of contraception?

YES. My son is 8. He knows the anatomically correct names for all genitalia, he understands the social construct of gender and that some people feel like boys, some like girls, some like both and some like neither. He knows that there are all kinds of romantic relationships and families and that they are all built on love. He knows that people get babies in different ways, through sex and through adoption and surrogacy, IVF etc... he knows almost as much as most adults (more than some) but he knows it in a more general way. It's not rocket science, but as a parent or teacher you need to space and skill (and sometimes the safety) to speak about sex education in a way that resonates with your students/children and in a way that is based in reality and fact.

7. **Anti-Racist Education.** Curricula that reflects students' lived experiences and actively engages them in antiracism is crucial for students today. Would you support legislation that incentivizes districts to develop Ethnic Studies programs?

YES. I have been a part of the Educational Equity and Justice Committee at Emerson for several years and one very important thing I have learned through my collaborations with people much smarter than I am on these issues, is that anti-racism isn't a "thing" you do - it's a way of seeing the world, of moving through the world, of interacting with the world, and of shaping the world. It should be a part of ALL we do!

8. **Higher Education Access.** Do you support granting in-state tuition and financial aid to undocumented students?

YES. I believe education, even college education, is a human right. No one "owns" knowledge, and money should not be the gatekeeper keeping people from getting the education they want, and that many of our jobs demand they need.

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

YES. Last year at the age of 47 I finally paid off my student loans. I paid tens of thousands of dollars more than I borrowed. We cannot expect, in this economy, with the rising costs of - everything - for our students to be able to succeed if they start out hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt. It makes no sense. Other countries can make it work, we can too.

D. Health Care

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

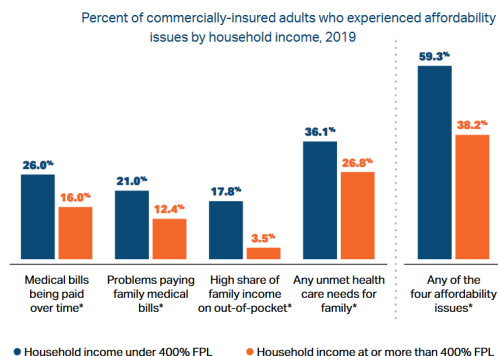
<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/average-new-car-prices-up-nearly-4-percent-year-over-year-for-may-2019-according-to-kelley-blue-book-300860710.html>

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



Image411

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 teach several classes in the area of "Health Communication: Mental Health, Media and Public Policy", "Healthcare and Healthcare Policy: Human Right or Business as Usual", and "Culture and Diversity in Health Communication." I was recently awarded an Emerson Presidential Grant along with 4 of my colleagues to help create the curricula for Emerson's new Health and Social Justice major. In my view, everything is healthcare policy. From housing and education, to the environment and the economy - it all affects our health. And the way we care for our communities' effects all of the other policies. The World Health Organization states: "The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), ratified by 160 States, confers on all human beings the core entitlements essential to human fulfillment, e.g. the rights to work, social security, family life, education and participation in cultural life. Although all are vital, the ICESCR's guarantee of "the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health" may be the most fundamental." Why? Because health has special meaning to individuals and communities. Good health is necessary for human well-being, providing intrinsic value for comfort, contentment and pursuit of the joys of life. But good health does more than that. It is important in allowing individuals to exercise a range of human rights – both civil and political, social and economic. Just as important, health is necessary for well-functioning societies. If a population does not have a decent level of health, it is very difficult to ensure their economic prosperity, political participation, collective security etc...

2. **Single Payer.** Would you support legislation to enact a single payer health care system in Massachusetts, which would guarantee health insurance as a right?

YES.

3. **Whole-Person Health**. Would you support legislation adding oral health and dental services as a requirement of state standards for MassHealth and commercial Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) and other value-based care models?

YES. I have a "weird" tooth... at least that's what people think. But I actually have 3 of them. 2 are implants from knocking out my adult teeth as a young teen. The 3rd, the one people notice, is the natural tooth that abuts them. It looks like it "sticks out" like a bunny :) It makes me very self-conscious when I speak. The reason it looks that way is the 5 years I spent with no dental insurance. Additionally, we know more and more that dental health and overall physical health are very closely related! There's a great documentary called, "Remote Area Medical" about a mobile healthcare event in Appalachia (fun fact, this program was started to bring healthcare to remote areas of developing countries, but the director found that rural America was in dire need of health services and started focusing on the US instead) - and the most popular and most needed procedures are dental. If your dental health isn't taken care of, it can affect everything else. We need to rectify this oversight.

4. **Reproductive Justice—I**. Do you support requiring health insurance plans to cover all pregnancy care, including abortion care, prenatal care, childbirth, and postpartum care, without any kind of cost-sharing?

YES. It feels very hard to even talk about this right now as a woman. I am deeply concerned about our right to choose our own reproductive actions, and the protection of access to full reproductive care for all women. We have seen in recent years that it only takes one bad administration, one bad law, one bad court decision to put our rights in great jeopardy. My opponent says he supports the right to abortion – however, if Roe V Wade is overturned I have absolutely NO faith in his desire or ability to put his career, his power, and his position in the House on the line to vocally advocate for our rights. I do not believe that my opponent in this race cares deeply enough, understands deeply enough, or has ever been affected deeply enough to defend a person's right to bodily autonomy with all his available resources. He has voted against all transparency measures in the State House, effectively making sure no one has access to how reps vote in committee. He's voted against same day voter registration and does not understand the implications this has – suppressing votes and putting all of our rights in jeopardy. I will fight with all I have to support, enhance, and protect a person's right to choose abortion.

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 who would have qualified for MassHealth if they lived in the state?

YES.

6. **Reproductive Justice—III**. Young people under sixteen seeking an abortion must obtain parental consent or judicial authorization. While most young people involve their parents, many cannot, causing delays to timely medical care and counseling. Scared teens may also turn to dangerous measures: going out of state or risking their

lives and health with illegal or self-induced abortion. Would you support repealing this restriction on young people's access to abortion?

YES.

7. **Menstrual Equity.** Would you support providing access to free menstrual products in schools, shelters, and prisons?

YES.

8. **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?

YES. I fully support harm reduction and SCS policies. I read a recent study of one of Canada's SCS facilities that basically stated that those in heroin-assisted treatment facilities (an SCS) have reduced risk of death from heroin overdose. And though it might be somewhat impractical, it is possible that if all heroin users were treated in highly supervised treatment programs this would result in a significant reduction in mortality, if all doses were consumed in the supervised treatment setting with post-dose observation. Addiction is a disease, and we need to treat it as such. I see it much the same as we might go in for chemotherapy, or dialysis, or any other regular treatment. It's simply another form of treatment, another branch on the tree we need to grow to beat the opioid crisis.

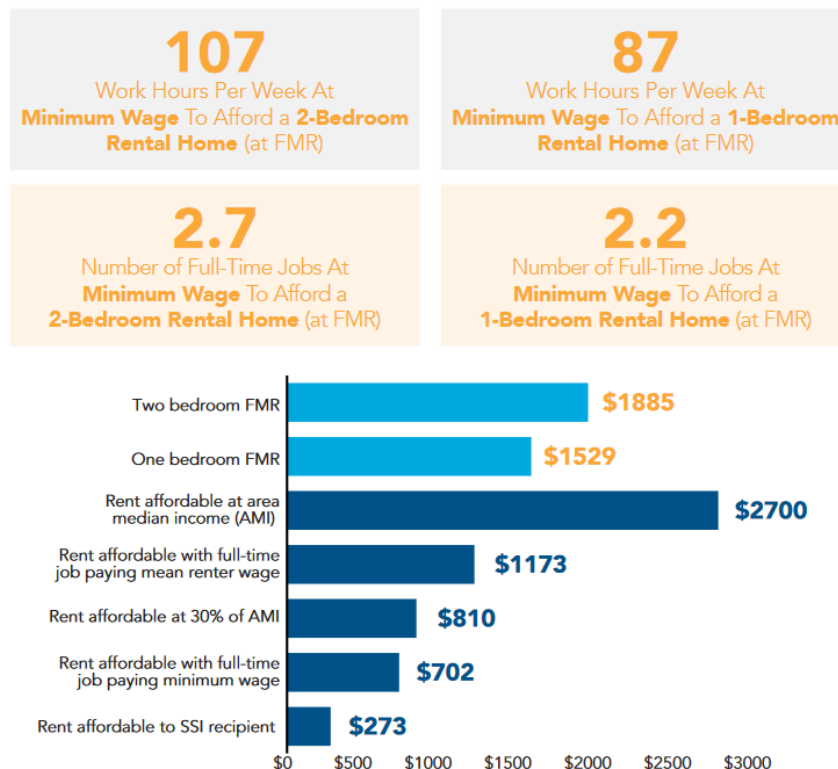
9. **Community Immunity Act.** Would you support strengthening the Commonwealth's immunization policies by standardizing the immunization requirements for all schools, daycare centers, and other covered programs and centralizing within the Department of Public Health (DPH) the processes for obtaining an exemption from those requirements?

YES.

E. Housing

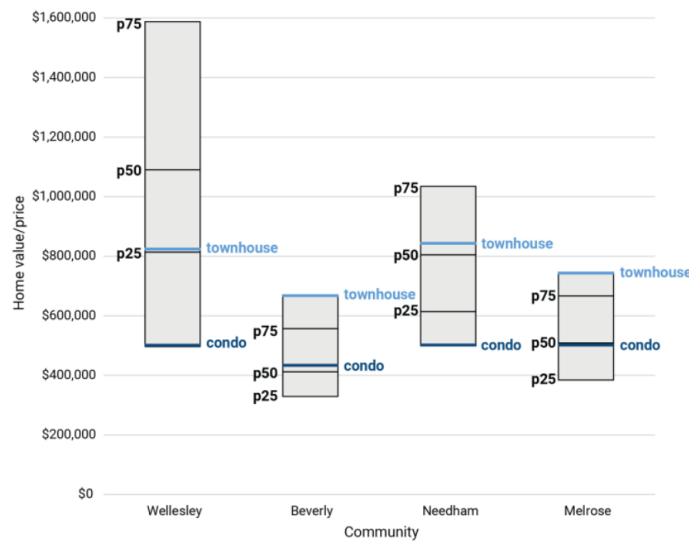
Massachusetts has a lot to offer, but that does little if people can't afford to live here. The [US News & World Report's annual state rankings](#) put Massachusetts at #40 in housing affordability (and #47 in cost of living). A worker earning minimum wage in Massachusetts would have to work [87 hours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

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



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

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



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

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

There are 2 drivers of housing and rent prices in urban areas that we don't talk about, greed and the "American Dream". First the American Dream, this is a harder one to address by legislation. Sometimes culture changes and then our laws change, sometimes our laws change and then our culture catches up. It's the latter with the "single family home" myth. As a State Rep, I would work with my local housing organizations to help educate the community about higher density housing and how we can integrate it into the community without losing our open spaces OR building high rise apartment buildings (2 things Waltham residents do not want). We can then start passing legislation to limit single family only zoning, and to help communities plan for greater inventory. Once we have those things in place (or perhaps in parallel to each other) we need rent control. Greed is difficult to legislate at the moment because so many in the state house - including the current incumbent - have a financial vested interest in keeping developers, the real estate industry, and landlords happy (just look at his OCPF reports). We have seen, definitively, that the free market will NOT solve our housing affordability issues. We must pass and enforce regulations that can ensure the price gouging we see in the market now does not continue.

2. **Homeless Bill of Rights.** Would you support the creation of a Homeless Bill of Rights that extends anti-discrimination protections to persons experiencing homelessness, including protections when seeking employment, housing, voter registration, and access to public spaces and places of public accommodation; and secures the right of persons experiencing homelessness to rest, seek shelter from the elements, occupy a

legally parked car, pray, eat, and avoid needless harassment in public spaces?

YES.

3. **Affordable Housing Funding—I.** Would you support legislation to allow cities and towns to impose a fee on real estate transfers to generate revenue for affordable housing, with the ability to create local exemptions as appropriate?

YES. The current incumbent opposes this legislation and has voted against it. His OCPF report is very telling here.

4. **Affordable Housing Funding—II.** Would you support doubling the current Deeds Excise Tax (from \$4.56 per \$1,000 to \$9.12 per \$1,000), upon the sale of real property in Massachusetts, to create a new funding stream to be split evenly between affordable housing and climate resiliency?

YES.

5. **Social Housing.** Would you support the creation of a state social housing authority to produce and preserve mixed-income homes that are union-built, sustainable, collectively owned, affordable for all income levels, and financially self-sustaining?

YES. We KNOW that mixed income, collectively owned housing in proximity to public transportation and retail centers works. We have examples that we can draw from around the country. We don't have to reinvent the wheel - we can do this.

6. **Tenant Protections.** Would you support providing municipalities with the authority to implement rent control, 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?

YES. I have seen how eviction has affected families first hand. I worked as an in-home therapist for the Home for Little Wanderers for a couple of years while getting my masters in counseling and the pressure and stress of tenant landlord relations and eviction proceedings led to some of the worst situations I've ever witnessed. Additionally I've had several close friends over the past 3 years fall prey to landlords who did not give them adequate information about the process. It's awful and dehumanizing.

7. **Tenant Opportunity to Purchase.** Would you support providing 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?

YES.

8. **Right to Counsel.** Would you support legislation to provide legal representation for low-income tenants in eviction proceedings?

YES.

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

YES.

10. **Zoning Reform—Part I.** Throughout Massachusetts, restrictive and exclusionary zoning laws make communities unaffordable and exacerbate residential segregation. Would you support the following steps....?

- a. Prohibiting municipal and state zoning bylaws, ordinances, and land use decisions that discriminate based on race, socioeconomic status, or familial status?**

YES. We need to revisit our current “lead laws”, these often lead to discrimination against families with children. There is room for a great deal of nuance as to what constitutes a danger and what does not concerning lead paint and our current “one size fits all” application doesn’t allow for that. Therefore, landlords attempt to funnel out families with children so they are not saddled with the cost of lead remediation.

- b. Enabling municipalities to pass inclusionary zoning ordinances by a simple majority vote?**

YES.

- c. Enabling municipalities to pass zoning ordinances to eliminate parking requirements for multifamily residential development by a simple majority vote?**

YES.

11. **Zoning Reform—Part II.** The Department of Housing & Community Development recently released guidelines for the 175 MBTA communities to have a zoning ordinance or bylaw that provides for at least one district of reasonable size near public transit in which multifamily housing is permitted as of right. Would you support extending this requirement to include *all* municipalities that have public transit available, as opposed to only MBTA communities?

YES.

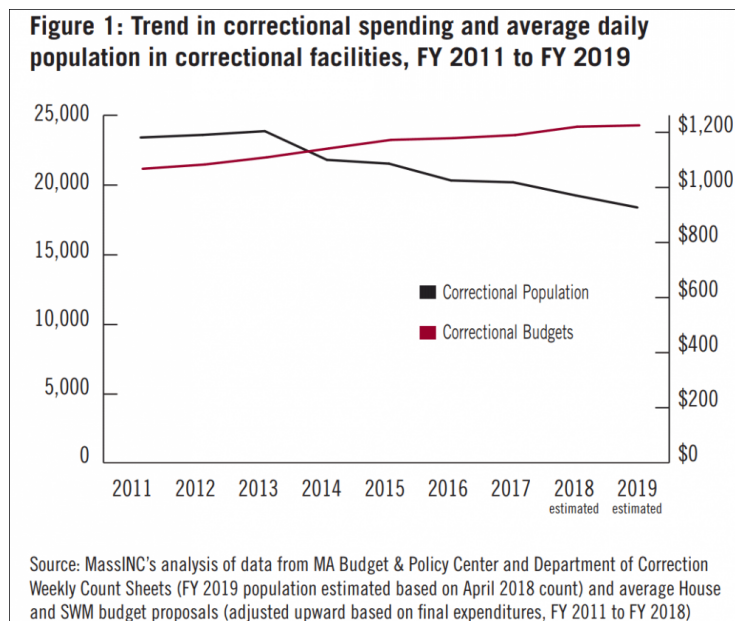
F. Racial and Social Justice

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

Mass incarceration in Massachusetts has proven socially and economically destructive, breaking apart communities across the state. From 2011 to 2016, [spending on prisons](#) grew faster than any other part of the Massachusetts budget, while funding for necessary services languished. The average cost per year to house 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
Juveniles in Custody (2015)	
Total juveniles in custody	309
Committed	168
Detained	135
Diverted	0
Juvenile custody rate (per 100,000)	0
White custody rate (per 100,000)	18
Black custody rate (per 100,000)	166
Latino custody rate (per 100,000)	117
American Indian custody rate (per 100,000)	0
Asian custody rate	0

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

I've learned a great deal about our incarcerated community members from my colleagues at Emerson who have worked in our Emerson Prison Initiative, which works to bring educational opportunities into the MCI – Concord prison enabling individuals there to earn a Bachelor's degree. We just graduated our first class this year! Those who've been lucky enough to teach there describe it as a transformational experience, for them, not just the individuals taking classes. So much of what we, the general public, know about incarceration and the individuals in our prison systems come from media stereotypes and that is simply not the reality of so many of those currently trapped in the system. The prison industrial complex is out of control and as stated earlier, I don't believe we need even one more prison in the US, or in Massachusetts. It's clear that our policing practices, legal policies, and prisons have done a very good job of decimating generations of families, most specifically Black families. This is a time honored tradition in the racist history of the United States and it must be stopped. It's going to take a multi-pronged approach including: education, sentencing reform, record expungement and more.

- 2. 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?**

YES.

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

YES.

- c. **Requiring a vote by a local legislative body (city council, town meeting) before a municipality can acquire military or surveillance equipment?**

YES.

The current 9th Middlesex incumbent has voted against every police/policing reform bill that he has had the opportunity to vote on. Given the amount of money he has taken from police unions and individual officers it's clear that his stance will continue.

- 3. **Alternative Crisis Response**. Do you support 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?

YES.

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

- a. **Eliminating mandatory minimums for all drug offenses?**

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?**

YES.

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

YES.

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

YES.

5. **Prison Accountability.** Massachusetts legislators have the statutory right to make unannounced visits to correctional facilities run by the state. Would you commit to exercising this right in order to improve accountability for the Department of Corrections?

YES. The practice of solitary confinement is, in my opinion, cruel and unusual punishment. There is no evidence that it is in any way effective at changing behavior and it is disproportionately used on incarcerated individuals of color and those struggling with mental health challenges. It is extremely difficult for those with mental health challenges to follow the rigid rules of a prison system and therefore they end up being sent to solitary for minor infractions. Putting these individuals into solitary is more likely to worsen their mental health related behaviors, not improve them.

6. **Solitary Confinement.** Although the 2018 Criminal Justice Reform Act contained provisions to reduce the excessive and harmful use of solitary confinement, the Department of Corrections has established policies and practices to [evade implementation of the spirit of these reforms](#). Would you support legislation to address this discrepancy by taking [measures](#) such as (but not limited to) providing all incarcerated people with access to at least 1 hour of structured programming each day for 5 days a week, and offering a minimum of 50 minutes of therapy per week to everyone in segregated confinement by qualified clinical mental health providers; and requiring that all people held in solitary confinement be given a minimum of 4 hours out of cell time?

YES.

7. **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 support legislation to end these restrictions?

YES. Family support systems are integral to the full rehabilitation and re-entry into society after incarceration, to limit this is not only cruel, but counter-productive.

8. **Prison Profiteering—Part I.** While Massachusetts does not have private prisons, the DOC invites private companies to profit off the families of incarcerated individuals by price gouging, as incarcerated individuals have no alternatives but to buy from the sole providers of goods in prisons. Would you support ending such price gouging by the DOC for necessary items and requiring DOC to adequately supply incarcerated individuals with the basic requirements necessary for life and maintain good health and hygiene?

YES.

9. **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. Do you support making phone calls free for incarcerated individuals?

YES.

10. **Prison Moratorium.** Would you support a moratorium on the construction of new prisons and jails in the Commonwealth?

YES.

11. **Expungement.** Would you support legislation to automatically expunge marijuana offenses with state-level coordination, firm deadlines, and a study on the impact of the expungements?

YES.

12. **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?

YES. I had the pleasure of volunteering several times in support of the Safe Communities Act!

13. **Work and Family Mobility Act.** Do you support removing immigration status as a barrier to applying for a license or learner's permit?

YES. I was very happy to see this move forward!

14. **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?

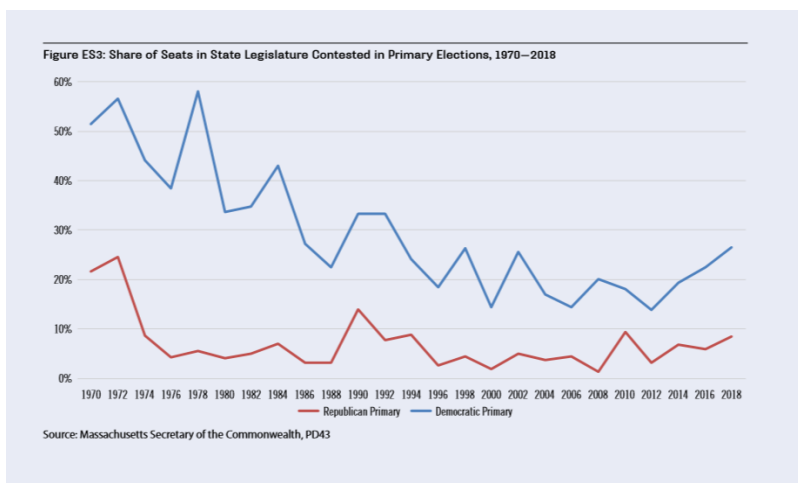
YES.

G. Good Government and Strong Democracy

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

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

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



Lower-income, ethnically diverse municipalities have lower voter turnout than whiter, more affluent communities, leading to reduced voice in state politics.

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Turnout (Nov 2020)</u>
Springfield	52.67%
Lawrence	52.72%
New Bedford	55.27%
Chelsea	56.94%
Holyoke	58.89%
Lowell	59.71%
Fall River	60.04%
Southbridge	60.44%
Brockton	63.86%
Lynn	64.07%

Bottom 10 municipalities in terms of 2020 voter turnout

- 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.).**

These issues affect all the other issues we're concerned about. If we can't bring the light of transparency into the dark corners of the state house, then things will continue to be business as usual, and business as usual is NOT good enough for the people of Massachusetts. We need to put public pressure on all Reps, including the Speaker, to publish all committee votes, to allow at least 30 minutes to read amendments before voting on them and 72 hours before voting on bills so that the community has time to lend their voice to the process. These things are basic to democracy and without them nothing else can be authentically advocated for by any Rep who has voted against the transparency measures that have come before the house, including the 9th Middlesex's current Rep. If you don't feel comfortable publishing your votes in committee, standing for roll call votes etc... my question simply becomes, "why"? And there is no good answer to that question. Beyond that we need to make election day a state holiday, give people paid time off to vote, and allow for same day registration. Anything that restricts access to voting is voter suppression – full stop.

- 2. Legislative Transparency—Part I.** The Massachusetts Legislature lacks many basic transparency measures found in other state legislatures around the country. Would you vote in favor of making the following items available online...?

- a. All committee votes, whether taken by electronic poll or formal roll call?**

YES.

- b. All written testimony submitted for or against bills (with appropriate redactions)?**

YES.

- c. **Reader-friendly summaries of bills currently in or reported out of committee?**

YES.

- 3. **Legislative Transparency—Part II.** Legislators only vote to change the rules at the start of the legislative session, but all legislators can model transparency on their own throughout the session. Would you commit to doing the following...?

- a. **Standing for a recorded vote when a colleague asks for one on any amendment which you have co-sponsored?**

YES.

- b. **Making your committee votes available online on your website?**

YES.

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

YES. When I talk to people on the doors about this they are mortified. The general public does not understand how this works and we need to do more to educate the public and to put pressure on the speaker to push for this change.

- 5. **Expanding Access to Public Meetings.** During the pandemic, the ability to attend and participate in public meetings virtually has expanded the number of people who are able to participate, removing barriers faced by people with disabilities, people with small children, people with mobility issues, or people with scheduling conflicts (among many others).

- a. **Would you support updating Open Meeting Law so that people can choose to participate remotely in public meetings on a permanent basis, even after the pandemic emergency ends, and providing the necessary funds to municipalities to implement this?**

YES.

- b. **Would you advocate for continuing the practice of allowing people to testify virtually at legislative hearings?**

YES.

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

YES.

7. **Same Day Registration.** 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?

YES.

8. **Local Elections.** Municipalities across Massachusetts have sought to expand the franchise for local elections, but remain hamstrung by the home rule process.

- a. **Would you support legislation to enable municipalities to expand the franchise to 16- and 17-year-olds for local elections?**

YES.

- b. **Would you support legislation to enable municipalities to expand the franchise to legal non-citizens (e.g., Green Card holders) for local elections?**

YES.

9. **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)?

YES.

10. **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?

YES. Waltham is a majority white community, and unfortunately after the recent redistricting, the 9th Middlesex lost almost every Ward that had a minority majority. I see this as incumbent protection and voter disenfranchisement.

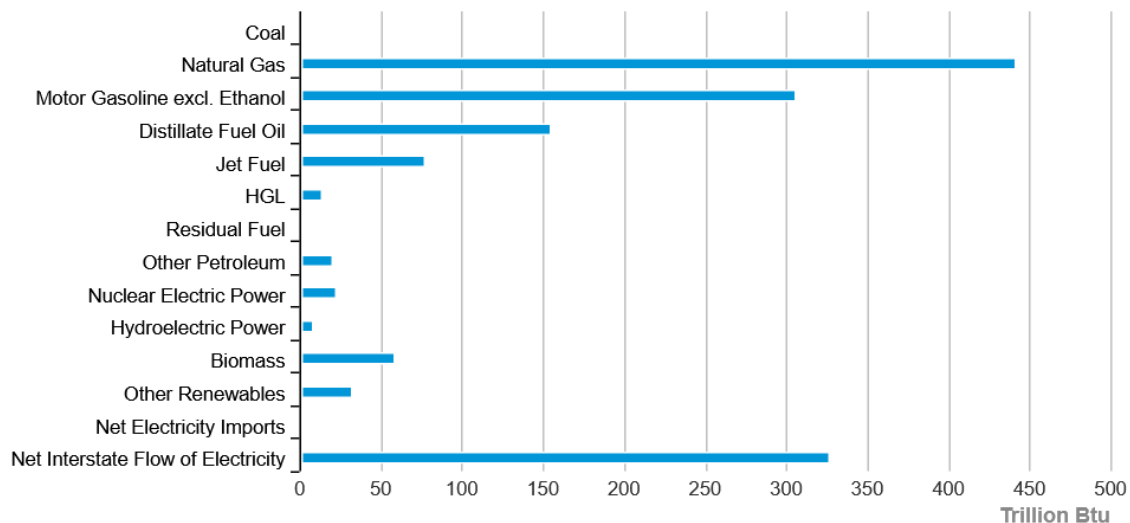
H. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection

As a coastal state, Massachusetts will be hit particularly hard by climate change, but we are not responding with the necessary urgency. In order to avoid catastrophic climate change, global carbon emissions need to be [halved by 2030](#) and brought to net zero by 2050, and affluent countries and states must go further. In 2016, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled that the state has failed to meet its legal obligation to set and enforce annual limits on greenhouse gas emissions as outlined in the 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act. Setting and reaching these goals, as well as the goals of the 2021 Next Generation Roadmap law, 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 accelerating this transition and ensuring that equity is at the forefront.

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.

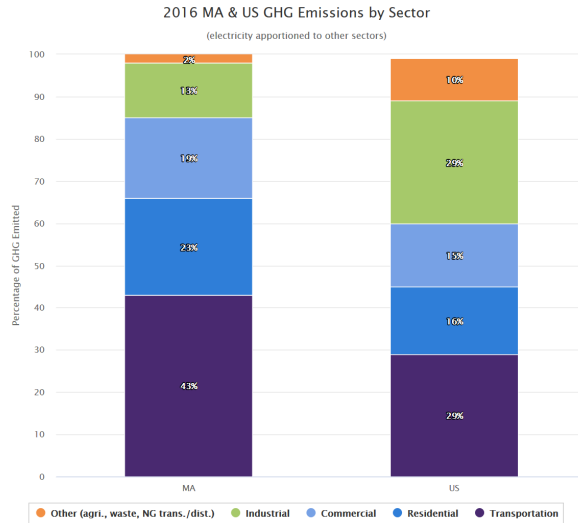
Despite recent progress, Massachusetts is still overwhelmingly dependent on fossil fuels.

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.



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.).

“There is no planet B”. The first time I saw this statement I thought about how laissez-faire I had been about my role in climate change up until that time. My belief that things desperately need to change – and my actions towards being that change have not always aligned. I think this is true for a lot of our communities, and as I tell my debate students – you have to make the solution workable for the people who will be implementing it AND for the people who will be affected by it. Just as I came to that realization, and have now worked to minimize my impact on the environment – the Massachusetts legislature needs to come to this realization too.

To quote from the Mothers Out Front website: “Energy efficiency is the healthiest and most abundant renewable resource available for us as we reduce our use of fossil fuels. In Massachusetts, 75% of our electricity is generated from burning natural gas, more and more of which is coming from the fracking fields of Pennsylvania. This is why energy efficiency is an integral part of protecting our children's future from climate change in our swift and just transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy.” This is important for 2 reasons: 1) because Energy Efficiency allows us to use new technology to create systems, buildings, and houses that are able to cut down on the amount of energy we use even when we do need to turn on the lights, wash clothes, or cook dinner! 2) Our use of Natural Gas hurts both the Citizens of Massachusetts AND of Pennsylvania! In summer of 2016 Pennsylvania experienced its first Fracking related earthquake, and they have and will continue to experience more. **Natural Gas is not a solution to our energy crisis.** Here in Massachusetts we need to take steps to make sure that our Representatives understand this and are constantly prioritizing energy efficiency

wherever possible. Does finding these solutions and implementing them take money – yes – but probably not as much as trying to find “Planet B”! The unwillingness of many in the State House to set big goals for climate change initiatives is not only frustrating, but dangerous. I am fully committed to passing meaningful climate crisis legislation. I don't think that 2050 is an adequate “timeline”, for us to put on legislation that is meant to save our planet. I think the 2030 deadline that has been proposed by many progressive candidates is the deadline that we should be shooting for in our bills and their implementation. I am continuing to talk with climate activists, and look at different pieces of legislation being proposed, in order to fully work out my climate crisis platform. But it is something that I am deeply devoted to!

2. **Next Generation Roadmap.** At the start of this legislative session, the Legislature passed a bill that requires emissions reductions of 50% from 1990 levels by 2030, 75% by 2040, and at least 85% by 2050. How can the Commonwealth exceed these targets, and what will your priorities be in advocating for that?

One way we can exceed our current targets is by getting aggressive with the developer/construction industry and our building code. There is absolutely no reason for anyone to be building ANY new construction of any kind, commercial, residential, or otherwise, that is not at least net zero, with 100% renewable energy use. We have an influx of federal funds coming that are earmarked for climate initiatives. Now is the time to train our workforce, update our archaic building codes and start 1) retro-fitting and 2) only allowing net zero new construction. So priority #1: Building codes, workforce training and new construction with 100% renewables. I believe this is the best place to start. Beyond that we also need to disband the ridiculous Commission on Energy Efficiency, who's membership is made up entirely of developers and real estate industry individuals. We need to create a TRUE Commission on Energy Efficiency that has experts on sustainable and net zero building in commercial, industrial and residential construction. We need this commission to be able to oversee and hold accountable organizations like the DPU, Mass Saves and the CEC who are supposed to be setting new targets for areas in their sectors but from whom we have heard - crickets - since the climate bill passed in 2021.

Truly, I'd like to see our leaders set the example for the public and for the industries involved by putting their money where their mouths are, stop "performing", and start "doing"! And I mean personally as well as professionally in their role as elected officials. I want to see the speaker, the Governor, etc... commit to reducing their own carbon footprint by retrofitting or building their homes to be Net zero, like my husband and I have done. Here in Waltham we have built a fossil fuel free, net positive home. My husband owns a design and build company and he and I both are passionate about moving the industry forward as a force for GOOD in the climate fight. We've had it with people, especially our leaders, not walking the talk. Performance belongs in the theater, not on Beacon Hill. The technology to do this exists, the training to build net positive homes exists, and contrary to popular belief it is NOT cost prohibitive, in fact, as an investment, it's a financial gain! And as people who need this planet to continue to be inhabitable - the alternative will have us all paying the ultimate price.

3. **100% Renewable Energy.** Scientists have argued that, with existing technologies, the

US could supply 100% of energy needs with renewable sources. Would you support requiring that Massachusetts adopt a target of sourcing electricity from 100% renewable energy sources by 2030?

YES.

4. **Rooftop Solar**. Would you support requiring that all new construction be built to accommodate solar energy installations?

YES.

5. **Fossil-Fuel-Free Construction**. Would you support legislation to enable municipalities to ban oil and gas heating pipes in new construction?

YES.

6. **Fossil Fuel Infrastructure**. Do you oppose the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure in the state?

YES.

7. **Environmental Justice**. Would you support requiring the Energy Facilities Siting Board to consider environmental justice, public health, and climate impacts in decision-making on siting projects?

YES.

8. **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?

YES.

9. **Electrifying Public Transit**. In Massachusetts, 43 percent of GHG emissions in 2016 came from transportation infrastructure and vehicles. Tackling this will require a shift away from cars and toward public transit, as well as electrification of both. Would you support the electrification of the MBTA bus fleet by 2030, RTA fleets by 2035, and the MBTA rail system by 2035?

YES.

10. **Free Public Transit**. Do you support making public transit in the Commonwealth fare-free?

YES. Public transit is a public good and should be treated as such. It should be integrated into our state budget in a way that fully funds both ridership as well as needed infrastructure updates and renovations.

11. **Regional Transportation Funding**. The unavailability of state funds for infrastructure spending has meant the deterioration of regional transportation systems. Do you support allowing municipalities to place a question on the ballot to raise revenue for local and regional transportation projects?

YES.

III. 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.

We need a, “shared health governance”, approach to healthcare where researchers, health insurers, governments, professionals and citizens work together building consensus around health priorities – including the legislative process, coalition building, and citizen participation.

Yes, there are economic and logistical challenges to building a single payer healthcare system. However, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services states, “the National Health Expenditure grew 3.9% to \$3.5 trillion in 2017, and accounted for 17.9% of the GDP”. Some economists say we don’t have a debt problem in this country – we have a healthcare problem. 2/3rds of personal bankruptcies are due to medical bills. I will fight to bring to fruition policies that improve our health as a society while lessening the burden of costs on our communities. It has to happen soon, there is growing support for the legislation, and we need legislators who will build the political will to “make it so”.