



**PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS**  
**2022 Legislative**  
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

**Candidate:** Raul Fernandez

**Office Sought:** State Representative

**District:** 15th Norfolk

**Party:** Democratic Party

**Website:** [www.raulforrep.com](http://www.raulforrep.com)

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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, as the Vice-Chair of Brookline's Select Board, I've seen firsthand that we can accomplish incredible progress locally when we prioritize racial and economic justice in all of our decision-making. I've also seen that state-level inaction stymies that progress:

It happened on housing: our Town Meeting passed a real estate transfer fee through a home rule petition, but it's taken years to make progress on Beacon Hill because the incumbent Rep. hasn't fought for it. That glacial pace has already cost our town \$37 million dollars and counting for affordable housing.

It happened on climate: I co-sponsored a warrant article to require electrification in new buildings and substantial renovations in Brookline. It passed Town Meeting, but current state law prevents it from taking effect.

It happened on voting rights: I championed Town Meeting's push to extend local voting rights to 16 and 17 year old residents and non-citizens, but it died on Beacon Hill.

When it comes to issues like housing, climate, and democracy, there isn't time to wait around — especially for our residents of color and our underpaid residents (others call them low-income), who feel the ramifications of our inaction most acutely.

Once elected, my top three priorities will be: securing housing as a human right for all of Brookline's residents; delivering true education equity across the state; and reimagining our crisis response system statewide to prioritize mental health and wellbeing.

### **2. What prepares you to serve in this capacity?**

I bring a combination of lived and professional experiences that make me uniquely prepared to serve in the State House. For too many of our legislators, policy is theoretical. For me, policy is personal. Growing up in public housing, I saw that fully-funded public institutions can create safe and stable neighborhoods. That's why [I'll advocate for substantially increased funding for public housing maintenance and production](#). As a graduate of Bronx Science, I'm living proof that a well-resourced public school can unlock the limitless potential of its students. I was lucky to attend Bronx Science, but that wasn't an option for most of my friends, and I'll never forget that my zoned public school graduated less than 3 in 10 students. [That's why I'll fight for real school desegregation to ensure that all students can access an excellent education](#). As a kid in the Bronx, I saw asbestos removed from white communities and dumped in Black and Brown communities, including in a lot across from my home. That's why it's so important to me that our response to the climate emergency makes Massachusetts more equitable, and

it's [why I'm so committed to ensuring that local environmental justice projects have the funding they need](#). As a renter in Coolidge Corner, I understand the anxiety created by yearly rent hikes. [That's why I'll champion rent stabilization and a universal state-funded right to counsel for tenants facing eviction](#). These lived experiences have shaped who I am as a policymaker, and because of them, I bring a sense of urgency to policymaking that's been missing from our state legislature.

I also believe that my experience as a municipal leader gives me a unique — and sorely-needed — perspective. I'm intimately familiar with the needs of cities and towns, and I can speak authoritatively about the way our state has failed to meet them. Climate provides an excellent example: here in Brookline, our Town Meeting passed a warrant article (that I co-sponsored) banning the use of fossil fuels in major new construction, but current state law prevents it from taking effect. At such a critical juncture in the fight against climate change, we can't afford not to support our cities and towns as they transition away from fossil fuel dependence. That's why one of my top priorities is to give municipalities the tools they need to combat climate change, and it's a priority that's been directly shaped by my own experience in municipal government.

### **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?**

The State House operates primarily to preserve the political power of House leadership and incumbents, not to create meaningful policy or address the real problems in our state. And because the legislative process in the House is so opaque, constituents have no real means to hold their electeds accountable for the power-playing they do (and the policymaking / vote-taking they don't do). As a result, incumbents and leadership have every reason to fight on behalf of the politically-expedient status quo, and no incentive to deliver substantive policy changes.

Building the progressive bench in the State House is absolutely a necessary step toward changing this culture, and once elected, I plan on fighting hard to elect progressive challengers like myself. That said, the House is composed of 160 representatives, and so while building the progressive bench is a necessary aspect of changing the culture at the State House, it alone won't deliver real change for the people of Massachusetts with the urgency that racial and economic justice and our response to the climate crisis require. As a Select Board member, I've built bridges and overcome roadblocks to secure concrete policy accomplishments, without compromising on equity and justice. I'll bring that approach to the State House by working with like-minded Reps to create coalitions that are effective and productive.

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

Oregon, California, and Washington, D.C. have all implemented rent control, and that's something I'd love to see us adopt here in Massachusetts. Rent control, like all tenant

protections, is about stability, and rents in Massachusetts should not increase beyond 5% above the cost of inflation each year. As a renter in the second-highest rental market in the state, this issue is personal: our ban on rent control means that any year could come with a major rent hike or no-fault eviction. Strengthening tenant protections is a crucial aspect of combatting the housing crisis, and I'm excited to learn from Oregon, California, and D.C.'s use of rent control.

I'd also like to see more municipalities in Massachusetts follow the lead of cities like Berkeley, San Francisco, and Seattle in banning the use of fossil fuel infrastructure in new construction. I know firsthand that for that to be possible, we need to change state law — I was an original cosponsor of a Warrant Article to enact that same ban in Brookline, but it was shot down by the Attorney General for conflicting with state laws.

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

I created and chaired Brookline's 2020-2021 Task Force to Reimagine Policing, which proposed meaningful public safety reforms that have since been adopted. These include the elimination of School Resource Officers, the elimination of "Walk & Talk" officers that patrolled public housing, the creation of a Senior Advisor on Social Services position, and a consulting engagement with the successful CAHOOTS program to create a clinical response to non-emergency mental health calls in Brookline.

In the end, the Task Force was incredibly successful, but we faced significant resistance. Regressive voices in town pushed back, and a majority of the Select Board voted against the creation of this task force, calling instead for a committee to reform, rather than reimagine, policing. I made it clear that anything less than reimagining wouldn't solve the big, structural problems with policing, and the Board reconsidered — and ultimately voted in favor of my Task Force. Later, we partnered with Tufts to poll Brookline residents about public safety, and the results overwhelmingly supported the Task Force's recommendations.

**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.**

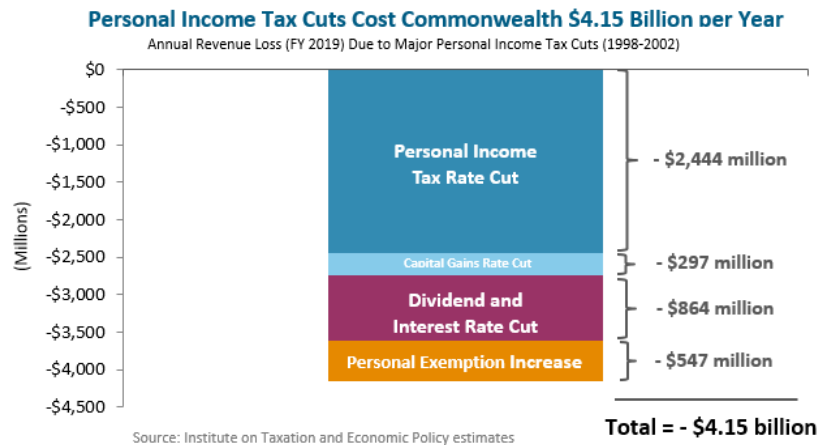
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## II. The Issues

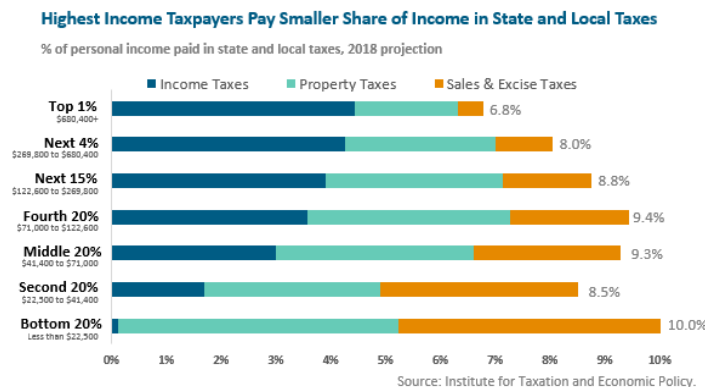
### A. Revenue and Taxation

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.).**

Our public systems are desperately underfunded, and it shows — our transportation infrastructure is unreliable, our schools are forced to struggle for bare-minimum funding (and sometimes not even that), and our housing crisis is exacerbated by a dearth of funding for affordable housing construction and maintenance. That's why I believe Massachusetts needs robust tax reform, with a particular emphasis on shifting away from regressive taxation methods and towards progressive ones. I championed a successful Home Rule Petition that would establish a Real Estate Transfer Fee in Town. The Home Rule would levy a fee on the sale of high priced properties for the purpose of funding the creation of affordable housing. Had the State Legislature acted on it when it first passed town meeting in 2019, Brookline would already have access to an additional \$37 million in funding for affordable housing.

Additionally, because I believe we need to shift tax burdens off of those already struggling, I supported the successful passage of a means-tested Senior Property Tax Exemption Warrant Article, providing relief to fixed-income seniors struggling to keep up with rising property taxes, and shifting that tax burden up to those who could afford it.

**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. And I further support establishing measurable metrics of success in statute at the time that any tax break is passed. Unless we set explicit expectations for what tax breaks will deliver, we cannot hold corporations accountable and we cannot assess whether other policy tools are more appropriate for achieving these goals.

**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.

**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. And I will be actively campaigning to get the Fair Share Amendment passed.

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. On the Select Board, I led our successful push to require a large nonprofit to commit to permanently increasing their PILOT to 25%. We were able to secure this commitment as part of a Select Board vote which allowed them to expand their footprint in town, but cities and towns need more authority to require PILOT payments from large institutions.

- 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.

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

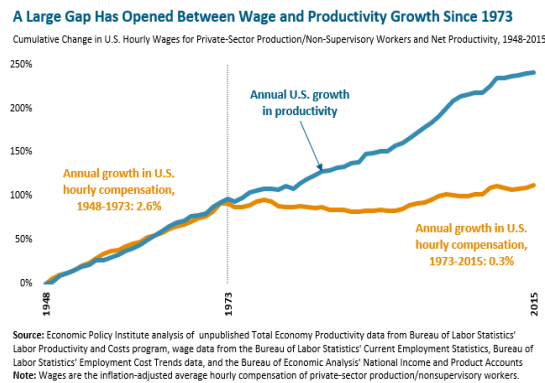
YES.

## 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.

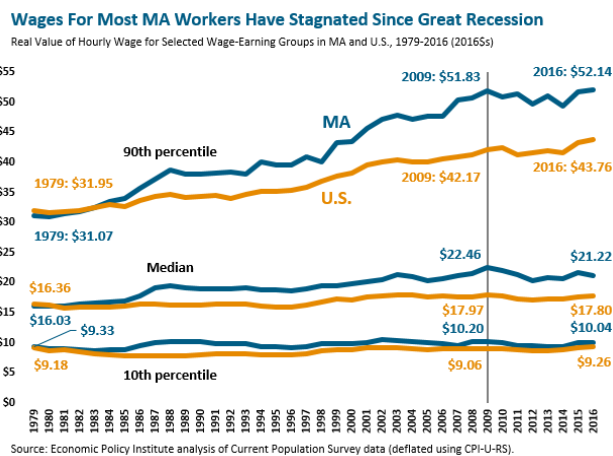
In recent decades, unions have been under attack. However, unions played—and continue to play—a pivotal role in creating a strong middle class. With weaker unions (or no unions at all) come weaker social and economic rights and an imbalanced economy.

### 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.)**

I believe that every worker in Massachusetts should earn a wage that allows them to thrive—not just to survive—and that every worker deserves access to basic employment rights and protections like paid time off and protections against discrimination. As a union member (SEIU 509) from a family of union transit workers, I've made workers' rights a cornerstone of my campaign, my service on the Select Board, and my career.

Most recently on the Select Board, I led a push to secure 12 weeks of paid parental leave for every municipal employee in Brookline—while the Board didn't move forward with it this year, we've heard from the town's HR director on feasibility plans and laid the groundwork for my colleagues to pick up the torch next year.

I've also been leading the push to adopt a wage theft policy in Brookline's procurement procedures—Brookline should not direct municipal resources to employers who steal from their employees, and we recently secured the Select Board's assent for the Town Counsel and Procurement Director to investigate policy options to prevent Town government from contracting with people who have been adjudicated to have engaged in wage theft.

I also led negotiations to reach a just resolution with Gerald Alston, a firefighter who faced racial discrimination in town, and championed the successful Warrant Article which banned the Town from requiring non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) as a condition of settlement for allegations of racial or sexual harassment or police misconduct.

I've also worked to strengthen and extend Brookline's social safety net during the pandemic: I led the effort to commit \$175,000 to Brookline's Safety Net Fund to provide critical temporary emergency assistance to those who needed it most. Finally, I was instrumental in ensuring that funds were made available to Brookline's METCO families, small business owners, and employees – all regardless of immigration or documentation status.

**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.

**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.

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. And I also support eliminating mandatory non-disclosure agreements as a condition of settlements for illegal conduct, and successfully championed a warrant article to ban this practice in Brookline.

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. And I have fought to extend paid family and medical leave to municipal employees in Brookline. Unfortunately, my colleagues did not share my enthusiasm for getting this done, but I am ready to take up the fight in the state house to extend this right to workers in every municipality.

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. And I attended the kickoff for the Mass Not For Sale campaign and will be actively campaigning for a no vote on this initiative.

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

YES.

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.

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. And creating an environment where harassment is not tolerated has been one of my top priorities on the Select Board. This work starts with acknowledging past harm and tackling the culture of silence around ongoing harassment, and I have worked on each issue in Brookline by leading negotiations for a settlement with Gerald Alston after he faced discrimination as a Brookline firefighter and by banning the use of mandatory NDAs as a condition for racial and sexual harassment settlements.

- 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.

## 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.

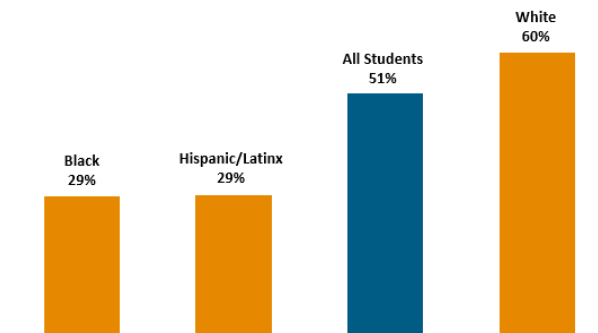
Public education has also been under attack by powerful corporate interests seeking to undermine public schools, teachers, and unions. These groups invest millions of dollars to promote the expansion of privately run charter schools, which siphon money from our public K-12 districts while largely excluding 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

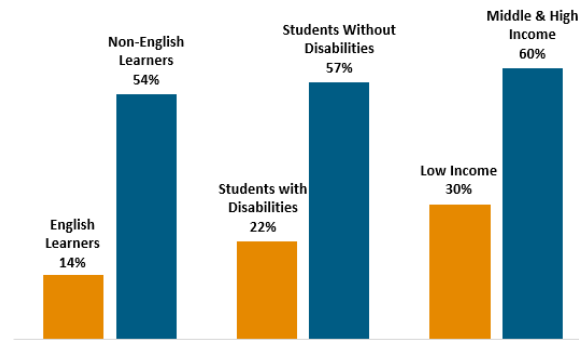
Share of MA 4th Graders Proficient on the 2017 NAEP Reading Exam, by Student Race, all students



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



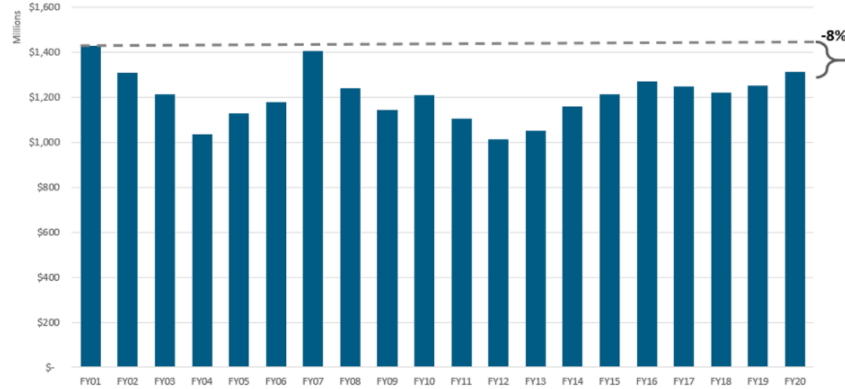
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2017

[https://archive.massbudget.org/report\\_window.php?loc=Towards-Equity-School-Funding-Reform-in-Massachusetts.html](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 approach to education policy is grounded in my academic experience as a scholar of racial inequity in education at Boston University. In my scholarship and my service on the Racial Imbalance Advisory Council in the state's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, I have documented the impact of structural oppression on students. It's also grounded in my own experiences as a student—being placed in a talented & gifted program while other kids in my class weren't, and understanding how different outcomes can be when we shower some kids with resources and withhold them from others. That's the lens through which I see education policy, and I'm committed to dismantling systemic disparities in education access and quality. In my education policy platform ([raulforrep.com/education](http://raulforrep.com/education)), I outlined my priorities in this issue area: real school desegregation, building a culturally responsive curriculum, and recruiting and retaining educators of color. Education equity is what I've dedicated my career to, and I'm excited to bring that expertise to the state house.

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. And as a parent of a one-year-old, early childhood education is a high priority for me. I recently joined a rally on Boston Common for the Common Start Coalition's proposal.

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. The high-stakes use of standardized testing undermines learning by cutting into instructional time for test prep. I support using standardized tests as one tool among many for identifying gaps in educational opportunity in Massachusetts, but the high-stakes use of these tests undermines their value as a diagnostic tool. In particular, the use of the MCAS as a requirement for high school graduation is inequitable, and I know as an educator that qualitative evaluations are often far more actionable in improving student learning.

Colleges are increasingly foregoing standardized testing as a requirement for education because they know that testing doesn't measure the skills people need to succeed in school and life, and it's past time for Massachusetts to similarly eliminate the high-stakes use of standardized test scores.

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.

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. I strongly support eliminating the state's power to impose receiverships. We make progress when we listen to school leaders already working in the community, not when we impose top-down control.

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.

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. Yes, strongly. I was proud to stand with Educators for Excellence at the State House in March at their rally to demand anti-racist curricula. I'll say now what I said then: we need a legislature that not only backs the educators that teach racially affirming, historically accurate, and welcoming content — but that passes legislation to make inclusive and accurate curricula the norm, not the exception.

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

YES. And I have been a champion for undocumented students at Boston University in my role on the faculty there, both as a direct advisor and mentor and in convening conversations about how the university can better support undocumented students and DACA recipients. One such event is described here: <https://www.bu.edu/wheelock/creating-communities-of-support-for-daca-undocumented-and-immigrant-children-students/>

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

YES. And I was proud to speak at Zero Debt MA's April rally calling on President Biden to cancel student loan debt. No one should be forced into tens of thousands of dollars of debt because they want an education. Making public colleges tuition free is an investment in people, and it will pay off. I also support maintaining and expanding student governance at public colleges and universities, and I wrote my doctoral dissertation on student trustees in the UMass system (<https://open.bu.edu/handle/2144/20868>) and have seen how student trustees have promoted justice through the years.

## 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.

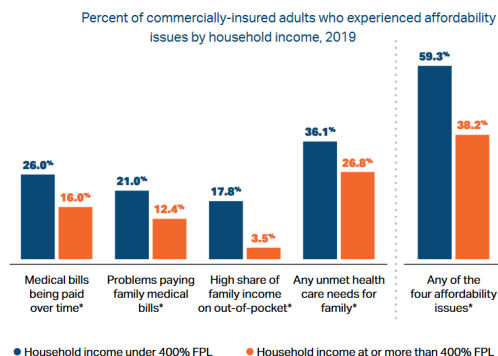
<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/average-new-car-prices-up-nearly-4-percent-year-over-year-for-may-2019-according-to-kelley-blue-book-300860710.html>

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 believe that high-quality healthcare is a human right, and I'm particularly focused on the areas where we fail to treat it as such. That's why my healthcare priorities center around maternal mortality, the addiction epidemic, and abortion access.

In this campaign, I've made it a priority to connect with and learn from advocates on the frontlines of the effort to improve maternal health outcomes among parents of color, and I'm especially excited to fight on behalf of the Racial Inequities in Maternal Health Commission's legislative recommendations. I also strongly support legislation by Reps. Miranda and Sabadosa that would expand MassHealth coverage to include doula services.

The addiction epidemic is a public health crisis, and I'll treat it as such by grounding my priorities in the Harm Reduction Commission's [2019 report](#). Specifically, I'll fight to legalize and adequately fund safe consumption sites. I'll also prioritize expanding the availability of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl strips, throughout the state.

On abortion access, the Roe Act was a watershed piece of legislation, but make no mistake: there is still work to be done when it comes to making abortion as accessible as it should be in Massachusetts. Restricting teenagers from accessing abortion care — or forcing them to acquire parental consent — can be life-threatening, which is why I strongly support allowing residents under 16 years of age to freely access abortion care without parental involvement.

I also support Rep. Sabadosa's legislation that would require all public universities to provide medication abortion on campus (a standard currently only met by UMass Amherst).

**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. I strongly support legislation filed by Reps Garlick and Sabadosa that would establish a single payer Medicare for all system in Massachusetts.

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.

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.

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. Yes, strongly. Young people deserve bodily freedom.

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

YES. Menstrual products should be free and accessible in all public buildings. Brookline is the [first town in the country to provide menstrual products in all public bathrooms](#), and as a Representative from Brookline, I'll fight for funding to make this possible in every community in Massachusetts.

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. And I further support the full implementation of the State's [Harm Reduction Task Force](#) recommendations, including both supervised consumption sites and increasing access to fentanyl test strips to allow people who use substances to avoid consuming substances laced with fentanyl without their knowledge.

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

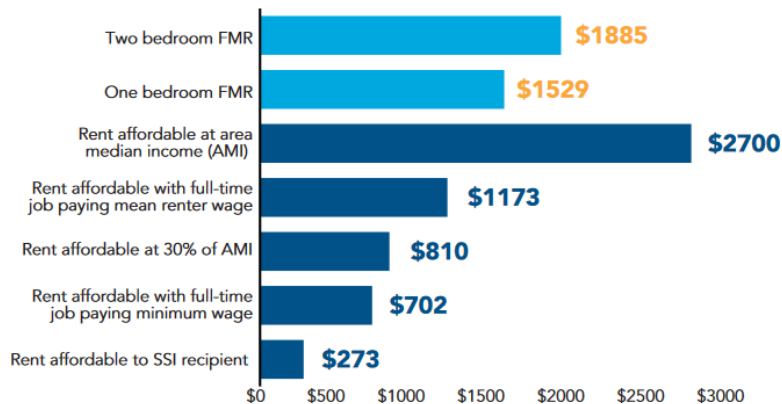
Department of Public Health (DPH) the processes for obtaining an exemption from those requirements?

YES.

## E. Housing

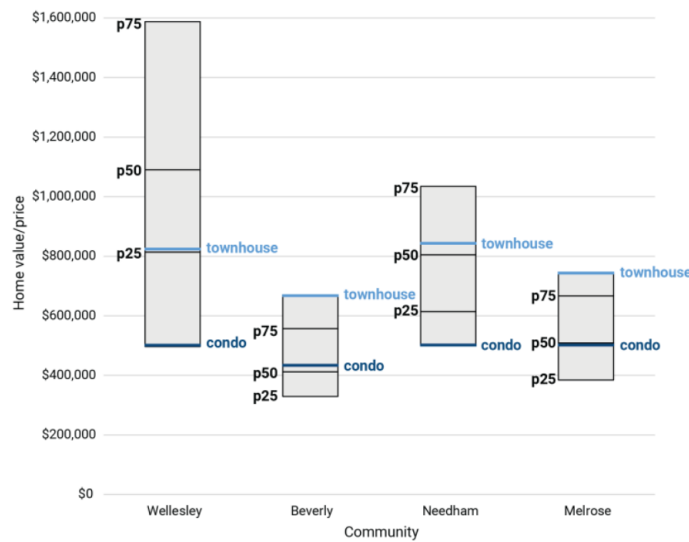
Massachusetts has a lot to offer, but that does little if people can't afford to live here. The [US News & World Report's annual state rankings](#) put Massachusetts at #40 in housing affordability (and #47 in cost of living). A worker earning minimum wage in Massachusetts would have to work [87 hours 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.).**

Solving the housing crisis in Massachusetts is one of my top personal and professional priorities. As I wrote in my recent housing platform ([raulforrep.com/housing](http://raulforrep.com/housing)), we need an all-of-the-above approach combining tenant protections like rent stabilization, state subsidy for affordable housing production and rental vouchers, ending exclusionary zoning to boost transit-oriented housing supply, and taking on discrimination in the housing market.

I also recently led a community policy conversation about my platform with public housing resident Kimberley Richardson and Brookline for Everyone's Amanda Zimmerman, two housing advocates in my district.

On the Select Board, I created and co-chaired the Town-Brookline Housing Authority Working Group, which focuses on understanding and collaboratively addressing the critical needs of residents and the capital needs of the BHA. In this role, I've seen how state underfunding puts both programming and maintenance at risk, and most towns don't have the resources to fill the gap on their own.

I also worked with the Brookline Housing Authority to establish a Small Area Fair Market Rents (SAFMR) designation through HUD, expanding options available to voucher-holders who are often excluded from living in Brookline by rents that exceed the payment standard.

I was also the only Select Board member to support successful passage of a

means-tested Senior Property Tax Exemption Warrant Article, providing relief to seniors on fixed incomes struggling to keep up with rising property taxes.

I've also focused on establishing new revenue streams for housing funding, and I championed the successful Home Rule Petition to establish a Real Estate Transfer Fee, which would levy a fee on the sale of high priced properties for the purpose of funding the creation of affordable housing—this petition has yet to be acted upon by the State Legislature.

I'll take the same all-of-the-above approach to the legislature, fighting for rent stabilization, funding, supply, and anti-discrimination.

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. And I further support modifying the MassID application process to establish clear mechanisms for securing identification without a permanent address. I know too many constituents who cannot begin housing applications without identification and cannot secure identification without a fixed address, and state procedures perpetuate this unacceptable state of limbo. I further support state funding for document storage pilot programs in municipalities, since damage to or loss of vital records is common for people who are unhoused and this loss undermines access to the fundamental human rights described in the Homeless Bill of Rights.

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. And I championed this effort on the Brookline Select Board. We passed it, and had the legislature acted promptly, we would have secured an additional \$37 million for affordable housing in Brookline already. Cities and towns need more mechanisms for generating this vital funding, and we can't allow state inaction to get in the way.

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.



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. And as the only renter in this race, I know how essential stable renting is to our community. Our political discourse often frames homeownership as the only path to stability, but renters deserve the same access to predictable housing and housing costs, and we can get there with rent stabilization and tenant protections.

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. And I support making this right transferable to Community Land Trusts, Community Development Corporations, or local public and quasi-public agencies.

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.

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

YES. With an audit process to ensure that communities with exclusionary zoning don't use excessively high inclusionary requirements as a back door to maintain housing bans.

- 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.

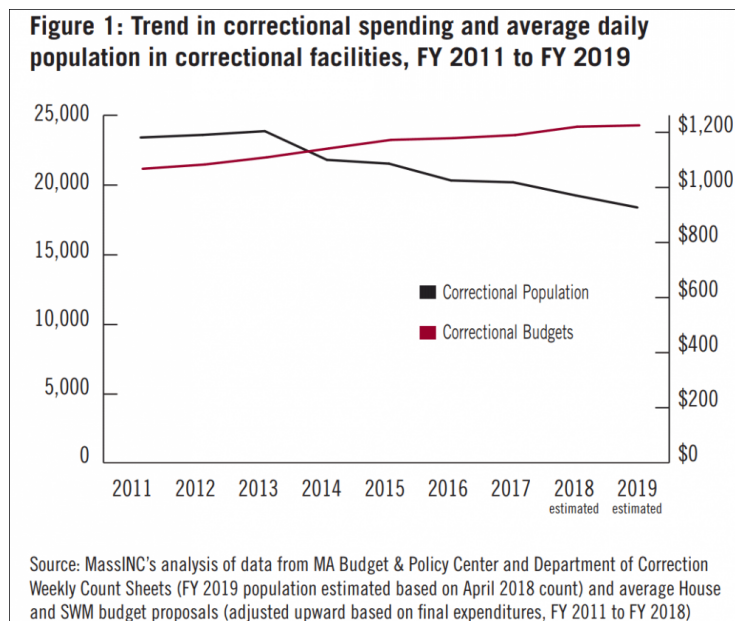
## F. Racial and Social Justice

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.).**

My first policy platform this year discussed state actions to promote racial justice ([raulforrep.com/racialjustice](http://raulforrep.com/racialjustice)). I believe that racial justice requires acknowledging past harm, identifying and dismantling ongoing structural racism within large institutions including state government, and leadership from people who have been directly impacted by structural racism.

In the state house, I'll be focused on policies to close the racial wealth gap and reimagine public safety and the carceral state, and I'll prioritize maintaining the partnerships that I've built with racial justice groups in Brookline during my time in office.

On the Select Board, I created and chaired Brookline's 2020-2021 Task Force to Reimagine Policing, which proposed meaningful public safety reforms that have since been adopted. Those include the elimination of School Resource Officers and so-called Walk & Talk Officers which patrolled public housing, as well as the creation of a Senior Advisor on Social Services position, and a consulting engagement with the successful CAHOOTS program to create a clinical response to non-emergency mental health and other calls with limited to no police

involvement required.

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. And I voted on the Select Board to move police misconduct investigations out of the police department. I was disappointed that this measure did not pass, since independent investigations and ending qualified immunity are each vital steps toward protecting constitutional rights of people who interact with police.

- 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. And I championed the successful Warrant Article which banned the use of face surveillance in Brookline prior to the passage of a similar bill at the State House.

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

YES.

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. And I further support substantially expanding funding to improve capacity and response times for existing emergency mental health unarmed response teams like the BEST team and creating a statewide three-digit hotline to activate these teams. I also support modifying state grant procedures to permit municipalities who receive funds earmarked for police departments to allocate these funds to alternative efforts and enforcement, including civilian traffic flaggers and alternative crisis response officers. We need both state leadership and local options on alternative crisis response, and state funding procedures shouldn't stand in the way of local progress.

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. And in addition to unannounced accountability visits, I would make visits to schedule meetings with incarcerated people and learn about how the state can better address the harms of DOC conditions.

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. And I further support outright abolition of solitary confinement, which is cruel and unusual punishment with long-lasting consequences for the mental health and well-being of people who experience it.

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.

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.

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.

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?

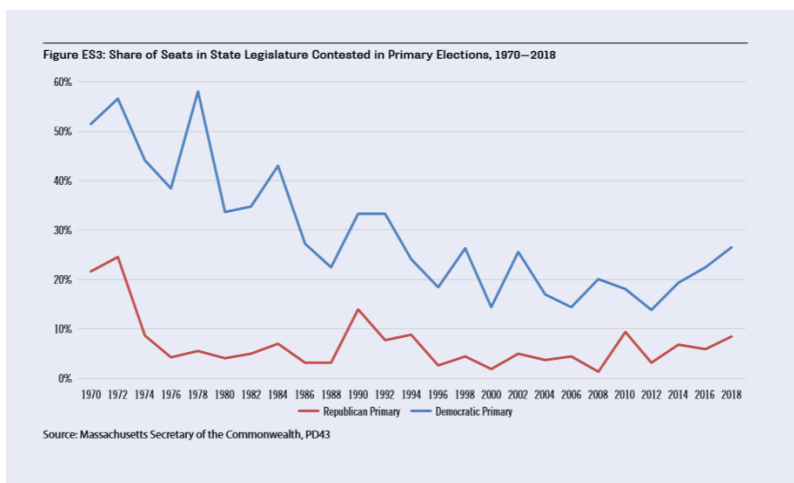
YES.

## 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.**



<b><u>Municipality</u></b>	<b><u>Turnout (Nov 2020)</u></b>
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.).**

I believe that our political process is stronger when communities can come together to solve big problems, even if we don't agree immediately. I've brought this approach to local government and to my campaign this year.

In local government, I've co-created and co-chaired committees including the Task Force to Reimagine Policing in Brookline, the Town-Brookline Housing Authority Working Group, the Small Business Development Committee, and several other coalitions of elected officials and community leaders dedicated to transformative change on big issues in town.

Often issues can seem intractable when elected officials talk about them in committee rooms insulated from public view, but I've found that when a group of residents come together and agree something is an urgent problem, we can almost always find a solution.

Opening up the State House to a more democratic policy process is a central part of my theory of change. That's also why in addition to releasing policy platforms, I've already hosted four community policy conversations with advocates in and around Brookline, tackling racial justice, climate, education, and housing.

In town, I've also led pushes around non-citizen voting and voting for 16-17 year olds, co-sponsored the successful resolution which established a Ranked-Choice Voting Study Committee, voted in the minority against a measure reducing voting hours during the pandemic, and co-chaired Brookline's Census Complete Count Committee, which worked successfully during a pandemic and amidst meddling by the Trump administration to ensure that Brookline residents of all backgrounds were counted in the Census.

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.

And I am the only candidate in the race who has taken the Act On Mass Transparency Pledge committing to these and other reforms in the State House. I have also been endorsed by Incorruptible Massachusetts based on my support for transparency reforms.

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.

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. As the dad of a one-year-old, I've experienced this barrier first-hand, and I'll make this legislation a high priority.

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. And I championed the successful Home Rule Petition to expand voting in our municipal elections to 16 and 17 year olds. This petition has yet to be acted upon by the State Legislature.

- 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. And during my time in office, I've been a supporter of non-citizen voting in local elections, which Town Meeting previously passed as a Home Rule petition which was not taken up by the State Legislature.

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. And I further support protecting and expanding the gains secured in the Jail-Based Voting provisions of the VOTES Act this year. Expanding the franchise to people incarcerated for felonies requires the infrastructure for people to cast ballots while incarcerated.

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.

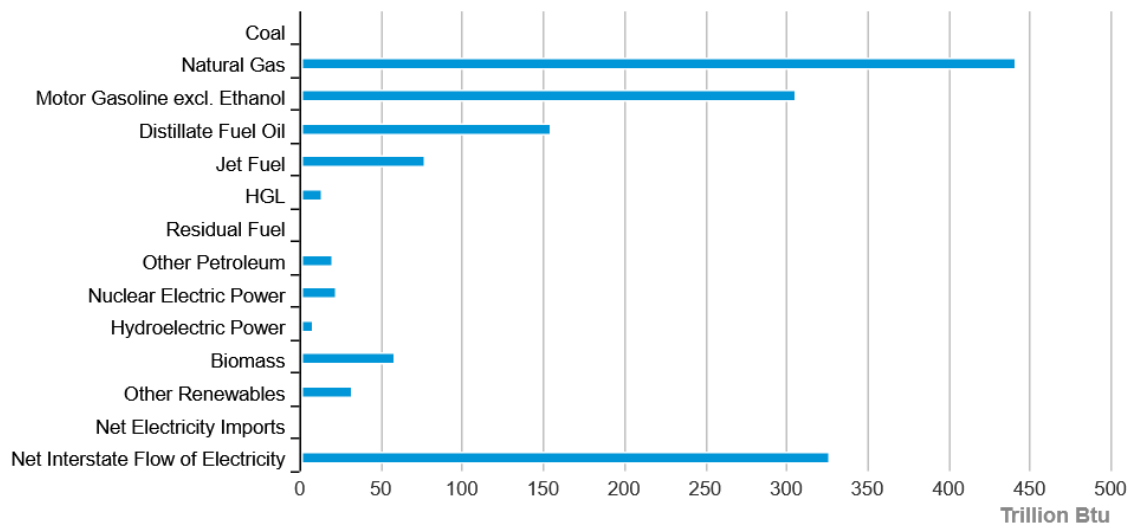
## H. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection

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.

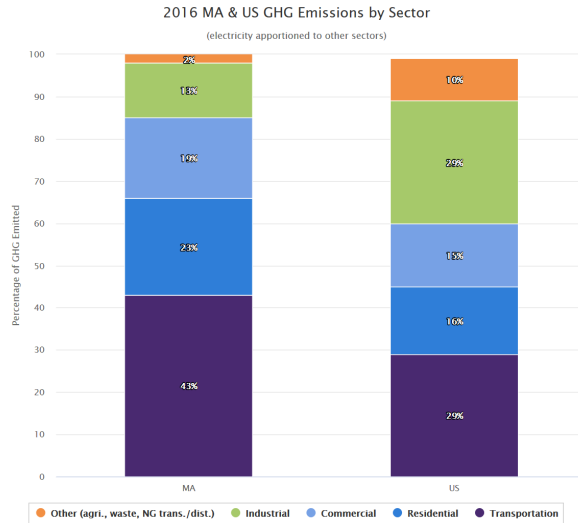
**Despite recent progress, Massachusetts is still overwhelmingly dependent on fossil fuels.**

### 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.).**

As I wrote in my recent climate platform ([raulforrep.com/climate](http://raulforrep.com/climate)), my approach to the climate crisis is grounded in my own experiences with environmental injustice. Growing up in New York City, I saw asbestos removed from predominantly white communities and dumped in my neighborhood. Too often, our response to environmental hazards has been to shift the burden onto underpaid communities and communities of color. That experience has informed my commitment to environmental justice — on the Select Board, I successfully secured an environmental justice seat on the Town’s Zero Emissions Advisory Board. It’s also grounded in my experience in local government: I was a cosponsor of a successful warrant article in Town banning new fossil fuel infrastructure in major construction, but the article was shot down by the Attorney General for conflicting with state law. These personal and professional experiences are why my approach to climate policy will prioritize (1) ensuring that our clean energy transition makes Massachusetts more equitable and shifts the climate burden off of the communities who have bear the brunt of environmental degradation and (2) giving cities and towns the tools they need to create a fossil fuel-free future — instead of getting in the way of that progress.

**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?

The technology we need to solve climate change already exists — what we need is leadership that’s willing to invest in it. My top priority in this area will be

modernizing our public transportation systems. Transportation accounts for 42% of our carbon emissions, but we can dramatically reduce that number by (1) electrifying our public transit and (2) making public transit fare-free. We need to give folks every incentive to choose public transit over cars, and that starts with making it the affordable and reliable choice. I'll also fight to give municipalities the tools they need to transition away from fossil fuel dependence. The Green Communities grant program is a powerful tool, and in the legislature, I will work to expand technical assistance and grants to cover fossil fuel bans and to pass enabling legislation at the state level.

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. And I was a cosponsor of a successful warrant article in Town banning new fossil fuel infrastructure in major construction. The article was rejected by the Attorney General as in conflict with certain Massachusetts General Laws.

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. And on the Select Board, I successfully secured an Environmental Justice seat on the town's Zero Emissions Advisory Board.

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. And I've fought for a [fare-free 66 bus pilot in Brookline](#) alongside municipal partners in Boston and Cambridge. Nearly all of Brookline's public transit services cross municipal boundaries, and our experience demonstrates the necessity of state-level leadership.

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.***

As a current municipal elected official, I've seen firsthand the way inertia at the State House stymies progress cities and towns make locally. In theory, the home rule process gives local leaders a voice at the state level — but too often, our Reps. allow bold, progressive home rule petitions to languish for years with no action. For that reason, I'll be making it a priority to fight on behalf of progressive home rule petitions.