



PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS
2024 Legislative
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate: Erika Uytterhoeven

Office Sought: State Representative, 27th Middlesex

Party: Democratic

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Email questions to elections@progressivemass.com.

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.** If you leave a question blank, your answer will be recorded as a NO. Feel free to expand your answers, but **please keep answers < 150 words** and use your own words (we want human-generated answers, not AI-generated).*

Issue Subsections:

- A. Revenue and Taxation
- B. Jobs and the Economy
- C. Education
- D. Health Care
- E. Housing
- F. Police Accountability and Decarceration
- G. A Welcoming Society
- H. Good Government and Strong Democracy
- I. 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?

Growing up with a mother in a strong union showed me first-hand how since the late 70's, corporations have been busting unions and carving out the American worker. Every year, my mother's co-workers received worse and worse contracts until finally, investors like Carl Icahn, destroyed the company my mother worked for, Trans World Airlines, via a hostile takeover. This is the story that has played out repeatedly over the past half a century and the corporate elite have gotten away with blaming unions and gaslighting our politicians and voters into believing that insatiable economic growth is more important than people living with dignity and respect. The key mechanism of neoliberal ideology is fooling working people into believing that the elite's interests are their own interests. In reality, working people's wages have been stagnant or dropping for decades, while the hoarders of capital have been profiting off our basic human rights like housing, health care, and education.

I ran for State Representative to reclaim our state government, to make the State House the people's house. This means implementing progressive taxation to fully fund a Massachusetts Green New Deal, fully fund our public schools, and to stop the gentrification crisis in its tracks, with massive state investment in public housing. Underlying each of my top 3 legislative priorities is an ethos of all means all and the requirement to raise billions of dollars in additional revenue.

2. What prepares you to serve in this capacity?

As an organizer, an antitrust economist, a democratic socialist, and a proud daughter of a single mother, I understand both the struggles working people face and the mechanisms by which corporations take control of our government to rig the rules in their favor. I have experience in both local/state and national political campaigns, most notably as a lead on the National Field Team for Bernie Sanders for President in 2016 and for the Labour Party in the United Kingdom in 2016 and 2017.

I was a co-founder of Act on Mass, a nonprofit dedicated to activating grassroots organizers and voters to hold the Massachusetts State House accountable on progressive issues. My work has given me the opportunity to see and understand the inner workings of the State House and develop clear ideas on how it should be improved and what I could personally do in that regard.

Serving as the State Representative for the 27th Middlesex District has been the greatest honor of my life. I am proud of the accomplishments we've made together and excited to continue the work ahead.

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?

Our legislature, particularly the House, is full of career politicians who value getting along with leadership and the perks that come with it over doing the right thing for Massachusetts. And the Speaker of the House wields so much power that he is able to use his position to stifle debate and kill policies before they even gain traction, because reps fear losing access and benefits. The lack of transparency across the board means it can be difficult for progressives to even know who they should talk to about progressive policies. Act On Mass has a list of the top ten issues at the Massachusetts State House that encapsulates my thinking on this topic: <https://actonmass.org/transparency/>.

4. What is one policy pioneered by another state (or at the municipal level) that you would like to see Massachusetts adopt?

Nebraska allows every legislator to choose 1 priority bill that will have a guaranteed debate and vote. I think this would be very helpful in Massachusetts, where we file over 7000 bills and only vote on a handful of substantive bills per year.

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

This has been fundamental to my work and approach as a State Representative and as an advocate for State House transparency, accountability, and good democracy. In my role as State Representative, I have helped build broad statewide coalitions around anti-racism in our public education system, PILOTs (or Payment In Lieu of Taxes), and removing police from our schools and replacing them with social workers, therapists, and other mental health support. As an advocate, I led on building a coalition across labor, progressive advocacy groups, local Democratic Town Committees across the state, elected officials at the state and local level, and with community members. This coalition is why Act on Mass was able to organize constituent meetings in over 100 districts (with 100 State Representatives) out of the 160 districts. This experience was crucial in preparing me to build statewide coalitions on the issues I care about most.

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.

I was excited and honored to receive 100% A+ for my first Progressive Massachusetts scorecard.

7. (For challengers or candidates in open races only) How do you see yourself as similar to or different from the current holder of the office you are running for?

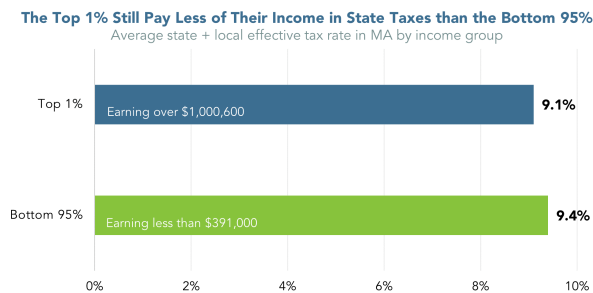
II. The Issues

A. Revenue and Taxation

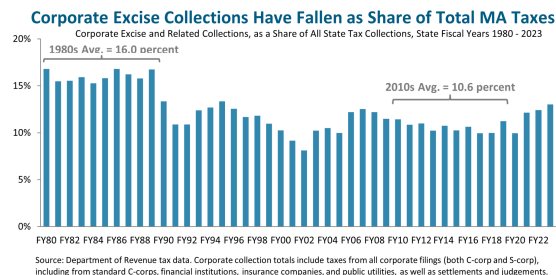
Although Massachusetts has developed the moniker of “Taxachusetts,” our history shows the opposite. Between 1977 and 2016, Massachusetts [reduced state taxes](#) by more than all but two other states. Because of income tax cuts enacted between 1998 and 2002, Massachusetts lost over \$4 billion in tax revenue *each year*—\$4 billion not invested in our roads, bridges, schools, parks, and services. Such cuts to the state income tax, combined with [low corporate income taxes compared to other states](#), have meant increasing reliance on regressive taxes and fees and curtailing 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.

Although we saw a welcome shift when MA voters passed the Fair Share Amendment and added more progressivity to our tax code, the Legislature in 2023 voted to give tax cuts to multi-million-dollar estates, large corporations, and day traders, blunting the full impact of the win. We cannot tax-cut our way into competitiveness; MA strengthens our competitiveness when we invest in our people and infrastructure.

Even with the recently passed Fair Share Amendment, the top 1% still pay a lower effective tax rate than the bottom 95%.



Even as corporations are securing an increasing share of total income, their share of taxes has been falling.



1. What principles do you bring to considerations of state revenue and tax policy? How should we raise more revenue to adequately fund our communities for the future?

Regressive taxation is immoral. Even the most extreme, “taxes are tyrannical”, right-wing libertarian at worst believes in a flat tax, which is still deeply inequitable, but our taxation system is even worse than that because of its regressive structure. What makes a tax system fair is for us to remove regressive taxes and put in place progressive taxes. Simply put, a tax is regressive if the share of income paid in that tax decreases as income increases. In other words, a regressive tax exacerbates income and wealth inequality by making the poor poorer and the rich richer. A tax is progressive if the share of income people pay in that tax increases as income increases.

We must both educate the public on this inequity and fight with the same unrelenting conviction as our opposition does, to turn our taxation system right-side up to a progressive taxation system so we can fully fund our schools, public transportation, affordable housing, infrastructure, and livable climate for all.

There are many options to make the Massachusetts tax system more fair and I’m proud to have filed several pieces of legislation and amendments to do so. In addition to filing a bill to make the estate tax more progressive (see question 2 for more), I filed legislation on taxing the GILTI (or global intangible low-taxed income), eliminating fares for the MBTA (which is one of the most regressive tax in the form of fares paid for by working people), and taxing wealthy nonprofits (ie. PILOTs) and charitable organizations that have abused the tax code without contributing fairly to the neighboring community or public.

2. Optional/As Applicable: Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on revenue and taxation (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).

I have fought for progressive taxation policies at the state level for years. Prior to taking office, I led the campaign to eliminate a controversial and detrimental corporate tax break from becoming law in the Fiscal Year 2019 supplemental budget (Amendment #60). I worked directly with State Representatives to ensure they filed amendments and voted to remove this corporate tax break and mobilized constituents across the state to call their Representatives and Senators to vote against this tax break. Ultimately, we won despite a clear initial uphill battle in the House of Representatives.

As a legislator, I fiercely and consistently opposed the tax cuts since Governor Baker proposed them in January 2022, and when Governor Healey made tax cuts her top priority on the campaign trail and proposed them subsequently after taking office. I was particularly focused on the most regressive components of this tax cut. I filed the amendment and the bill on making the estate tax cut less regressive, which was by far the largest regressive component of the entire tax package.

While we did make some improvements to the estate tax formula, it was not good enough. I voted against the bill in committee and I was one of three legislators to

vote against the bill on the House floor prior to conference committee negotiations.

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

YES.

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

YES.

- c. **Ending the current sales tax exemptions for aircraft and aircraft parts, which costs the Commonwealth approximately [\\$30 million](#) each year?**

YES.

In general, I am deeply skeptical of the idea that tax breaks generate economic activity in our state, instead, it is simply a narrative of “race to the bottom.” It is a way for corporations to capture extra money who were already planning to work in our state. When a tax break has been proposed, I have filed amendments as lines of defenses. Both to remove the corporate tax break from the bill and to add provisions that ensure the benefits are entirely or largely going to their workers, not their shareholders or executives. If corporations are going to beg the public for aid and receive special treatment, they at the very least must be held to a much higher standard. This is what I did working in partnership with Mass Budget Policy Center to remove the PPP Double Dip tax break that was snuck into the Emergency Paid Sick Time bill in 2021.

In addition, before any legislator votes in favor of adding or maintaining any tax breaks, we should expect to see an analysis demonstrating how the Commonwealth can reasonably expect to see more tax revenue after giving the tax break than before and what is the equity impact of a tax cut. For example, how does it impact the bottom 1%, bottom 25%, the median, top 25%, and top 1% by income in the state? Furthermore, how does this disproportionately impact wealthy white communities versus lower-income gateway communities? We have never been offered such an analysis from corporations or even the Department of Revenue and that shows the tax breaks are just about profit for corporations at the expense of the public. I will continue to advocate for more transparency and accountability from the Department of Revenue before we make generations-lasting damage through the tax code.

4. **Corporate Disclosure.** Would you support legislation to make publicly accessible the reports that are already filed annually by publicly traded corporations, detailing their sales, profits, taxable income, and taxes paid?

YES.

I would support legislation that would make tax reports of publicly traded corporations fully accessible to the public. Transparency in corporate taxation is crucial for holding corporations accountable and ensuring they are contributing fairly to Massachusetts. Since taking office, I have been vocal about progressive taxation and transparency is a necessary step to ensuring corporations pay their fair share.

5. **Progressive Revenue.** In order to accomplish many of the items in a progressive agenda, we will need more revenue. 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.

I do not believe the corporate minimum tax rates as included in the House transportation bill passed in early 2019 are high enough. The largest corporations ought to be paying a higher rate. In my two sessions as a Representative, I have filed many bills and amendments around this issue and have steadily worked to create and foster a coalition to push progressive taxation forward.

- b. Increasing the tax on the portion of corporations' US profits that are shifted to offshore tax havens, in order to restore Massachusetts's conformity with federal tax-avoidance rules?**

YES.

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

YES.

- d. Creating a graduated surtax on corporations who are paying their CEOs more than 50 times the amount of the median employee compensation?**

YES.

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

YES.

6. **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. 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.

I am proud to again have filed H.2963 and work in partnership with Senator Gomez who filed S.1836. As one of my priority bills, we have built a statewide coalition of labor unions, progressive advocacy groups (such as Progressive Massachusetts) and municipal leaders to fight for this bill and to support municipal leaders and local community groups in fighting for and negotiating for the best PILOT agreement in their city or town. I am very excited to share that this bill is still in consideration in the Committee on Revenue, which I serve on. Thank you to Progressive Massachusetts for being an early supporter and endorsee of this legislation!

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 Massachusetts now has a \$15 minimum wage, a living wage for a single adult without children is now [\\$27.89 per hour](#).

In recent decades, unions have been under attack nationally. 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. Strengthening the rights and power of labor is essential to an economy that works for all.

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



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

The minimum wage in Massachusetts is well below a living wage. ([Source](#))

	1 Adult			2 adults (both working)		
	0 children	1 child	2 children	0 children	1 child	2 children
Living Wage	\$27.89	\$52.46	\$67.41	\$18.33	\$28.38	\$36.20
Poverty Wage	\$7.24	\$9.83	\$12.41	\$4.91	\$6.21	\$7.50
Minimum Wage	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$15.00

1. Share your principles and proposals regarding creating good-paying jobs for all and reducing inequality in the Commonwealth.

This issue is deeply personal for me because I was raised by a single immigrant mom who worked as a flight attendant for Trans World Airlines (TWA) and as a member of a union, she benefited immensely from the contracts negotiated by her union. Thanks to her union, my mom had a stable job, earned a living wage, and was able to retire with dignity. Thanks to her union, I was able to go to college and pursue my dreams and opportunities that my mom immigrated to the United States for. I truly am who I am today because of organized labor.

Growing up with a mother in a union showed me first-hand how since the late 70's, corporations have been busting unions and carving out the American worker. Investors like Carl Icahn, destroyed TWA and the livelihoods of countless workers via a hostile takeover. This is the story that has played out repeatedly over the past half a century and the corporate elite have gotten away with blaming unions and gaslighting our politicians and voters into believing that insatiable economic growth is more important than people living with dignity. They maintain legitimacy through pervasive neoliberal ideology in education and media. This divide became so eerily clear and personal, when Carl Icahn was part of my course curriculum, with my classmates and professor lauding his work.

I ran for State Representative to reclaim the State House for the people of Massachusetts and to fight for everyone to live with dignity. In my role, I fight to reclaim our narrative on behalf of workers and unions that market fundamentalism is not a solution to human rights but a root cause that must be dismantled while uplifting unions by supporting their actions and putting for pro-labor policies.

2. Optional/As Applicable: Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on creating good-paying jobs for all and reducing inequality (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).

I am one of four current legislators in the House who publicly supported the Massachusetts State House Employees Union (IBEW 2222) and their right to union and bargain collectively when they went public in 2022. I also testified in favor of the bills that would advance their priorities and for them to form a formal union.

I am also proud to have championed my bills to both restore the right to strike for public sector workers and ensure educators are paid a living minimum wage of \$45,000 for paraprofessionals and \$65,000 for teachers in Massachusetts.

Finally, I've been to many strike picket lines and union actions both in Somerville and beyond. This includes supporting striking teachers, nurses, Starbucks workers, graduate students, research assistants, residential assistants, machinists, and various building trades. I think it is critical that legislators and all elected use their positional power to support the labor movement.

3. Livable Wages. Although Massachusetts now has a \$15 minimum wage, that is still not a living wage in much of Massachusetts, and \$15 has lost a lot of value due to high inflation. Do you support the following steps...?

a. Raising the minimum wage to \$20 per hour?

YES.

Every year Massachusetts becomes more and more unaffordable and wages remain stubbornly stagnant, this leads to working class people being driven out and displaced from their homes in Massachusetts. We need to take steps that actually help everyday people and that starts with a livable wage across the board.

b. Eliminating subminimum wages?

YES.

c. Ensuring that the minimum wage law applies to municipal workers?

YES.

d. Indexing the minimum wage to inflation?

YES.

4. **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.

We must ensure that businesses and corporations are paying livable wages for all of the time they work. This must include for subcontractors as well because they are often subjected to wage theft because the main contractor recuses any responsibility.

5. **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.

This is a horrific practice used to intimidate workers and must be prohibited.

6. **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.

Municipal workers deserve the same rights as the rest of Massachusetts

workers. They provide a crucial service to towns and cities throughout the Commonwealth. Without them, municipalities would not be able to serve their residents or properly function on a day-to-day basis.

Amendment 958 in FY24 Budget PFML Benefits for Municipal Employees

7. **Right to Strike.** Would you support legislation to legalize the right to strike for public employees (with the exception of public safety personnel) after six months of failed negotiations with their employer?

YES.

I proudly filed this bill again with Rep. Connolly as H.1845. Since filing, I have worked to build a coalition of advocacy and labor groups to support this bill.

8. **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. **Will you oppose all legislation that weakens MA labor law protecting employees from being misclassified as “independent contractors”?**

YES.

We can’t allow corporations to simply buy laws that benefit them. Uber and Lyft spent over 200 million dollars in California to deceive the public and pass Prop 22. I will continue to work with labor and community organizers to fight back against these ballot initiatives and legislation that harm workers and weaken our democracy.

- b. **Would you support legislation to ensure drivers and delivery workers receive the same protections, wages, rights, and benefits that all Massachusetts workers are entitled to under law?**

YES.

9. **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. **Would you support legislation to extend collective bargaining rights to State House staff?**

YES.

I fully support substantial improvements in the compensation, support, and staffing levels of legislative staff, recognizing that they are fundamental to the effective functioning of our government. It is essential to provide our

staff with fair wages, adequate resources, and a supportive work environment to attract and retain the dedicated professionals necessary for our legislative success. I have been a vocal supporter of the efforts to unionize the State House.

b. 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.

10. **Public Bank.** Would you support the creation of a Massachusetts public bank chartered to provide cost-effective financing for small businesses and municipalities, land trusts and cooperatives, and projects for climate change adaptation and remediation?

YES.

The idea of a Massachusetts public bank has been gaining momentum this session. Public banks are lending and depository institutions owned and managed by a government in the public interest. They leverage public funds to create credit that serves the public in a variety of ways, from infrastructure projects to small business loans. In contrast to most large private banks, which serve private shareholders and often seek short-term profits in order to maximize payoffs for out-of-state owners, public banks keep capital local by investing in community enterprises and public projects in pursuit of the long-term economic health of the communities they serve. I'm proud to support this legislation.

C. Education

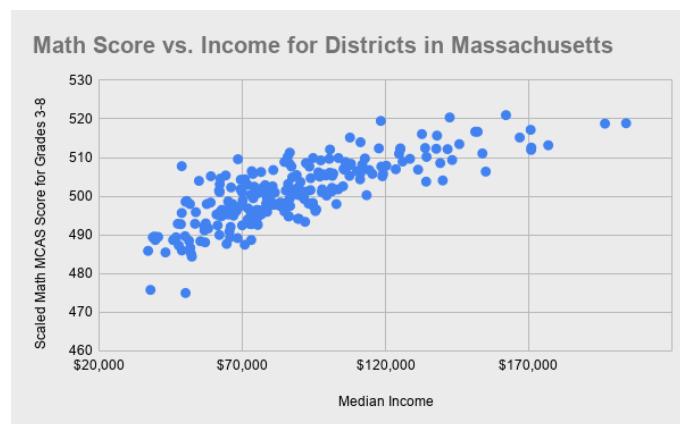
Massachusetts parents and caregivers face the [highest child care and early education costs of any state in the US](#). The average annual cost of infant care in Massachusetts is more than half of what a full-time minimum wage worker earns in a year. These costs are prohibitively expensive for low- and middle-income families, who are forced to choose between making ends meet and saving for the future on one hand, or affording child care on the other.

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.

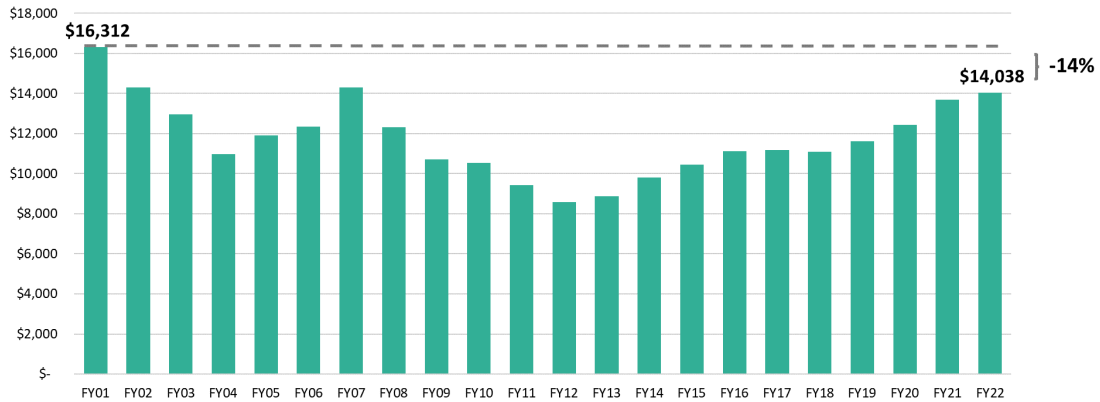
Standardized test scores have a very strong correlation with the income of the school district. ([Source](#))



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

Higher Education Funding Per Student Cut by 14 Percent Since FY 2001

Massachusetts higher education spending, per resident student, FY 2001-FY2022 adjusted for inflation (2024\$)



1. Please share your principles and proposals regarding public education.

I absolutely believe in public education and I believe our democracy depends on it. While Massachusetts is often touted as an educational system that “scores well” compared with other states, we have deep inequities in how our public education is funded, especially for our communities of color, low-income communities, and gateway cities. A truly equitable public school system would have far greater investments in districts with greater need, but instead, an inequitable system with well funded schools in white suburbs and underfunding urban and low-income districts persist. While the Student Opportunity Act was a step in the right direction, much more work must be done. Finally, we also must invest in the whole student from birth to higher education, which means investing in universal early education and debt-free higher education.

We have been systematically underfunding our public schools, especially since Massachusetts passed prop 2.5 in the 80’s. To make matters worse, educators do labor that is considered women’s work and as such, their labor is deeply undervalued, underpaid, and they are expected to sacrifice and do their work out of the love of their students. Most strikingly, educators are underpaid and their pay has decreased compared to their peers over time. Teachers make 26.4% less than equivalent college-educated workers , or 73.6 cents for every dollar earned by other professionals. What is striking is that teachers used to make 93.9 cents on the dollar in 1996, and in 1960, teachers used to earn a 14.7% premium (for women teachers only). Furthermore, it is truly shameful that in most districts in Massachusetts, paraeducators are paid a meager \$15K-\$29K per year. In one school district, the lowest step was paid \$13K a year! If we truly cared about education, educators should absolutely be earning a premium for their labor, but they are not. Instead, they are economically penalized for it.

Although Massachusetts fares better than the national average (with a 20% wage penalty), these aren't numbers to be proud of, especially as the cost of living in Massachusetts is much higher than most of the country.

2. Optional/As Applicable: Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on public education.

Other than a few exceptions in Haverhill, I have been the only state legislator to join educators on the picket line and speak in support of their strike consistently throughout my two terms in office. This includes supporting strikes in Newton, Brookline, Woburn, Malden, and Andover, and rallies for a living wage for districts that nearly went on strike for Melrose, Tewksbury, and Somerville. I am proud to have championed my bill to both restore the right to strike for public sector workers and ensure educators are paid a living minimum wage of \$45,000 for paraprofessionals and \$65,000 for teachers in Massachusetts.

Prior to becoming a legislator, I organized with the Fund our Future campaign to increase public education funding by \$1.5B per year via the Student Opportunity Act, with the funds largely going to low-income students, English language learners, and students with special needs. This was a monumental win led by the teachers' unions to update our 17-year-old funding formula—however, there is much more work to do to ensure that the funds are adequately distributed to the school districts as promised. This is especially true now that the MA legislature is talking about an austerity budget in light of revenue shortfalls.

3. Affordable Child Care. Would you support legislation to make child care free for low-income families and ensure that no family has to pay more than 7% of their income on child care? (Y/N)

YES.

A recent study that was released showed that Massachusetts is the most expensive state to live in. Every day, working families are forced to make sacrifices or even leave the state due to the cost of housing and child care. We must take real steps to help our residents.

4. Universal Pre-K. Would you support creating universal, free Pre-K, accessible to any resident of Massachusetts, integrated into the public school system? (Y/N)

YES.

As a former economist, I can attest that all research on inequities in our education system stems from the United States being one of the few countries that does not provide universal pre-K.

5. High-Stakes Testing. Massachusetts is now one of just 8 states for which an assessment like the MCAS is a condition for graduation. Would you support ending the MCAS graduation requirement and replacing it with one based on completion of coursework showing mastery of the skills, competencies, and knowledge required by the state standards? (Y/N)

YES.

We must put a moratorium on high stakes testing, which has been shown to merely punish low-income students while padding the coffers of for-profit, private companies such as Pearson. I have filed legislation to abolish the MCAS or any mandatory standardized tests and replace it with a structural solution that evaluates and improves education like MCIEA.

6. **Charter Schools.** Charter schools siphon millions of dollars for public education away from public schools and create a two-track system of public schools described by the national NAACP as “separate and unequal.” 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. Do you support keeping the cap on charter schools? (Y/N)

YES.

As charter schools are a mechanism funded by hedge fund and private equity investors to privatize and dismantle our public school system. Voters need to be educated on how charter schools were founded following Brown vs. Board of Education as a backlash against desegregation. Yet charter school proponents have been deceptively effective at co-opting racial justice narratives to present charter schools as a solution to structural racism. This is false. Charter schools will not bring racial or class equity, but only exacerbate it by dismantling our public schools and turning education into a privilege rather than human right and an essential cornerstone of our democracy.

7. **Receivership.** The Lawrence Public Schools, Holyoke Public Schools, and Southbridge Public Schools are currently under state receivership, with a state-appointed receiver assuming the powers of a superintendent or democratically elected school committee. The state takeover has not produced sustainable gains and has at times been characterized by [chronic mismanagement](#). Would you support ending the practice of state receivership and returning power to democratically elected school committees? (Y/N)

YES.

I am vehemently opposed to receivership and opposed to top-down state interventions including “empowerment zone initiatives”. Receivership has been applied or threatened to schools that so often serve communities of color, low income communities, and immigrant communities. It is rooted in racist ideas that marginalized communities cannot govern themselves. The solution to struggles in any school district is for the community which the school serves and the educators to solve problems by providing them with resources for schools to thrive. The solution is not giving even more power to an unaccountable DESE that has little to no understanding of local issues. Fully funding schools throughout the Commonwealth helps districts, rather than the tired tactic of taking away democratically accountable community control and agency.

In addition, “empowerment zone initiatives” lack any evidence for success for

students and have failed to show positive impact of any form. This has been notably the case in the Springfield Empowerment Zone, which Innovation Partnership Zones (or IPZs) and empowerment zone initiatives are modeled on. Empowerment zone initiatives impose a cumbersome bureaucratic process to our school districts that robs communities of their voice and agency. Empowerment zone initiatives are merely a euphemism for autocratic control, by taking all managerial and operational control from districts and ceding them to unaccountable appointees.

8. **Comprehensive Sex Education.** Do you support requiring public schools 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? (Y/N)

YES.

In particular, I support the Healthy Youth Act, which ensures that public schools in Massachusetts all teach the same sex education curriculum. That curriculum must include medically accurate information on consent, LGBTQ+ issues, and both abstinence AND contraception.

9. **Inclusive Curricula.** Our educational curricula must speak to students' lived experiences and recognize and celebrate the diversity of our Commonwealth.

- a. **Racially Inclusive Curricula.** Would you support legislation to ensure that instruction in K-12 education shall include the teaching of accurate histories, writings, and contributions of racial and ethnic groups that have been historically underrepresented or marginalized? (Y/N)

YES.

Last session, I filed bill H.584 to promote anti-racist education. I also worked extensively with educators and parents to push this bill forward. I will continue to work and grow this advocacy network.

- b. **LGBTQ-Inclusive Curricula.** Would you support legislation to ensure that Massachusetts public schools include sufficient instruction on the histories, roles, and contributions of LGBTQ individuals in the history of this country and the Commonwealth? (Y/N)

YES.

Studies have shown that a curriculum that includes the histories and contributions of a wide range of backgrounds benefits all children. They deserve an education with windows and mirrors to prepare them for the world ahead and to support their mental health right now.

10. **Debt-Free Higher Ed.** Would you support legislation to guarantee Massachusetts residents can graduate Massachusetts' public colleges and trade schools completely free of student loan debt? (Y/N)

YES.

Everyone deserves access to a quality education, and education is one of the ways we can work towards ending the racial and class disparities in our society.

11. **Public Higher Ed Funding.** Although per-student funding for public higher education has recovered from a nadir in FY 2012, it still remains below what it was at the turn of the century. Would you support legislation to establish a fair and adequate minimum funding level for public higher education at no less than the fiscal 2001 per-student funding level, adjusted for inflation? (Y/N)

YES.

I would support legislation that establishes a fair and adequate minimum funding level for public higher education, ensuring it surpasses the fiscal 2001 per-student funding level, adjusted for inflation. Investing in our students' futures means providing full funding for accessible and high-quality education.

12. **Supporting Public Higher Ed Faculty.** Would you support ensuring that adjunct faculty and part-time staff are eligible for state health care and retirement benefits? (Y/N)

YES.

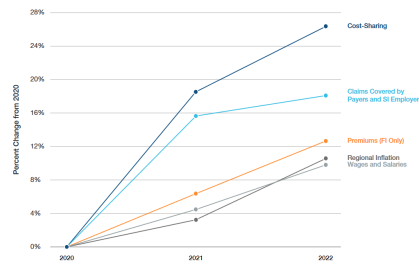
I have fought for better wages and benefits for educators and labor across the Commonwealth since taking office. This includes adjunct faculty and part-time staff that fill vital roles in providing an education to their students while not having the benefits and security that tenured and full time staff receive.

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.

Cost-sharing has risen faster than claims paid by employers, and premiums are rising faster than inflation.

Private Commercial Insurance Affordability in Context, 2020-2022

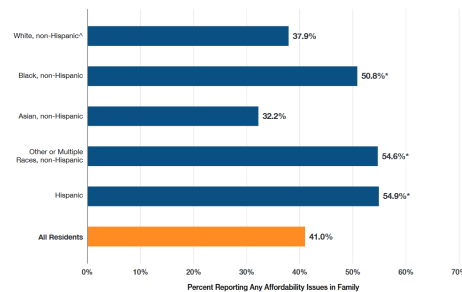


Member cost-sharing and premiums increased at a faster rate than regional inflation and wages and salaries from 2020 to 2022, driven in part by fluctuations in utilization during this time period.

Source: From reported data to Civil Service of Labor Statistics data.
Notes: Based on Massachusetts contract membership, which may include non-Massachusetts residents. Claims amounts were adjusted for pharmacy-related reported by payers. Reported cost-sharing amounts, and claims amount to have not been adjusted to account for health care costs, which may vary by plan. Claims members' contributions from 2020 to 2022, and 2023, were also listed as 2022, but in 2023, they were 2023. Data for 2023 is not available for reporting and did not submit data for 2023. Data for 2023 is included in 2023 and 2022. See website for more.

Almost half of Massachusetts residents are facing affordability issues with accessing health care.

Any Affordability Issues Among Residents and their Families, Overall and by Race/Ethnicity, 2021



Over half of Black and Hispanic residents reported experiencing health care affordability issues in the past 12 months.

Source: 2021 Massachusetts Health Insurance Survey.
Notes: "Any affordability issues" is defined as reporting any of the following issues: couldn't access family medical care in past 12 months; family medical cost at the time of survey, spending a high share of family income in past 12 months; or out-of-pocket health care expenses, and/or total family health care needs due to the cost of care in past 12 months.
* Reference group.
** Difference from reference group is statistically significant at the 5% level.

1. Please share your values, principles, and proposals regarding health care access and equity.

Massachusetts is the 2nd most expensive state for health insurance, causing 1 in 5 Massachusetts residents to be saddled with medical debt. We need a single payer, Medicare-for-all system in Massachusetts, making health care a human right for all residents.

Not only is accessible and affordable health care the moral issue of our lifetime, it will save the Commonwealth over \$21 billion annually. We need leadership in the State House that will put people first over profits for the health insurance industry.

2. Optional/As Applicable: Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on health care (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).

I have done a great deal of work advocating for Safe Consumption Sites and working with our public health and public safety officials to learn from and adopt aspects of the groundbreaking policies Portugal implemented over twenty years ago to put in place safe consumption sites and decriminalize the use of opioids. I will continue to fight for Somerville to become the first city in Massachusetts to open a Safe Consumption Site.

3. Single Payer. Would you support legislation to enact a single payer health care system in Massachusetts, which would guarantee health insurance as a right? (Y/N)

YES.

The need for a single payer health care system is the issue that brought me into working professionally in politics and organizing on the Bernie Sanders campaign in 2016. This is a moral issue for me, everyone has the right to health care and we must bring our primarily for-profit patchwork system of health insurance to an end.

4. Medical Debt. States like [Connecticut](#) and [Arizona](#) have taken action, in partnership with RIP Medical Debt, to eliminate medical debt for hundreds of thousands of working-class residents. Would you advocate for similar action in Massachusetts? (Y/N)

YES.

I am proud that City Councilors in Somerville have fought to eliminate medical debt for residents. Everyone has the right to health care and should not be burdened with debt that can often last their entire lives due to an accident or illness. I will continue to work on state-level policy modeled after local policy wins in Somerville.

5. Reproductive Justice—I. Would you support requiring health insurance plans to cover all pregnancy care (including prenatal care, childbirth, and postpartum care), without any kind of cost-sharing, building on the recent mandate to require coverage for abortion and abortion-related care? (Y/N)

YES.

Since Roe V. Wade overturned and various states going after both patients and providers, now more than ever, Massachusetts needs to step up and protect all forms of reproductive health care. In addition, because maternity wards are not “profitable” in our broken healthcare system, many hospitals have closed their maternity wards putting many Massachusetts mothers and parents at risk because they have to travel much further to obtain necessary pregnancy care. I am proud to have worked on and supported legislation passed recently in the House to better fund and support community hospitals and regulate the profiteers, like Steward and the private equity firms that buy up Massachusetts hospitals.

6. **Reproductive Justice—II.** 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? (Y/N)

YES.

I am proud of the work that the legislature has done in response to the overturning of Roe V. Wade in 2022, but there are still steps we must take to ensure that the right to reproductive healthcare is accessible to all people who need it. This includes repealing the restriction that anyone under sixteen must get consent.

7. **Anti-Abortion Centers.** In Massachusetts, anti-abortion centers (also known as crisis pregnancy centers), which have a politically-motivated agenda to dissuade and delay patients from accessing abortion care, outnumber abortion clinics by more than 2 to 1. These centers scare and shame pregnant people considering abortion care and often oppose birth control and emergency contraception. Would you commit to opposing any Massachusetts government support and funding for such centers? (Y/N)

YES.

In 2021, Somerville was the first city to pass an ordinance that bans crisis pregnancy centers in the city. I am hopeful that other municipalities take this step as well and would support a complete ban at the state level as well.

8. **Overdose Prevention Centers.** An essential part of addressing the opioid crisis, overdose prevention centers allow medical professionals to respond to overdoses and engage participants in medical and behavioral health services. Would you support the legalization of overdose prevention centers? (Y/N)

YES.

I have been working with the Government of Portugal and helped host a conference last year to bring public health and public safety leaders from Portugal to meet with Massachusetts public health and public safety leaders to

learn from the Portuguese policies on Safe Consumption Sites and decriminalizing opioids.

It cannot be stated enough that opioid-related overdose is a dire issue in Massachusetts. Opioid-related overdose deaths in Massachusetts have been increasing drastically over the past decade, and opioid-related overdose deaths account for 37% of all deaths of people aged 25 to 44.

Overdose prevention centers are a proven harm reduction strategy to combat substance use worldwide. We need strategies that meet people who use substances “where they’re at” which includes promoting safer use, managing use itself, and promoting recovery. Overdose prevention centers provide a safe and sanitary space for substance use which is monitored and maintained by trained staff. There are more than 100 Safe Consumption Sites in 66 cities and 11 countries around the world. Overdose prevention centers don’t just prevent overdose deaths, they are a critical pathway to resources for users seeking treatment and other social services. In addition, they reduce rates of infectious disease transmission by encouraging safer and healthier substance use practices. All this leads to a decrease in local overdose deaths and an increase in public safety and neighborhood conditions.

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? (Y/N)

YES.

We continue to see that some of our most vulnerable communities, young children and immunocompromised, have been forgotten and ignored during the COVID-19 pandemic. We need to have a system that puts the health and safety of all people first.

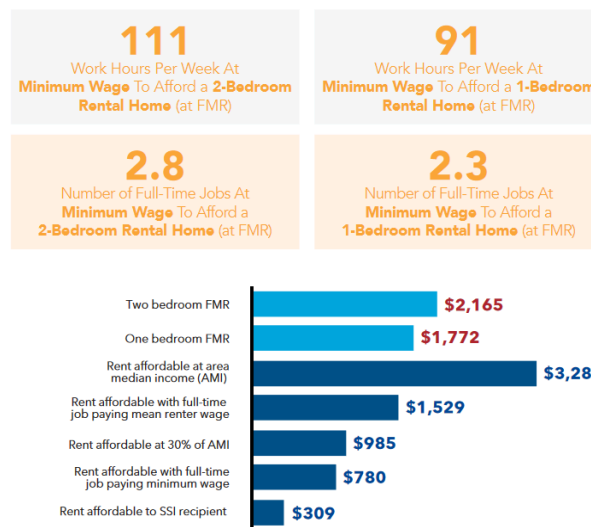
E. Housing

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). To rent the average 2-bedroom apartment in Massachusetts requires an income equal to [\\$41.64 per hour](#), more than twice the minimum wage. A minimum-wage worker in Massachusetts would need to [work 91 hours each week](#) to afford a modest 1-bedroom rental home at fair market rent.

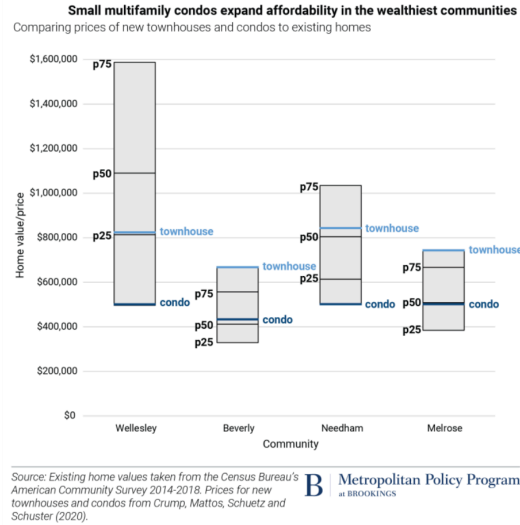
Home ownership has become increasingly out of reach, as the state's median home price is [approximately \\$600,000](#). In more than 20 communities, the median home price recently [passed \\$1 million](#). Meanwhile, we have some of the [most restrictive zoning laws](#) in the country, making it difficult to build more housing to meet the needs of a growing population.

The high cost of housing has led to displacement, and in a growing number of municipalities, the local workforce can no longer afford to live there.

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



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



1. Please share your principles and proposals regarding affordable housing and housing affordability in the Commonwealth.

For too long policymakers have prioritized the interests of developers over residents, turning the places we call home into investment commodities for profit. Over the past decade, Somerville has had the steepest increase in housing pricing in Massachusetts—we are truly on the front lines of the displacement crisis, and this crisis has spread across the entire state and country, while deep pocketed investors have bought up real estate for profit. Tragically, investors driving up housing costs have pocketed all the gains we won for the working class through increasing the minimum wage because so much of the gains in wages have simply been funneled into paying for housing.

Housing is the most expensive purchase we will ever buy or pay out monthly from our wages. Exposing renters and homeowners alike to the systematic risk of wild price fluctuations is not only inhumane and destructive to our communities, it is a market failure. Yet cities in Massachusetts are prevented from taking action in solving the housing crisis: In 1994, the real estate industry funded a ballot question to ban rent control, which narrowly passed by winning 51% of the vote. Massachusetts needs to end the ban on rent control and give cities all the tools they need to address the housing crisis.

We can stop heartbreaking displacement and make affordable housing a guaranteed right for all by putting people first over profit.

2. Optional/As Applicable: Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on housing (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).

I have worked consistently and vociferously on advocating for systemic solutions to our housing crisis. This includes fighting to end the ban on rent control and put in place policies that give municipalities the tools they need to address the affordable housing crisis, including: tenants opportunity to purchase (or TOPA), the real estate

transfer fee to fund permanently affordable housing, and deep investments into public housing and social housing. I will continue to work with my local community organizers, municipal leaders, and fellow legislators to make these policy goals a reality.

- 3. Right to Shelter.** Massachusetts is the only state with a right to shelter—that is, all families experiencing homelessness are guaranteed shelter. Would you oppose any effort to roll back the right to shelter? (Y/N)

YES.

I was one of five progressive legislators who voted against the bill that limited shelter stays for most families to six months. Since 1983, Massachusetts has been a “right-to-shelter” state for families, a right that I believe we need to protect by all means necessary, especially Massachusetts being one of the wealthiest states in the one of the wealthiest countries in the world. Time limits to shelter stays will not solve this problem, affordable housing and housing first policies will.

- 4. Welcoming New Neighbors.** Would you support efforts to locate both long-term housing and short-term shelter in your district? (Y/N)

YES.

This is something I feel especially strongly about because of how many constituents my office has had to help who are at risk of losing their homes and have such extremely limited short-term and long-term shelter options close to Somerville.

- 5. Affordable Housing Funding—I.** Would you support enabling all cities and towns the flexibility to design and pass real estate transfer fees that will be effective in their municipalities to raise money for affordable housing production? (Y/N)

YES.

This is just one way that we can try to tackle the housing crisis here in Massachusetts. As we have seen in recent years, so often developers are buying and flipping homes, pricing people out of our communities, both renters and first-time home buyers. They are profiting while furthering the housing and displacement crisis. Somerville has filed a transfer fee home rule petition for the last several legislative sessions which I support.

- 6. 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? (Y/N)

YES.

The Deeds Excise Tax has remained stagnant for decades while housing prices have soared in that same period.

7. **Rent Control.** Would you support lifting the statewide ban on rent control and enabling cities and towns to craft and pass laws to stabilize rents in ways best attuned to the local housing situation? (Y/N)

YES.

We need rent control which would prevent absurd rent hikes and provide more stability for renters from year to year. Every week, I encounter constituents facing displacement, and often eviction, from drastic and immoral rent hikes on the order of a few hundred dollars a month to over \$1000 per month. Many of these residents have called their place home for over 10 or 20 years. These predatory landlords are among the super rich who are doing well because they can capitalize on vulnerable residents through an unregulated housing market. Furthermore, there is a pervasive business model to force tenants to make a choice: stay and pay \$550 more in rent or move, which costs 1 month rent in broker's fees, first and last month rent, and a security deposit. For a 1-bedroom that can easily cost \$6000 in cash upfront. What if you don't have \$6000 in your bank account? Tough luck, the landlord will find a new tenant to pay the original rent until next year, when the same \$550 increase is applied at the second year lease signing again.

The threat of displacement not only deeply harms individuals and families, it is hurting our community. Our state and its communities are a vibrant place with restaurants, local businesses, artists and musicians, and a warm sense of home. But that sense of home and community is becoming increasingly unattainable due to the rampant insecurity renters face in the age of rising rents.

8. **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? (Y/N)

YES.

Municipalities need to be given more control over how they approach housing in their own community. The State continues to block any type of legislation that could slow the housing crisis. I have again filed the Somerville home rule petition that would allow TOPA.

9. **Eviction Sealing.** Every case in eviction court creates a record that stays with a renter forever, making it difficult to obtain future housing. Would you support legislation to automatically seal records for dismissals, cases in which tenants win, and no-fault evictions and to create a process for sealing all other records after a set amount of time with minimal administrative burden? (Y/N)

YES.

We should remove barriers to finding quality housing. This and the checkbox make it much more difficult for tenants to rent, often following them for the rest of their lives.

10. **Right to Counsel.** Would you support legislation to provide legal representation for

low-income tenants in eviction proceedings? (Y/N)

YES.

One eviction on a person's record can cause compounding effects for years to come. Tenants often don't know the complicated housing laws or their rights. Legal representation should not be solely afforded to those with money.

- 11. HDIP Reform.** The Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP) is a multimillion-dollar annual state tax credit program subsidizing market-rate housing in Gateway Cities. The administration could award more than \$100 million in HDIP developer tax credits over the next two years. Would you support reforming this program to support both market-rate and affordable housing development? (Y/N)

YES.

We passed HDIP in the House last summer and I was one of only two legislators to vote against because it had no provisions or requirements for affordable housing development. We know from recent application of HDIP funding that HDIP rents are generally well above market and often shockingly high with no limits on increases in rent. It's also important to note that HDIP tax credits are not distributed evenly or equitably among Gateway Cities and often are misdirected to strong market areas where no subsidy is needed.

- 12. Social Housing.** Social housing is state financed, mixed-income housing, owned by a local or regional housing authority. Typical projects may set aside 1/3rd of the new units for low-income residents, 1/3rd for middle-income residents, and 1/3rd for higher-income residents. Would you support the establishment of a mixed-income social housing production program? (Y/N)

YES.

We need to think outside the box to preserve and create new affordable housing. The vast majority of housing currently being developed are luxury condos and apartments. This is pushing longtime residents out of the communities they grew up in.

- 13. Zoning Reform.** Would you support zoning reforms to increase housing production and create more affordable and environmentally sustainable communities such as...

- a. Requiring multi-family zoning and removing costly parking mandates around public transportation and city/town centers statewide? (Y/N)**

YES.

- b. Legalizing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) as of right statewide? (Y/N)**

YES.

- c. Creating a streamlined process for turning vacant land and commercial properties into multi-family housing? (Y/N)**

YES.

d. Prioritizing the disposition of state-owned land for affordable housing? (Y/N)

YES.

e. Enabling communities to adopt inclusionary zoning ordinances (i.e., requirements that a certain percentage of new units in a development be affordable) by simple majority vote? (Y/N)

YES.

Zoning laws in our state have been used to direct development to poorer communities of color and to limit disruption of wealthier white communities, shielding them from being part of the solution to the affordable housing crisis. This needs to change. Further, zoning reform has been used to pressure the progressive left, forcing it to make compromises around developer-friendly proposals that solve one issue while exacerbating another. We can pass zoning reform but it needs to be on our terms and advanced by communities closest to the crisis. The history of Massachusetts suburbs is one of wealthy, primarily white, people fleeing and disinvesting in cities while ensuring that their own families have better services.

14. MBTA Communities Law Enforcement. Towns like Milton, Holden, and Wretham (and possibly others to come) have sought to maintain that compliance with the MBTA Communities Law is “optional.” Would you support measures to strengthen the law with stricter consequences for municipalities that refuse to comply, including voiding non-compliant zoning? (Y/N)

YES.

Cities like Somerville, Boston, Cambridge, and others have taken steps to combat the housing crisis. Other municipalities benefit greatly from their proximity to the Greater Boston area and access to the MBTA, yet actively take steps to prevent more dense housing from being built in their borders. This greatly contributes to the current housing crisis and must be stopped.

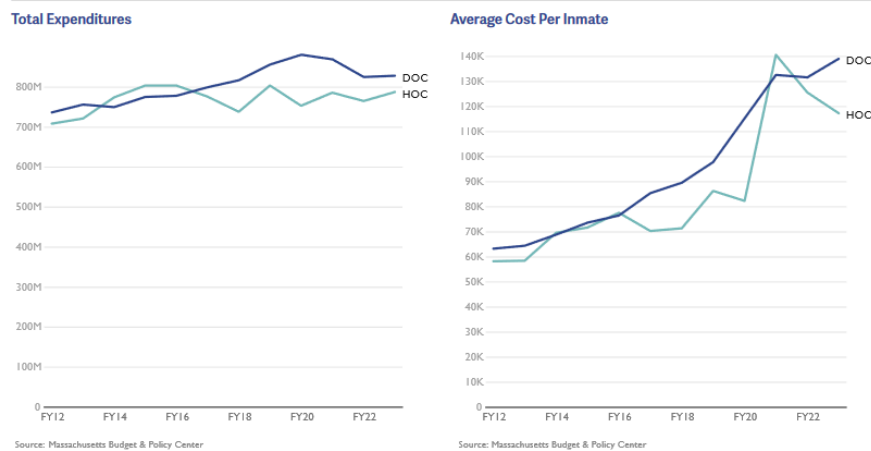
F. Police Accountability and Decarceration

Mass incarceration in Massachusetts has proven socially and economically destructive, breaking apart communities across the state. Even though Massachusetts has one of the lowest incarceration rates of the United States, we have some of the [starkest racial disparities in incarceration](#), a result of overpolicing and systemic biases.

Although incarceration rates in Massachusetts have gone down over the past few years as a result of policies from the 2018 criminal justice reform omnibus bills, spending on the Department of Correction has [risen](#). The average cost per year to house an individual in the Massachusetts Department of Corrections is [more than](#) \$100,000, 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.

The correctional population in Massachusetts has declined, yet the state continues to increase the Department of Corrections budget.

Figure 14: Total expenditures for correctional institutions and average cost per inmate, inflation-adjusted to 2023 dollars



Although MA's incarceration rate is lower than the national rate, racial disparities are even more stark. ([Source](#))

Statistics (2022)	MA	US Total
Imprisonment rate (per 100K residents)	94	355
Black : White Disparity	7 : 1	4.8 : 1
Latinx : White Disparity	4 : 1	1.3 : 1

1. Please share your principles and proposals regarding police accountability and decarceration.

I do not believe the 2018 Criminal Justice Reform Act (2018 CJRA) went far enough. Particularly in terms of accountability over the Department of Correction (DOC). In fact, it created new mandatory minimum sentences at a time when CJR advocates at the national level were clear that we need to get rid of them entirely. I am also disappointed that the 2018 CJRA did not abolish cash bail, something that disproportionately hits low income and vulnerable communities. We ought to get rid of it.

We have one of the most expensive DOC in the country, it costs almost \$132,000 per year to incarcerate someone, while only a mere 2% of the DOC budget is spent on programming and education. Meanwhile, incarcerated people's only option for employment pays less than \$3 a day for institutional jobs and less than \$2 an hour for MassCor Industries. Finally, the system does nothing to heal or rehabilitate individuals, and I've only witnessed compounding and painful trauma along with medical neglect. As such, I am in the fight to decarcerate and reallocate resources from public safety into systemic solutions including housing, education, and healthcare.

2. Optional/As Applicable: Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on police accountability and criminal legal reform (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).

I have worked locally on ensuring police officers will stay out of Somerville schools following a horrifying incident when the police were called on a 6 year old Black and Brown student at the Argenziano. I fought tirelessly to ensure that this student's records were expunged and to fight for Somerville Schools to create the most comprehensive MOU between the schools and police that would protect the rights of students and parents from the criminal legal system and the school to prison pipeline.

I have also advocated vociferously against solitary confinement and the DOC's blatant violations of the 2018 CJRA, which was covered by Victoria Law [here](#). This included multiple unannounced visits to prisons, something that is a statutory right of legislators but has not been exercised until very recently.

Finally, I also have been working on supporting and advocating for [programming and education for incarcerated individuals](#), notably for cultural groups at several prisons. An accomplishment I have been proud of is when for the first time in Massachusetts history, over [20 women incarcerated at MCI-Framingham testified live over Zoom in committee](#) in favor of the prison moratorium. Since then, every committee reviewing legislation pertaining to the criminal legal system has included live testimony from individuals across several prisons.

3. Police Accountability. The 2020 police accountability law passed by the Massachusetts Legislature contained a number of steps forward, but important measures were left out. Would you support legislation to do the following?

a. Eliminating qualified immunity for state and local police and correctional

officers so that individuals whose constitutional rights are violated can have their fair day in court? (Y/N)

YES.

It's truly upsetting that these measures were left out of the 2020 police accountability legislation when the legislation was brought forward in response to the murder of George Floyd that propelled forth an incredible racial justice uprising in the United States and across the globe. Yet by not eliminating qualified immunity, we are holding state and local police and correctional officers to a completely different standard from other residents. This was a top priority for me when I first ran in 2020 and continues to be a deeply needed change I advocate for.

b. **Enacting the recommendations from the special legislative commission on facial recognition, to implement privacy, civil rights, and due process protections to govern police use of the technology? (Y/N)**

YES.

I wholeheartedly support strict regulations on facial surveillance and more democratic accountability.

4. **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? (Y/N)

YES.

One of the main demands that grew out of the George Floyd protests in 2020 was finding an alternative to policing. So often those with mental health conditions and addiction are confronted by police and it has disastrous outcomes. These alternatives have been successfully implemented around the country. We need to look at how we can help protect our most vulnerable populations and greatly reduce their interactions with police.

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

a. **Eliminating mandatory minimums for all drug offenses? (Y/N)**

YES.

b. **Raising the age of criminal majority from 18 to 21**, in line with research that shows that young offenders served by a juvenile system are much less likely to reoffend and more likely to successfully transition to adulthood? (Y/N)

YES.

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

YES.

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

YES.

Yes to all of these reforms. Currently, our entire system is focused on filling the jails and prisons and keeping those currently incarcerated in and ensuring they return if they are ever released. We need to instead focus on providing people with the resources and help they need.

6. **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? (Y/N)

YES.

I have visited facilities with legislators 1-2 times a month consistently throughout my terms in the legislature. I want to ensure that it has appropriate membership & appointments from among marginalized communities, criminal justice advocates and isn't stacked against accountability.

7. **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](#), by essentially turning Souza-Baranowski into de facto solitary confinement by limiting out of cell time to three hours per day, which exceeds the definition established in the 2018 Act by one hour. Would you support legislation to address this discrepancy by establishing universal conditions of confinement standards applicable to all people in Massachusetts state prisons, county jails and houses of correction, regardless of housing or security status? (Y/N)

YES.

And I would look to continue to work with CJR advocates to figure out how we can propose to reduce that further and look to ban the practice entirely.

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

YES.

I submitted testimony in favor of the moratorium and have been working diligently with incarcerated women at MCI-Framingham, activists, and my

colleagues in the Criminal Justice Caucus to ensure that no new prisons or jails are built.

9. **Clean Slate.** The Massachusetts court system maintains a database of name-based court arraignment records, referred to as Massachusetts Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI). Many people are trapped in poverty and shut out of jobs and housing because of the difficult process to expunge their records, even for cases that did not end in a conviction or occurred when they were teenagers. Would you support...

- a. **Requiring the Commissioner of Probation to automatically seal criminal and juvenile records after the applicable waiting periods without requiring individuals to file a petition to do so?** (Y/N)

YES.

- b. **Requiring the immediate sealing of a criminal offense if the charge did not end in a conviction?** (Y/N)

YES.

Individuals that go through our criminal legal system at a young age feel the impact for the rest of their lives. We must do more to truly and fully rehabilitate people and clean slate legislation would be a big first step.

10. **Protecting Our Immigrant Neighbors.** The entanglement of state and local law enforcement with ICE's federal immigration enforcement makes everyone less safe. To end such entanglement, would you support the following measures....?

- a. **Preventing police and court officials from inquiring about immigration status?** (Y/N)

YES.

- b. **Requiring written, informed consent before any ICE interrogation?** (Y/N)

YES.

- c. **Prohibiting all Massachusetts entities from donating state employee time to ICE via 287(g) agreements, i.e., agreements in which state and local law enforcement are deputized to act as ICE agents?** (Y/N)

YES.

- d. **Protecting access to justice by prohibiting police and court officials from initiating contact with ICE about a person's pending release from police or court custody, except at the end of a sentence of incarceration?** (Y/N)

YES.

Yes, yes, yes, and yes. We should abolish ICE and no local or state funds or resources should ever be used to work in conjunction with them.

G. A Welcoming Society

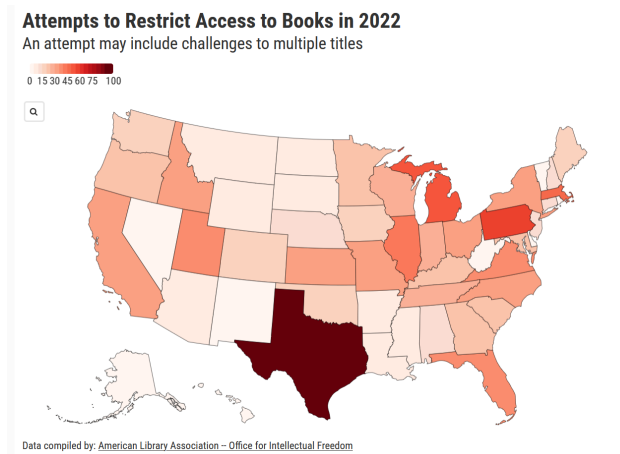
Our commonwealth is at its strongest when we recognize and celebrate the diversity of our population.

Massachusetts has often been a leader on LGBTQ rights, being the first state to legalize same-sex marriage and having passed a strong trans anti-discrimination law (with additional protections for health care passed more recently). However, archaic laws and regulations remain, and efforts to ban LGBTQ-friendly books are not just a "red state" problem but unfortunately far too common here at home.

Immigrants make up [18%](#) of Massachusetts's population; however, demagoguery against, or indifference to, immigrant populations has historically been a mainstay of Massachusetts politics. We too often see both Democrats and Republicans fear-monger about immigration and the border, championing policies that criminalize rather than welcome.

Although Massachusetts likes to view itself as a leader in social progress, racial discrimination has been prevalent in our history and in our present, and a legacy of oppression and expropriation of indigenous communities remains unaddressed in policy and iconography.

In 2022, there were 45 attempts to restrict access to books in MA, with 57 titles challenged. ([Source](#))



1. Please explain your principles and proposals relative to building a welcoming society.

I believe in building a society that is inclusive, equitable and compassionate. Since taking office, I have worked with advocates and colleagues to expand our policies and social safety nets and include policies that create opportunities and protections for all, regardless of race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or background.

2. Optional/As Applicable: Please indicate work you personally have done to make MA a more welcoming place for all.

Given my work at MCI-Framingham and other male facilities, I have advocated for several transgender incarcerated people when their health and safety were put at risk or when they were denied their statutory rights to gender affirming healthcare.

In terms of legislation, I have supported several bills including ensuring legal parentage equality, promoting rehabilitation including guaranteed health, treatment, and safety for incarcerated LGBTQI+ People, establishing gender neutral bathrooms, and supporting and championing the Healthy Youth Act both as state-level legislation and to implement similar policies locally in Somerville.

3. **Right to Learn.** Right-wing efforts to ban books from school or public libraries disproportionately target books about LGBTQ people and communities of color. Would you support legislation to prevent book removal due to personal or political views in public and school libraries, require public libraries to adopt the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, and protect librarians from retaliation?

YES.

We must defend the foundational values of access to information and diverse perspectives in our public and school libraries. Librarians and educators are under attack from the right in their ever expanding culture war and need to be protected from retaliation.

4. **Location Shield Act.** Would you support legislation to ban the sale of cell phone location information, which can be used for surveillance and targeted harassment of any population, including abortion patients and providers, LGBTQIA+ individuals, religious faiths, and other marginalized groups? (Y/N)

YES.

I have signed on to H.357. Massachusetts must be a leader when it comes to protecting some of our most vulnerable residents as other states continuously find new ways to attack and strip people of their rights.

5. **Gender X Bill.** Would you support codifying into law the RMV's recent regulatory decision to offer an "X" marker on licenses and expanding its scope to cover more documents, including birth certificates, other ID options, and state forms? (Y/N)

YES.

The RMV took the first step to become more inclusive, but it must be expanded to all state forms.

6. **Massachusetts Parentage Act.** Although marriage equality has been the law of the land in Massachusetts for more than two decades, we have outdated parentage laws that disadvantage same-sex couples. Would you support legislation to ensure that every child has the same rights and protections under law as any other child without regard to the marital status, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation of the parent or parents? (Y/N)

YES.

The legislature has started to take steps to finally update some of the outdated and archaic language found in our laws and regulations, but we must do more. These are easy steps that make Massachusetts more inclusive and better protect the rights of marginalized groups.

7. **Language Access.** Would you support legislation to build the capacity of key public-facing state agencies to meet the language access needs of an increasingly diverse population by standardizing and enforcing language access protocols and practices? (Y/N)

YES.

Language access has been one of the top priorities for the AAPI caucus which I am a proud member of. I will continue to advocate to pass legislation and ensure implementation by the state administration.

8. **Indigenous People's Day.** Would you support legislation to replace Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples in state statute as the recognized holiday on the second Monday of October? (Y/N)

YES.

I am proud that Somerville, Boston, and others have taken steps to replace Columbus Day at the municipal level, but we need to make this change at the state level as well.

9. **School Mascots.** Would you support legislation to prohibit the use of Native American mascots in Massachusetts public schools? (Y/N)

YES.

I am a cosponsor of H.477. This is another example of an easy step that the legislature could take to make Massachusetts a more welcoming and inclusive place.

H. 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, 2018, and 2022 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](#).

MA has the least competitive elections in the country. (Source)

State Legislative Competitiveness Index in Massachusetts, 2010-2022					
Year	Open seats	Incs. in contested primaries	Major party competition	Competitiveness Index	Rank
2010	17.0%	8.4%	48.0%	24.5	41 / 46
2012	5.0%	10.0%	33.0%	16.0	44 / 44
2014	11.0%	9.6%	38.5%	19.7	41 / 46
2016	6.5%	10.7%	23.0%	13.4	44 / 44
2018	12.0%	11.4%	30.0%	17.8	46 / 46
2020	7.5%	12.4%	21.0%	13.6	44 / 44
2022	12.0%	11.9%	30.0%	18.0	46 / 46

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

Municipality	Turnout (Nov 2022)
Lawrence	22.8%
Springfield	24.9%
Lowell	29.7%
Chelsea	31.7%
New Bedford	33.0%
Fall River	33.0%
Brockton	33.1%
Southbridge	34.3%
Holyoke	34.4%
Lynn	35.0%

Source: [MassLive](#)

1. **Please explain your principles and proposals relative to good government and strong democracy.**

Prior to serving as State Representative, I co-founded Act on Mass (www.ActOnMass.org) and worked closely with Progressive Massachusetts and other organizations to advance transparency in our state legislature. I drafted the transparency pledge which Progressive Mass scores on the legislative scorecard, and I am so grateful for all the work PM has put into this issue and look forward to being a champion for this in the legislature.

As a candidate I have put a strong focus on starting field early and committing to focus on knocking on doors as the candidate. I'm proud that my 2020 race brought in nearly 400 volunteers and resulted in a 50% turnout for a Democratic primary. This was a historically high turnout of a voter base that was far more reflective of the district's overall residents. After winning my race in 2020, I continued to knock doors (over 5000 doors) during an off election year in 2021. I am continuing in my re-election campaign to focus on field and using community events as a way to bring in more residents to the political and civic process.

2. **Optional/As Applicable: Please indicate work you personally have done to promote transparency, campaign finance reform, legislative rules reform, and access to voting.**

As a cofounder of Act on Mass, transparency has been a top priority for me before becoming a legislator and as a legislator. I have worked hard with fellow State Representatives to make the rules of the State House more transparent so voters know how their representatives are voting, and worked to increase accessibility and lift all voices and make them heard in the State House so that policy reflects the progressive values of Somerville and Massachusetts.

In addition, to filing and supporting campaigns for more transparency in the rules. I have also filed legislation to ensuring the same open meeting law in the legislature as is required in all other legislative bodies in the state (ie. city council, town meeting, and school committee) and have supported legislation to extending public records law to the Governor and the Legislature.

3. **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...? (Y/N)

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.

Yes and yes! I have organized around these issues prior to taking office and

have filed amendments to make these changes in the House rules debate.

4. **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 making your committee votes available online on your website, with reader-friendly language about the bills voted on? (Y/N)

YES.

They are available on my website. I have also worked with some of my committee chairs to make all committee votes public upon request.

5. **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? (Y/N)

YES.

Absolutely. I think this goes without saying. I'll also add that I've had to rely on public records requests to obtain critical information pertaining to my advocacy on legislation and issues.

6. **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). 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? (Y/N)

YES.

These changes need to be made permanent. Funds should be provided to municipalities that need help implementing these changes full time. The more voices heard in the meetings, the stronger our democracy.

7. **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? (Y/N)

YES.

I am a cosponsor of H.769. It has been studied here in Massachusetts and successfully implemented in 12 other states. It is past time that we remove this barrier that prevents so many parents, especially single parents, from running to represent their communities.

8. **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? (Y/N)

YES.

I was one of 64 Representatives to vote against the further amendment that essentially killed same day voter registration. I fought to expand voting rights & remove arbitrary barriers to voting that disproportionately impact Black voters, voters of color, immigrants, young people, and renters.

9. **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?** (Y/N)

YES.

Somerville student advocates pushed for this in the city and I was happy to sign on to the Home Rule Petition.

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

YES.

I support this effort. It is important for residents of a community to have a voice in how it is run. I was proud to file the Somerville Home Rule Petition with Rep. Connolly that allows non-citizens to vote in municipal elections.

10. **Voting Rights Restoration.** Would you support restoring the franchise to incarcerated individuals serving time for felony convictions (Their right to vote was taken away by ballot twenty years ago)? (Y/N)

YES.

I have worked closely with Senator Miranda and Senator Gomez to help ensure that incarcerated individuals have their rights restored, including filing H.26, Proposal for a legislative amendment to the Constitution relative to voting rights. This bill advanced out of committee for the first time this session which was an incredible win for voting rights restoration.

11. **Campaign Public Financing.** Would you support the extension of the limited public financing system to include campaigns for state representative and state senate? (Y/N)

YES.

Absolutely. In fact, what we can learn from publicly funded elections in states like Maine is that it works very well for down ballot races like state representative and state senate races.

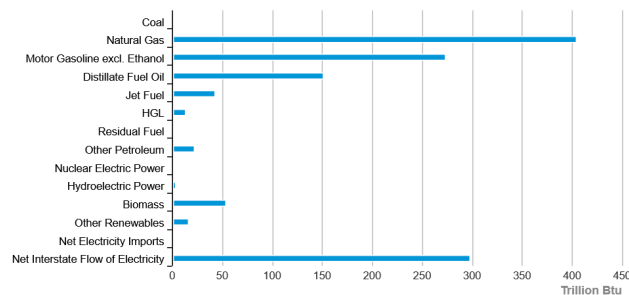
I. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection

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, the 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.

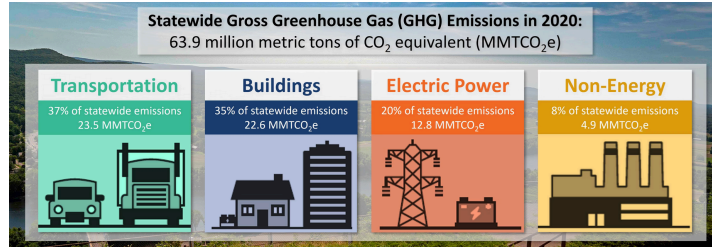
Despite recent progress, Massachusetts is still overwhelmingly dependent on fossil fuels.

Massachusetts Energy Consumption Estimates, 2021



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 sustainable infrastructure and environmental protection.**

The Massachusetts State House has the power and responsibility to do our part to stop the climate crisis. Without action, over 90,000 homes in Massachusetts are at risk of flooding due to sea level rise. We now have only 8 years to drastically reallocate our resources and restructure our society to save our future.

As our nation struggles to address the climate crisis, we must be national leaders by passing a Massachusetts Green New Deal. This means getting to 100% renewable energy by 2030 by investing in public transportation, conservation and restoration of critical infrastructure, and sustainable and affordable housing.

The Massachusetts Green New Deal must empower the environmental justice communities who have been most impacted by climate change and the workers most affected by the transition to a green economy. This means passing taxation or carbon pricing that is equitable and ensuring that any worker displaced by the shift away from fossil fuels receive full income and benefits as they transition to alternative work. The Massachusetts Green New Deal will stimulate economic growth, strengthen labor unions, and provide long-lasting benefits for all.

2. **Optional/As Applicable: Please indicate work you personally have done to protect the environment and expand access to public transportation.**

I have supported several local fights on behalf of our environmental justice communities in Somerville including protecting residents that live adjacent to I-93 and McGrath, increasing pedestrian and bicycle safety while reducing traffic congestion, and fighting to hold Eversource and National Grid accountable for harmful infrastructure such as pollution through gas leaks. Finally, I have been a vocal advocate for funding over \$1.6 billion more annually into the MBTA so that we can have a safe, reliable, and free public transportation system that will reduce the number of cars on the road.

Prior to taking office, I worked with the Sunrise Movement to fight and advocate for 100% renewable energy by 2030.

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 2035? (Y/N)

YES.

In my first two sessions as Representative, I filed a bill with Senator Eldridge that would get us to carbon neutral by 2030, H.3231, An Act investing in a prosperous, clean Commonwealth by 2030 (or IPCC by 2030 for short). Although an ambitious bill, we have been using such benchmarks set by the annual IPCC report and the solutions put forth in this bill as a way to continue to push for urgency for bills that would get Massachusetts to 100% clean electricity and renewable energy by 2030.

4. **Expanding Solar Coverage.** Would you support legislation to create permanent incentives for siting solar projects where they have the least environmental impact, i.e., on buildings and disturbed land? (Y/N)

YES.

The legislature needs to take steps to actually combat climate change. This includes minimizing environmental impact while maximizing renewable energy generation.

5. **Fossil Fuel Infrastructure.** Do you oppose the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure in the state? (Y/N)

YES.

I support a ban on new fossil fuel infrastructure. My vision is that we must massively allocate our societal resources towards stopping climate change and that such a societal shift must be centered around creating high-quality unionized jobs, centered around equity for marginalized environmental justice communities, and centered around young people's leadership in politics and our government.

6. **Make Polluters Pay.** Do you support holding the corporations who are most responsible for causing global climate change financially accountable to pay for damages caused by climate driven extreme weather and the infrastructure improvements needed for resilience? (Y/N)

YES.

I am a cosponsor of H.872, An Act establishing a climate change superfund and promoting polluter responsibility. If we are going to combat climate change in any meaningful way, we will need to find the funds to do it, including going after corporations that continue to contribute to the crisis.

7. **Zero-Carbon Renovation Fund.** Would you support creating a fund to jumpstart zero-carbon renovations in existing buildings like affordable housing and public schools, and in environmental justice communities? (Y/N)

YES.

I proudly cosponsored H.3232 this session that would establish this fund. The threat of the climate crisis is enormous and we must start taking action if we have any chance to reverse the effects of climate change.

8. **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? (Y/N)

YES.

Yes, and I want to see a broad group of EJ stakeholders come together to lead on this legislation, to ensure that the law is equitable and meets the needs of the community.

9. **Plastic Bag Ban.** Would you support a statewide ban on single-use plastic bags? (Y/N)

YES.

Plastic bags take decades to break down and millions end up in our landfills, water supply and oceans. We need to take steps to reduce the amount of plastic out there.

10. **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 requiring the electrification of the MBTA bus fleet by 2030, RTA fleets by 2035, and the MBTA rail system by 2035? (Y/N)

YES.

Large areas of Somerville are built around a state-owned highway. My constituents live with the health effects of this everyday including significantly elevated rates of cardiovascular disease, asthma, and leukemia. The sooner we electrify our public transit fleets and require electric vehicles, the better off everyone in the state will be, but especially our environmental justice communities such as the surrounding neighborhoods along highways such as East Somerville.

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

YES.

Access to public transit is about more than getting from Point A to Point B. It is about having access to places, opportunities, and experiences that shape, enrich, and better our life, whether we are receiving health care or education, visiting parks and museums, or simply getting across town to see someone we love. By eliminating fares and investing in free public transit we can establish a right to mobility and ensure that everyone, regardless of their income level, race, or zip code, has access to these fundamental rights. We have seen the success that Regional Transit Authorities and Boston has had under the leadership of Mayor Wu to enact free bus routes. We need to take the successes of that program and implement them statewide for buses and trains.

III. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Limit answer to 150 words or fewer.

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