



**PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS**  
**2026 Legislative**  
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

**Candidate:** Christine Barber

**Office Sought:** State Senator, Second Middlesex

**Party:** Democrat

**Website:** [christinebarber.org](https://christinebarber.org)

**Social Media Handles:**

- **Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/rep.christine.barber/>
- **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/christinebarberstaterep>

## 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. Community Safety
- G. A Humane Immigration System
- H. A Welcoming Society
- I. Good Government and Strong Democracy
- J. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection

## **I. About You & Your Governing Approach**

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

I'm the daughter of a public school teacher and a manufacturing plant manager. I started out as a community organizer, then came to Beacon Hill, first as a legislative staffer who helped draft the 2006 Massachusetts health reform that became the blueprint for the Affordable Care Act. I then worked as a health care advocate at Community Catalyst, where I spent years organizing to expand access to quality, affordable care around the country. I believe the government should work for everyone, not just the powerful, not just the connected. That belief has driven my entire career, and it is why I am running for the Senate.

I've spent a decade as State Representative for Somerville and Medford, proving that I can translate progressive values into progressive laws. I have led on and passed bills including the Work and Family Mobility Act, eliminating insulin and inhaler copays and creating transparency for pharma, enacting Salary Range Transparency, and securing millions in local investments from the Green Line Extension to early education and out-of-school time programs. This moment – facing unprecedented attacks from the federal government, rising housing costs, and urgent climate threats – demands a Senator who can deliver results on day one.

My top three priorities are: (1) housing affordability, including rent stabilization, social housing, and tenant protections; (2) protecting immigrant communities, defending reproductive rights and access to affordable health care against federal attacks; and (3) building climate-resilient communities and investing in public transit.

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

I bring years of close work with community members, deep policy expertise, and a proven record of passing laws, not just filing bills. Holding progressive values is necessary, but it isn't enough. You also have to write the bills, build the coalitions to get them on the agenda, push them through committees, and get them across the finish line. That is how I approach this work.

I've served as a leader in the Progressive Caucus and Women's Caucus, as a member of the Ways and Means Committee, chaired the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, and navigated conference committees to ensure that progressive priorities are signed into law. I have worked closely with, and learned from Senator Jehlen, partnering with her for a decade on issues such as pay equity, access to menstrual products, public transportation, issues affecting seniors, and criminal justice reform. As a legislator, I've earned a reputation for organizing my colleagues on progressive issues that can make a real difference, and pushing hard to get the best possible outcomes. Before being elected to the legislature, I spent eight years at Community Catalyst as a

national health policy expert, working with advocates across the country to organize and pass the Affordable Care Act. Before that, as a legislative staffer, I helped draft the landmark 2006 Massachusetts health reform law, the blueprint for the ACA.

I know how the Senate works because I've built relationships across both chambers. I know how to negotiate within leadership structures while staying true to progressive values. And I know this district. I've represented Somerville and Medford for a decade, and I've worked with and delivered for these communities time and time again.

**3. Do you consider yourself progressive, and if so, how would you define “progressive”?**

Yes. To me, being a progressive means using the full power of government to fight inequality, expand fundamental civil and reproductive rights, and deliver material improvements in people's lives. Progressive is not just about values or aspirations; it's about outcomes. Did the bill pass? Did families get relief? Did the policy change lives? Progressive means working directly with affected communities, staying in the fight, building coalitions, and delivering progressive laws that expand rights and support for the most marginalized and vulnerable communities among us.

**4. 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?**

We have a Democratic supermajority, but not a progressive majority. Thousands of bills are filed, and it takes organizing skill to build power to overcome centralized power and industry lobbying to get progressive bills on the agenda and build enough votes for them to pass.

I overcome these obstacles by doing the work: working very closely with outside coalitions, building relationships with colleagues with different backgrounds, engaging stakeholders early, staying at the negotiating table, and understanding the budget and rules well enough to find paths forward. I have a success record in this: I filed and passed the Work and Family Mobility Act after a 17-year advocacy fight. I filed and helped pass the MBTA Communities law. I drafted legislation that became law to eliminate copays for insulin, inhalers and heart medication and to get Big Pharma to the table to negotiate drug prices. I've written and passed laws expanding HomeBase eligibility and benefits for families facing homelessness and to expand ConnectorCare health care eligibility to 500% FPL.

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

Fare free buses. I have filed An Act relative to fare-free buses, which creates a pilot for free access to bus service for the MBTA and RTAs, and establishes two advisory committees to evaluate the impacts of the pilot program on ridership, equity, increased access, efficiency, on-time performances, cost savings and other metrics.

Other communities have done this - programs in Boston, Merrimack Valley, and Worcester all saw ridership growth, faster boarding times, less conflict between riders and operators, and meaningful cost savings for low-income, transit-dependent riders.

Beyond ridership numbers, these programs improved access to healthcare, reduced social isolation, and even contributed to reduced driving and emissions. Worcester's program is notable for its sustainability — fares only covered 8% of its budget, making elimination financially feasible, and the program has been continuously extended. Expanding access to public transit is a health equity issue and indisputably connected to our climate. Incentivizing people with a free ride on public transit gets people out of their cars, decreases our carbon emissions, reduces air pollution, reduces traffic and improves health. The positive results from local efforts are resounding and I am working to implement this initiative on a statewide level, particularly on the MBTA.

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

As lead sponsor of the Work and Family Mobility Act, I worked closely with the Driving Families Forward Coalition to build support with immigrant advocacy organizations, faith leaders, law enforcement, business owners, and legislative colleagues across the ideological spectrum.

I met consistently with outside groups, and inside the State House I built support vote by vote, addressed concerns about implementation, and ensured the bill could survive a veto-override fight. When opponents forced a ballot repeal question (Yes on 4), I helped organize the campaign to defend the law, and we won. Tens of thousands of immigrants now have the dignity of a driver's license.

**7. (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.**

The scorecard currently misses 5 bills that I co-sponsored. I have contacted Progressive Mass to correct this. I'm proud to have 100% alignment on votes this session. Last session, I supported the tax reform package because on balance, I felt it made a number of key positive changes for working families, particularly expanding EITC, the Child Care Tax Credit, Senior Circuitbreaker, and rental deduction.

**8. (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?**

Pat Jehlen has been an extraordinary progressive, effective leader, and leaves a historic legacy to build upon. I'm running for State Senate to do just that.

I have worked closely with Sen. Jehlen on affordable housing, workers' rights, criminal

justice reform, schools and government accountability. I hope to build on her legacy by bringing my experience of working closely with local communities and passing legislation directly into the Senate.

## II. The Issues

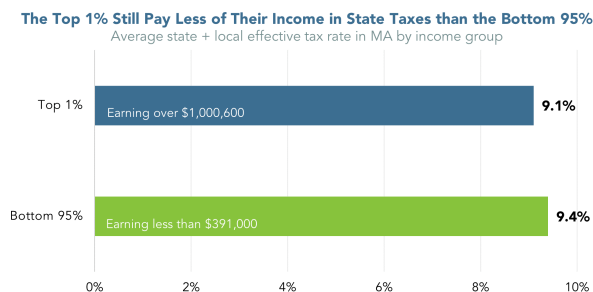
### A. Revenue and Taxation

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.

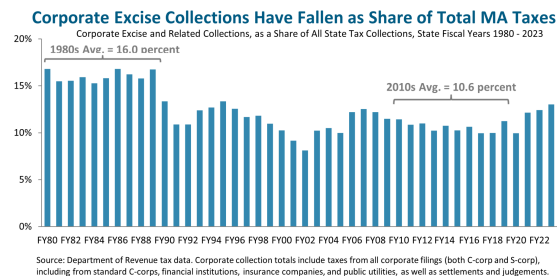
Although we saw a welcome shift when MA voters passed the Fair Share Amendment and added more progressivity to our tax code, the Legislature in 2023 voted to give tax cuts to multi-million-dollar estates, large corporations, and day traders, blunting the full impact of the win. We cannot tax-cut our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

Moreover, Massachusetts faces the threat of steep federal budget cuts, but given that we have the same GDP as the country of Sweden, we have the ability to raise the revenue to meet needs if we have the will to do so.

#### 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?

To fund critical services like education, public transportation, and other public services, Massachusetts must raise new forms of revenue. Corporations and the wealthy should pay their fair share in taxes. I've been a tireless advocate for raising progressive revenue, and championed legislation to close corporate loopholes.

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 voted in favor of the Fair Share Amendment in the legislature, and organized canvasses in my district to build support for the Fair Share ballot initiative. I've filed a number of bills, including an excise tax on large endowments, closing corporate tax loopholes (GILTI), and more.

3. **Corporate Tax Breaks.** Corporate tax breaks cost Massachusetts [more than \\$1 billion in foregone revenue](#) each year. Which of the following 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 to require 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**
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**
5. **Corporate Fair Share.** Large multinational corporations like Amazon and Walmart hide significant profits offshore in order to avoid paying taxes here in Massachusetts and in other states. Would you support legislation to increase the amount of offshored corporate income subject to MA's corporate income tax to 50%, the maximum allowable amount and the amount taxed by most of our neighboring states? **YES**
6. **Taxing Extreme Wealth.** Would you support the establishment of a Massachusetts wealth tax, which applies only to extremely rich taxpayers (with a threshold of at least \$100 million) and taxes them on a percentage (e.g., 1% annually) of their wealth above the threshold? **YES**
7. **Digital Ads Tax.** Would you support imposing new tax targeted at large companies that amass our personal data, either through a data-mining excise tax or a tax on digital advertising, as introduced or passed in states like New York and Washington State? **YES**
8. **Preventing Regressive Tax Cuts.** Massachusetts needs to raise new revenue to

advance a progressive agenda. At the same time, we also need to fight regressive tax cuts that weaken our public services.

- a. MA stands to lose hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue each year due to corporate tax cuts in Trump's Big Ugly Bill that will automatically enter the MA tax code. Do you support permanently decoupling the state tax code from these federal changes? **YES**
  - b. Will you oppose the corporate lobby's ballot question to reduce the state income tax, a measure which would cost the state \$5 billion a year? **YES**
  - c. Will you oppose the corporate lobby's ballot question to reform the state tax collection cap law (62F) in order to make the state more frequently hit the cap and lose out on critical investments? **YES**
9. **Rainy Day Fund.** Massachusetts will see significant budget cuts next year due to Trump's Big Ugly Bill. Would you support using 15% of the rainy day fund in order to prevent cuts? **YES**
  10. **PILOT Reform.** Do you support enabling cities and towns to require large tax-exempt not-for-profit institutions (i.e., with property valued at or above \$15M) 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**
  11. **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 climate adaptation/remediation projects? **YES**

## B. Jobs and the Economy

Massachusetts ranks as one of the top ten [most unequal states](#), as the gains from economic growth have disproportionately benefited the already well-off. Compounding this, we are one of the most expensive states in the country for [health care](#), [housing](#), and [child care](#), all of which strain wages. A strong economy depends on strong wages, as workers spend and help local economies thrive. Although 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
<b>Living Wage</b>	\$30.58	\$58.26	\$76.55	\$19.63	\$31.61	\$39.61
<b>Poverty Wage</b>	\$7.67	\$10.40	\$13.13	\$5.20	\$6.57	\$7.93
<b>Minimum Wage</b>	\$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.

A strong economy starts with strong wages and strong unions. I've championed Salary Range Transparency, which is now law, requiring employers to disclose pay ranges in job postings. I've fought for home care worker wage increases and supported organized labor consistently throughout my career. Workers shouldn't have to choose between paying rent and paying for groceries in the wealthiest state in the country.

I voted for raising the minimum wage, continue to support a higher minimum, eliminating subminimum wages, and indexing the minimum wage to inflation. I support extending paid leave to all workers and strengthening the right to organize. Economic inequality is the root of many of the crises we face and the solutions start with ensuring workers share in the prosperity they create.

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 led the effort to pass the Salary Range Transparency law, which requires Massachusetts employers to disclose pay ranges in job postings, promotions, and transfers, a concrete tool that gives workers leverage and helps close the gender and racial pay gaps. I cosponsored and strongly supported the legislation that established Paid Family and Medical Leave and raised the state minimum wage to \$15, landmark laws that lifted hundreds of thousands of working families. I currently cosponsor legislation to raise the minimum wage to \$20 per hour.

I have consistently supported policies to increase wages for workers, including filing a successful budget amendment to raise wages for home care workers, a workforce that is overwhelmingly women, disproportionately women of color and immigrants, and chronically underpaid for the essential care they provide.

I cosponsored and strongly supported legislation we passed to create Paid Family Medical Leave and a \$15 minimum wage. Since then, I currently cosponsor the bill to bring minimum wages up to \$20/hour.

I have consistently supported policies to increase wages for workers, including filing a successful budget amendment to increase wages for home care workers.

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**
  - 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**
5. **Paid Leave for All Workers.** In 2018, MA passed the strongest paid family and medical leave law in the country. However, the law did not include municipal workers or graduate student workers. Would you support extending the law to make sure that all workers have access to these vital benefits? **YES**
6. **Paid Time Off.** The US is the only advanced industrial country where workers are not guaranteed paid time off. Would you support legislation to require employers to offer full-time employees at least two weeks of paid time off each year, which they can use for any reason with no loss of pay? **YES**
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**
8. **State House Unionization.** Would you support legislation to extend collective bargaining rights to State House staff? **YES**

## C. Education

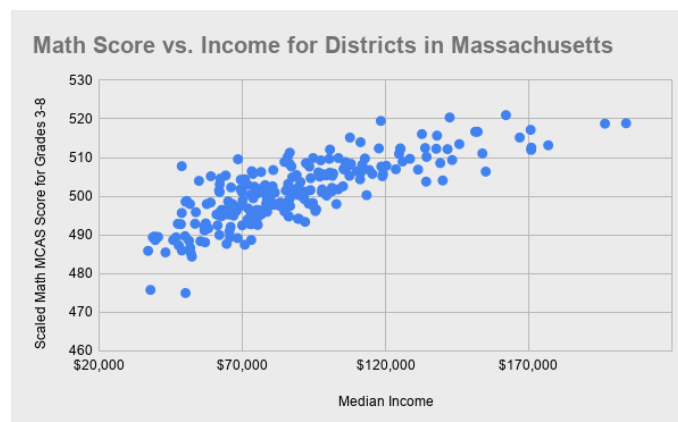
Massachusetts parents and caregivers face the [highest child care and early education costs of any state in the US](#). The average annual cost of infant care in Massachusetts is more than half of what a full-time minimum wage worker earns in a year. These costs are prohibitively expensive for low- and 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 the pandemic and inflation.

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.

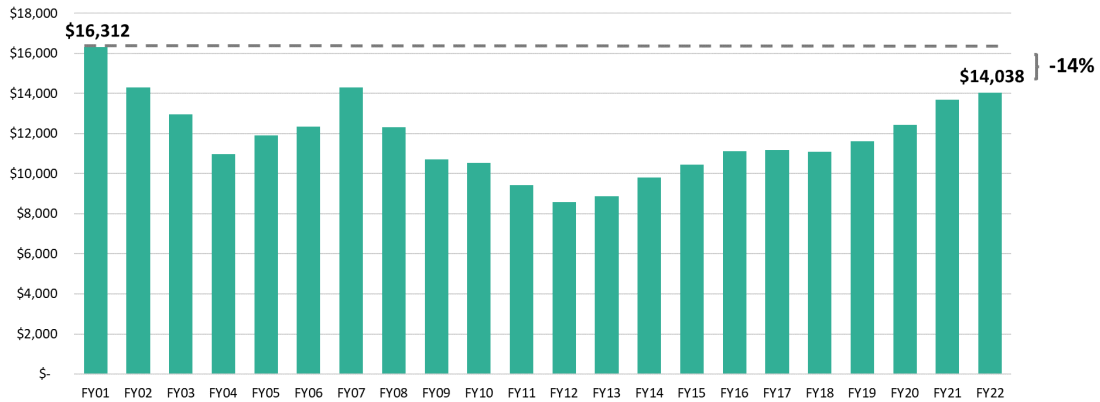
**Standardized test scores have a very strong correlation with the income of the school district. ([Source](#))**



**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.

As the daughter of a public school teacher, public education is personal. I championed the Student Opportunity Act and have fought to protect its full implementation. I secured funding for the MCPAP for Schools mental health pilot in Somerville and OSD waivers expanding early child care scholarships. I have secured millions in investments for early educator wages increases, funds for early education, and out-of-school time programs.

I strongly support keeping the cap on charter schools, every dollar diverted to charters is a dollar taken from the public schools serving the vast majority of students. I support and cosponsor bills on universal Pre-K, debt-free public higher education, and robust wraparound services through Community Schools. I also co-sponsored universal school meals and bills to remove MCAS as a graduation requirement. Massachusetts must also resist federal attacks on public education funding and civil rights protections.

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

Public education is fundamental to opportunity and democracy, and as the daughter of a public elementary school teacher, the fight for strong, well-resourced public schools is personal to me.

I strongly supported passage of the Student Opportunity Act and voted in favor of the Fair Share Amendment in the legislature, organizing canvasses in my district to build support for the ballot initiative. I voted for the FY24 budget that made universal school meals permanent and have cosponsored the standalone Universal School Meals bill across multiple sessions.

I helped secure funding for mental health services in Somerville schools through the MCPAP for Schools pilot and am working to expand the program statewide. I have filed legislation across multiple sessions to improve air quality in environmental justice communities, including schools near high-traffic corridors, and supported the MassCEC Green School Works grants to electrify and modernize school facilities. I will continue pushing for school construction funding through an MSBA that allocates resources more equitably across the state.

I've secured \$5.5 million several years in a row with the Children's Autism Medicaid Waiver and passed legislation allowing adults with disabilities to stay on parents' insurance beyond age 26.

I cosponsored legislation to remove MCAS as a graduation requirement and supported Ballot Question 2 in 2024. I have cosponsored the THRIVE Act in past sessions and continue to support its goals. I support keeping the existing cap on charter schools, and I campaigned against Question 2 in 2016 to lift that cap.

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? **YES**
4. **Universal Pre-K.** Would you support creating universal, free Pre-K, accessible to any resident of Massachusetts, integrated into the public school system? **YES**
5. **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." Do you support keeping the cap on charter schools? **YES**
6. **K-12 Education Funding.** Our public schools are losing out on the full benefits of increased funding due to a glitch in how the Chapter 70 formula treats inflation. The combination of several years of high inflation and an inflation cap in education funding calculations has locked in lower levels of aid to districts. Do you support fixing this gap and ensuring that our school districts get the funding they deserve? **YES**
7. **Receivership.** The Lawrence Public Schools and Southbridge Public Schools are currently under state receivership, with a state-appointed receiver assuming the powers of a superintendent or democratically elected school committee. The state takeover has not produced sustainable gains and has at times been characterized by [chronic mismanagement](#). Would you support ending the practice of state receivership and returning power to democratically elected school committees? **YES**

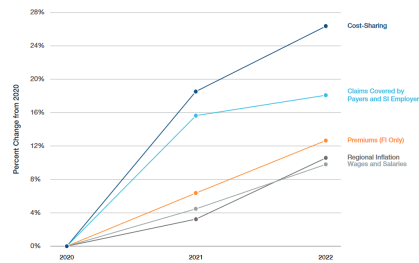
8. **Guaranteed Education for Incarcerated Youth.** Would you support legislation to mandate that at least 6 hours of credited daily education is available for all incarcerated, school-aged youth, including those with IEPs? **YES**
9. **Comprehensive Sex Education.** Do you support requiring public schools 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? **YES**
10. **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? **YES**
  - 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? **YES**
11. **Redistributing Institutional Wealth.** Would you support legislation that would levy a small excise tax on private college and university endowments above \$1B to fund free public higher education for all in-state students? **YES**
12. **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? **YES**
13. **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? **YES**
14. **Student Protest & Academic Freedom.** Will you support the unequivocal rights of students and faculty to peaceful protest and freedom of expression in Massachusetts' public and private institutions of higher education? **YES**

## 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

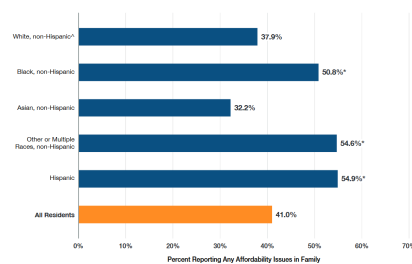


Member cost-sharing and premiums increased at a faster rate than regional inflation and wages and salaries from 2020 to 2022, driven in part by fluctuations in utilization during this time period.

Source: Payer reported data to CNA, Bureau of Labor Statistics data.  
 Note: Based on Massachusetts reported membership, which may include non-Massachusetts residents. Claims amounts were adjusted for pharmacy-related reported by payers. Reported cost-sharing, premiums, and claims amounts have not been adjusted to account for benefit carve-outs, which may vary by plan. Claims reported attributable to 2021 to 2022, with 2020 data available as of 2/22. For 2021 and 2022 data, data for the remaining reported for reporting and data for 2020 data for 2/22. Data for 2020 is available for 2/22 and 2/22. See technical appendix.

### 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.  
 Note: Only individuals listed as either as reporting any of the following issues: problems paying family medical bills in past 12 months, family medical bills at the time of survey, spending a high share of family income in past 12 months on out-of-pocket health care expenses, and unmet 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.

I have spent my career working toward the goal of universal health care. From my work drafting Chapter 58 as a legislative staffer to improving access to reproductive care to passing my bill to eliminate copays for insulin and inhalers to passing the ConnectorCare pilot expansion - I have worked to build our health care system into one that improves equity and meets patients' needs.

Before being elected, I spent eight years at Community Catalyst fighting for the ACA, and before that I helped draft the 2006 Massachusetts health reform law, the national blueprint for the ACA.

As a legislator, I have worked with the Health Equity Compact to eliminate copays for insulin and inhalers, expanded ConnectorCare to 500% of the Federal Poverty Line, passed a law allowing pharmacists to prescribe contraception, and blocked MassHealth cuts proposed by the Baker Administration. I passed a law to allow MassHealth to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies.

This session, I filed a bill to protect abortion access after 24 weeks based on physician judgment, and a bill to address medical debt.

Health care is a right. I will continue to lead on efforts to bring universal health care to ensure that every person in Massachusetts can access care.

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

Expanding health care access has been central to my work for my entire career. Before being elected to the House, I spent eight years as a health policy expert at Community Catalyst working to expand access to health care around the country through the passage of the Affordable Care Act, including ensuring coverage for reproductive care.

Earlier in my career I helped draft Chapter 58, the landmark 2006 Massachusetts health reform law that became the blueprint for the Affordable Care Act. In the Legislature, I have focused on health care access and equity, including leading on the expansion of ConnectorCare to 500% FPL that is now helping 50,000 additional residents afford coverage. I led a successful fight to prevent the rollback of MassHealth coverage during the Baker Administration. I was the lead filer of the Work and Family Mobility Act, which allowed people to access a drivers license regardless of immigration status, helping them access care. My work then and now to address ICE in our communities directly affects health equity, and the ability of all people to access care.

Reproductive rights has been central to my work as well. I was proud to strongly advocate for and vote for the Roe Act, codifying abortion rights into state law and affirming Massachusetts as a beacon of reproductive freedom. That vote was a foundational commitment to ensuring that no matter what happens at the federal level, the rights of Massachusetts residents would be protected. When the Dobbs decision was released, I organized legislators to speak on the floor in support of the House bill to protect reproductive rights, which protected providers and patients traveling to Massachusetts for abortion care, and eliminated cost sharing for reproductive health care. I have worked continuously to expand access to sexual and reproductive health care. I was the lead sponsor on a legislation we passed that allows pharmacists to prescribe hormonal contraception such as the pill and the patch — a tangible step toward removing barriers for patients who face obstacles accessing a physician.

This session, I am a co-sponsor of H.1991, An Act Relative to Abortion Care for Young People, which would repeal the state law requiring individuals under sixteen to obtain parental consent before accessing abortion care, recognizing that every person deserves agency over their own body.

I am also the lead sponsor of H.2370, An Act Prioritizing Patient Access to Care, which would lift Massachusetts' gestational restriction on abortion and ensure that decisions about abortion care remain between a patient and their provider. The bill restores and strengthens physician judgment as the standard of care — particularly in cases involving pregnancies beyond 24 weeks — and directly addresses life-threatening disparities in reproductive health outcomes.

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? **YES**
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? **YES**
5. **Full Spectrum Pregnancy Care.** 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? **YES**
6. **Abortion Access - 1.** Young people under sixteen seeking an abortion must obtain parental consent or judicial authorization. While most young people involve their parents, many cannot, causing delays to timely medical care and counseling. Scared teens may also turn to dangerous measures: going out of state or risking their lives and health with illegal or self-induced abortion. Would you support repealing this restriction on young people's access to abortion? **YES**
7. **Abortion Access - 2.** Despite recent overdue updates to abortion care protections in Massachusetts, dozens of patients have to travel out of state every year for necessary care. Would you support expanding abortion access after 24 weeks of pregnancy

when in the best professional judgement of a licensed physician? **YES**

8. **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? **YES**
9. **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? **YES**
10. **Vaccination.** Would you support legislation to eliminate non-medical exemptions to the routine vaccines for children required for school entry, as our neighbors in Maine, Connecticut, and New York have already done? **YES**

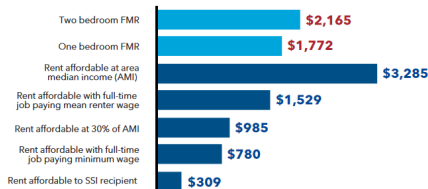
## E. Housing

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

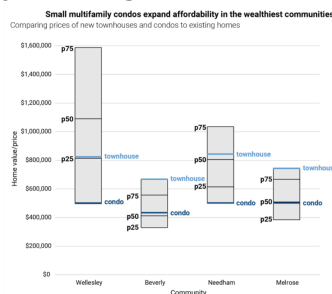
Home ownership has become increasingly out of reach, as the state's median home price is [approximately \\$600,000](#). In more than 20 communities, the median home price recently [passed \\$1 million](#). Meanwhile, we have some of the [most restrictive zoning laws](#) in the country, making it difficult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



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

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

Housing is the defining affordability crisis in this district and our entire state. I authored the ADU provision in the Housing Bond Bill, the expansion of HomeBASE eligibility and benefits for families facing homelessness, and fair housing language. I've filed anti-discrimination housing bills in three consecutive sessions and a bill making discriminatory zoning unlawful. I have secured hundreds of thousands of dollars to rebuild state public housing in my district and create new affordable units.

I support rent stabilization, I've co-sponsored rent control legislation for multiple sessions and I support the 2026 ballot initiative. I also support tenant opportunity to purchase, right to counsel for tenants facing eviction, and condo protections. But we also need to build: more affordable units, more senior-friendly housing, and more support for first-time homebuyers. I have cosponsored the local option real estate transfer fee and social housing.

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

I authored the Accessory Dwelling Unit provision in the 2024 Affordable Homes Act, landmark legislation that legalized ADUs by-right statewide, opening the door for thousands of new housing units in single-family neighborhoods without displacing existing residents. I filed MBTA Communities legislation and have filed anti-discrimination housing legislation across three consecutive sessions to prevent discrimination against affordable housing developments.

As lead sponsor of a budget amendment to expand the HomeBase program, I secured a significant funding increase and new policies that allow families leaving emergency shelter to remain in HomeBASE for more than two years, renew their assistance, and access higher benefit levels, concrete changes that keep families housed and out of the shelter system. I also secured \$250,000 to support the construction of new affordable housing at Clarendon Hill in Somerville, one of the largest affordable housing redevelopments in the city.

I am a cosponsor of rent stabilization (H.2328), the local-option real estate transfer fee, tenant opportunity to purchase, and right to counsel in eviction proceedings. I have supported budget increases for tenant legal assistance and emergency rental aid every year I have served, and I support the Keep Mass Home rent stabilization ballot initiative.

I will bring this same record of authorship, advocacy, and delivered results to the State Senate.

3. **Emergency Shelter.** How would you evaluate Governor Healey's response to the emergency shelter crisis?

While Governor Healey faced an unprecedented emergency shelter crisis with limited tools, there have been significant challenges in ensuring shelter for families. The response highlighted the need for greater investments in voucher programs like MRVP, RAFT and HomeBase, longer-term investments in affordable housing, faster permitting, and a more coordinated approach to welcoming newcomers with dignity while addressing the systemic housing shortage that created the crisis. We also need to ensure that some of the temporary restrictions that were implemented remain temporary. I was proud that HomeBase, a program I have worked for years to improve, was heavily utilized to move families from shelter to supportive housing.

4. **Welcoming New Neighbors.** Would you support efforts to locate both long-term housing and short-term shelter in your district? **YES**
5. **Everyone Needs ID.** Would you support easing access to Mass IDs for people experiencing homelessness by waiving the \$25 fee for IDs and easing the verification requirements for youth and adults who are unhoused and seeking IDs? **YES**
6. **Local Option Real Estate Transfer Fee.** 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? **YES**
7. **Green and Affordable Communities.** Would you support doubling the current Deeds Excise Tax (from \$4.56 per \$1,000 to \$9.12 per \$1,000), upon the sale of real property in Massachusetts, to create a new funding stream to be split evenly between affordable housing and climate resiliency? **YES**
8. **Rent Control.** Massachusetts residents face some of the highest and fastest-growing rents in the country.
  - a. Would you support lifting the statewide ban on rent control and enabling cities and towns to pass rent stabilization ordinances to limit annual rent increases? **YES**
  - b. Do you support the proposed 2026 statewide ballot initiative to limit annual rent increases? **YES**
9. **Tenant Opportunity to Purchase.** Would you support providing tenants of small, medium, and large multifamily properties with the right of first refusal when the owner plans to put a building on the market? **YES**
10. **Right to Counsel.** Would you support legislation to provide legal representation for low-income tenants in eviction proceedings? **YES**
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. Would you support reforming this program to support both market-rate and affordable housing development? **YES**

12. **Social Housing.** Social housing is publicly financed, mixed-income housing, owned by a local or regional housing authority. Would you support efforts to increase state funding for social housing initiatives? **YES**
  
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? **YES**
  
  - b. 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? **YES**
  
14. **MBTA Communities Law Enforcement.** Would you support measures to strengthen the law with stricter consequences for municipalities that refuse to comply, including voiding non-compliant zoning? **YES**

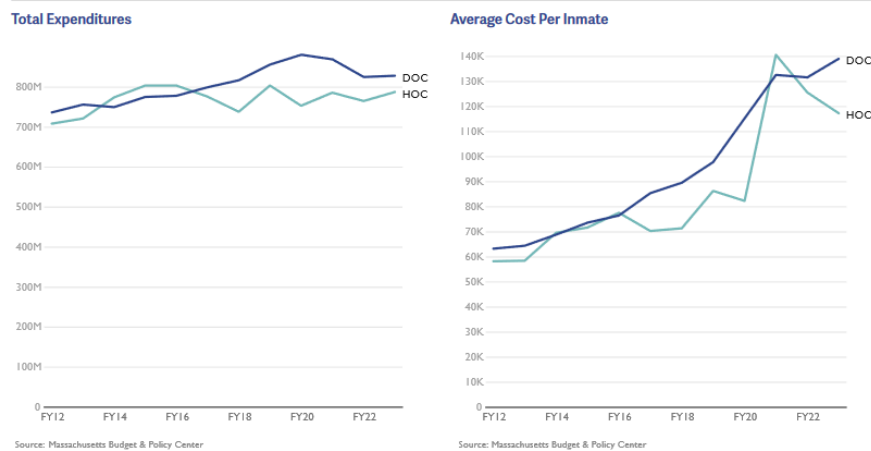
## F. Community Safety

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 community safety, police accountability, and criminal legal reform.

I believe in community safety through investment, not incarceration. Massachusetts spends over \$100,000 per year to incarcerate one person, money that could instead be invested in housing, education, mental health, and reentry. I have consistently supported policies to reform the criminal justice system as a legislator.

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

As Co-Chair of the Task Force on Justice-Involved Women, I visit MCI Framingham regularly and have focused on the specific needs of incarcerated women. I've filed legislation for women's reentry programs, family transportation to prisons, and record expungement for trafficking survivors. I secured \$175,000 in Fair Share funds for the Tufts TUPIT Prison Education program, which will bring new college and reentry resources for justice-involved women. I have also been very engaged in the proposed renovations and building at MCI Framingham, and engaged the Administration with questions about the efficacy of the project.

I was proud to champion the 2018 Criminal Justice Reform law, and I support continuing this work by ending mandatory minimums for drug offenses, eliminating qualified immunity, establishing DOC oversight, and automatic record sealing. Racial disparities in our criminal legal system are unacceptable, and reform must center the communities most harmed by decades of overpolicing. I'm committed to continuing the work on this issue.

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

- b. Raising the age of criminal majority from 18 to 21, in line with research that shows that young offenders served by a juvenile system are much less likely to reoffend and more likely to successfully transition to adulthood? **YES**
  - c. Decriminalizing consensual sexual activity between adolescents, by creating an exception to the statutory rape law for youth close in age? Massachusetts is one of only three states that criminalizes consensual sexual activity between two adolescents. **YES**
  - d. Eliminating the sentence of life without parole, which is costly and has been shown to be racist in its application? **YES**
  - e. Restructuring joint venture sentencing such that accomplices to murder are sentenced proportionally to their level of responsibility for a death rather than a minimum sentence of life without parole? **YES**
5. **DOC Oversight -- I.** Would you support legislation to establish an inspector general for the Department of Correction? **YES**
  6. **DOC Oversight -- II.** Massachusetts legislators have the statutory right to make unannounced visits to correctional facilities run by the state. Would you commit to visiting, whether announced or scheduled, Department of Corrections facilities as a state legislator? **YES, I do this regularly.**
  7. **Solitary Confinement.** Would you support legislation to create universal access to productive out of cell time with programming, education and vocational training for all incarcerated people? **YES**
  8. **Prison Moratorium.** Would you support a moratorium on the construction of new prisons and jails in the Commonwealth? **YES**
  9. **Keeping Families Connected.** Would you support eliminating the arbitrary, unnecessary restrictions on visitation rights in prisons and jails? **YES**
  10. **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? **YES**
    - b. Requiring the immediate sealing of a criminal offense if the charge did not end in a conviction? **YES**

11. **Reentry.** The Department of Correction's stated mission is to "prepare [individuals in custody] for safe and successful reentry into the community," but regularly fails to live up to that. Do you support the following measures to strengthen reentry efforts...
  - a. Mandating that correctional facilities in Massachusetts assist incarcerated individuals in acquiring valid Massachusetts identification cards before their release? **YES**
  - b. Increasing funding for reentry-related programming? **YES**
12. **Gun Violence Prevention.** Will you vote YES to protect the 2024 gun safety bill on the ballot in November 2026? **YES, I worked closely on drafting this bill.**

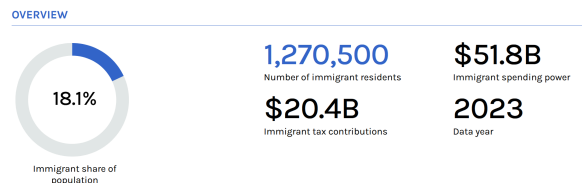
## G. A Humane Immigration System

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.

Since Trump took office in January, ICE has escalated its activities in Massachusetts, terrorizing immigrant communities. ICE arrests have gone up by more than [250%](#) since last year, driven by their targeting of individuals without criminal records. ICE has brutalized children, torn families apart, and engaged in rampant racial profiling.

Our immigrant communities are helping to keep our communities healthy, they are innovating and educating, and they are helping us build a better future for all of us.

**Immigrants are a major part of MA's economic prosperity. ([Source](#))**



1. Please share your principles and proposals regarding welcoming and protecting our immigrant communities.

A key principle of mine in advocating for immigrant communities is, first and foremost, listening to those most impacted, immigrants and organizations working directly on their behalf. It's from those conversations in my district that many ideas for legislation have come, whether it be the Work and Family Mobility Act or the Dignity Not Deportations bill. I'm proud to have been able to build powerful coalitions to pass crucial legislation in this area.

This session, I was the first legislator to file the Dignity Not Deportations bill, banning state and local police from being deputized as ICE agents. That bill is now a cornerstone of the PROTECT Act package led by the Black and Latino Legislative Caucus.

With a federal administration terrorizing immigrant families, Massachusetts must be a firewall. I will fight for every protection available, and I have the record to prove I deliver.

2. Optional/As Applicable: Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on welcoming and protecting our immigrant communities (legislation,

community work, published writings, etc.).

Immigrant justice has been central to my legislative career. I was the lead House sponsor of the Work and Family Mobility Act, the most significant expansion of immigrant rights law passed in Massachusetts in years. When opponents tried to repeal it at the ballot, I helped organize and win the Yes on 4 campaign.

This session, I was the first legislator to file the Dignity Not Deportations bill, banning state and local police from being deputized as ICE agents. That bill is now a cornerstone of the PROTECT Act package led by the Black and Latino Legislative Caucus.

I continue to support funding for the immigrant legal defense fund, Safe Communities Act, and policies to keep ICE out of our communities.

3. **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? **YES**
  - b. Prohibiting any new 287(g) agreements, i.e., agreements in which state and local law enforcement are deputized to act as ICE agents? **YES, I am the lead sponsor.**
  - c. Calling on Gov. Healey to end the Department of Correction's 287(g) agreement with ICE, the only such contract in New England and the only such contract in a state with a Democratic governing trifecta? **YES**
  - d. Prohibiting local law enforcement from assisting ICE such as by allowing ICE to use facilities, properties, and equipment or providing information to ICE such as relating to upcoming court appearances? **YES**
4. **Language Access.** Would you support building 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? **YES**
5. **Immigrant Legal Aid.** In 2025, the MA Legislature created a new fund to provide cost-free legal services to immigrants at risk of deportation. Would you support increasing the funding for the program and codifying the fund into law? **YES**
6. **Community Trust and Accountability.** Would you support legislation to ban former ICE or Border Patrol agents from serving as police officers, teachers, or other public employees in Massachusetts? **YES**

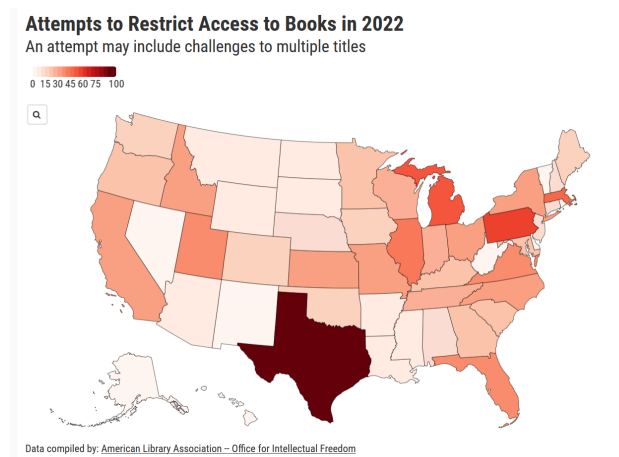
## H. A Welcoming Society

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, efforts to ban LGBTQ-friendly books are not just a "red state" problem but unfortunately far too common here at home.

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.

Massachusetts must live up to its self-image as a leader in social progress. I'm proud to currently be representing the district where Carl Sciortino bravely took on the conservative, homophobic establishment in one of the most dramatic elections of the same-sex marriage fight. That history is incredibly inspiring in pressing forward to continue the work of expanding and protecting our rights.

I've championed LGBTQ+ rights throughout my career. I voted for the ROE Act, the shield law, and every piece of gender-affirming care legislation during my tenure. I filed trans-inclusive health care legislation (H.1037) to ensure health care access for

transgender individuals.

I support the right to read and oppose book bans that disproportionately target LGBTQ+ content. I support comprehensive, inclusive sex education and racially and LGBTQ-inclusive curricula. I will fight to ensure Massachusetts remains a refuge state for families seeking gender-affirming care and for anyone fleeing states that have criminalized their identity.

I believe in protecting the right to read, strong personal privacy, and ensuring our schools teach accurate, inclusive histories. Book bans, surveillance of immigrants and women seeking care, and erasure of marginalized communities' contributions are all threats we must actively resist at the state level.

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

I've filed Indigenous Peoples Day legislation, anti-discrimination housing bills across three consecutive sessions, hate crime reform legislation across multiple sessions, and trans-inclusive health care bills. As House Chair of the Women's Caucus, I work to advance gender equity, reproductive justice, and support for survivors.

3. **Right to Read.** 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**
4. **Data Privacy.** In recent years, we have seen the dangers of unregulated data markets: right-wing groups tracking women seeking abortion care, domestic abusers tracking partners/exes, ICE agents tracking immigrants, and much more.
  - a. Do you support passing legislation to ban companies from selling our sensitive data, such as biometric and location information? **YES**
  - b. Do you support applying a private right of action to privacy laws, to ensure consumers have access to the civil court system when companies violate the law? **YES**
5. **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? **YES, I am the lead sponsor.**
6. **School Mascots.** Would you support legislation to prohibit the use of Native American mascots in Massachusetts public schools? **YES**

## I. 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, 2010-2024					
Year	Open seats	Incs. in contested primaries	Major party competition	Competitiveness Index	Rank
2010	17.0%	8.4%	48.0%	24.5	39 / 44
2012	5.0%	10.0%	33.0%	16.0	44 / 44
2014	11.0%	9.6%	38.5%	19.7	39 / 44
2016	6.5%	10.7%	23.0%	13.4	44 / 44
2018	12.0%	11.4%	30.0%	17.8	44 / 44
2020	7.5%	12.4%	21.0%	13.6	44 / 44
2022	12.0%	11.9%	30.0%	18.0	44 / 44
2024	9.5%	9.9%	20.0%	13.1	44 / 44

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

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Turnout (Nov 2022)</u>
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.

Democracy requires transparency, accountability, and participation. I believe legislators owe constituents clear explanations of their votes, regular accessibility, and a commitment to open government.

I support making the public records law apply to all three branches of government. I support same-day voter registration, removing the inactive voter list barrier, and ranked choice voting.

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

I worked to open up the processes of the legislature to create the most transparent and accountable House Rules we have had, by advocating strongly to House leadership. I voted for a Rules package this session that makes Committee votes and testimony public. As a Committee Chair, I am directly responsible for the implementation of legislative rules that empower members and increase transparency, and work hard to uphold these standards.

As a legislator, I've prioritized constituent engagement through regular communication and community presence. I will continue that in the Senate.

3. **Accessibility.** Central to good government is accessibility and responsiveness. Would you commit to the following?

- a. Sending out a newsletter that includes explanations of recent votes at least once per month? **YES**

- b. Holding office hours on weeknights or weekends at least once per month? **YES**

- c. Holding town halls in your district at least twice per year? **YES**

4. **Public Records Law.** Massachusetts is the only state where the Governor's Office, the Legislature, and the Judiciary claim full exemptions from the public records laws. Do you support the ballot initiative to eliminate these exemptions? **YES**

5. **Legislative Accountability.** Massachusetts's system of 'leadership stipends' is an outlier among the 50 states. Do you support the ballot initiative to reform this system to create a fairer pay structure and hold committees to higher standards of transparency and productivity? **YES**

6. **Legislative Research Bureau.** The Massachusetts legislature is the only legislature in the nation without a professional, non-partisan research bureau. Would you support the creation of such an office? **YES**

7. **Expanding Access to Public Meetings.** Would you support updating Open Meeting

Law so that people can choose to participate remotely in public meetings on a permanent basis and providing the necessary funds to municipalities to implement this? **YES**

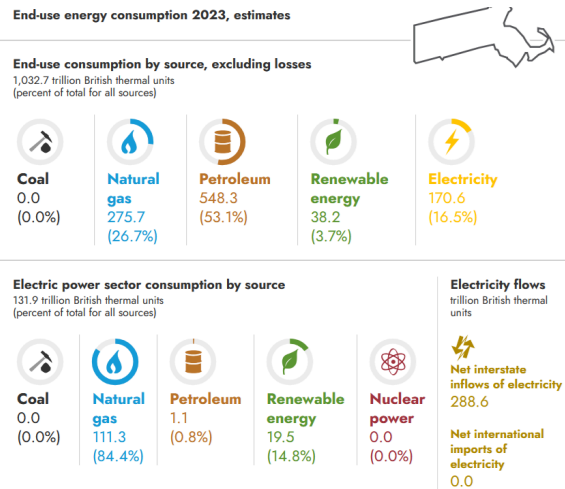
8. **Same Day Registration.** Massachusetts lags behind other states in making voting accessible for all. Do you support eliminating Massachusetts's arbitrary and exclusionary 10-day voter registration cutoff and allowing voters to register or update their registration at the polls on Election Day and during the early voting period? **YES**
9. **Inactive Voter Lists.** Massachusetts is the *only* state in the country where voters are placed on the Inactive Voter List—one step before being removed from the voter rolls—if they fail to return our annual municipal census. Do you support removing this barrier to participation? **YES**
10. **Ranked Choice Voting.** Would you support legislation to allow cities and towns to adopt ranked choice voting in local elections? **YES**
11. **Universal Voting Rights.** Would you support restoring the franchise to incarcerated individuals serving time for felony convictions (Their right to vote was taken away by ballot twenty years ago)? **YES**

## J. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection

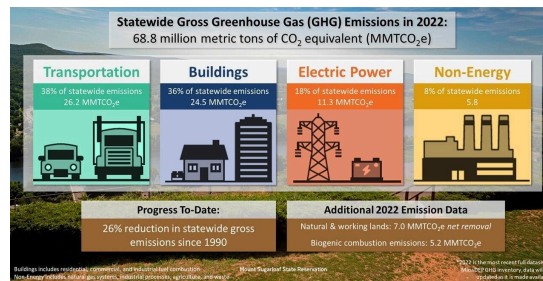
As a coastal state, Massachusetts will be hit particularly hard by climate change, but we are not responding with the necessary urgency. Massachusetts has ambitious and necessary greenhouse gas reduction goals, but we are [not on track](#) to meet them. Our state remains overly dependent on fossil fuels like oil and gas despite the pollution and myriad public health harms they produce and the ample [data](#) showing that we must leave fossil fuels in the ground. As we now face a federal government hostile to renewable and climate action, the responsibility lies with state government to take leadership in accelerating a green energy 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: it would need [more than \\$24 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.**



**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.

We have an imperative to urgently address climate change, and my legislative record shows the dedication to the issue. I have prioritized environmental justice communities that are most impacted by climate change in my work.

As current Chair of the Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, I am advancing the \$3 billion MassReady Act environmental bond bill to fund climate resilience, clean water, food security, and environmental protection statewide.

I fought to protect net zero targets and kill the pipeline tax in the recent House energy bill. I am championing a bill to address air pollution in environmental justice communities. I am working to make Somerville the next fossil-fuel free community through my bill.

At a time when the federal government is dismantling environmental protections, Massachusetts must lead, and I am on the front lines.

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

I helped pass the electric bus mandate, requiring all new MBTA buses to be electric by 2030, full fleet by 2040. I've filed bills on net zero building standards, municipal fleet electrification, fare free buses and clean transportation. I secured \$1 million for offshore wind innovation. I championed the Green Line Extension, the first expansion of the subway in a generation, and helped to secure funding for the project.

3. **Fossil Fuel Infrastructure.** Do you oppose the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure in the state? **YES**
4. **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? **YES**
5. **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? **YES**
6. **Banning Predatory Industry Practices.** Third-party electricity suppliers notoriously give confusing or misleading offers and often target low-income and older adults. Would you support banning third-party electricity suppliers that sell directly to residents? **YES**
7. **Utility Accountability.** Would you support legislation that restricts investor-owned

utilities' profits, including but not limited their ability to recover lobbying, advertisement, trade association dues, and investor relations expenses on utility bills?  
**YES**

8. **Data Centers.** Data centers across Massachusetts and the country have been driving heavier energy and water usage, leading to higher costs for everyday customers. Would you support the following measures...?
  - a. Requiring primary-use data centers to pay for the cost of utility infrastructure upgrades, procure renewable back-up energy sources, and provide quarterly water and energy usage data? **YES**
  - b. Imposing a moratorium on new large-load data centers while a commission is convened to define appropriate community and environmental regulations?  
**YES**
  - c. Repealing tax exemptions for data centers? **YES**
9. **Plastic Bag Ban.** Would you support a statewide ban on single-use plastic bags?  
**YES**
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 MBTA to operate an all-electric system by 2035? **YES**
11. **Free Public Transit.** Do you support making public transit in the Commonwealth fare-free? **YES**

### **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.

The throughline of my work is simple: values are only as powerful as our ability to translate them into policy. Sharing the right values is necessary, but it isn't enough. You also have to build the relationships, draft the bills, organize the coalitions, and push them through committees until they reach the Governor's desk.

That work is never done alone. The Work and Family Mobility Act took 17 years of advocacy by immigrant communities, faith leaders, labor unions, and a coalition of legislators before we won. The Dignity Not Deportations bill came from working in close partnership with the Black and Latino Legislative Caucus and immigrant rights organizers. The prescription copay law was built with health equity advocates and patient groups. The Green Line Extension required years of partnership with riders, neighborhood groups, and transit advocates. Every win on my record exists because I worked alongside the communities most affected, listened to advocates and frontline workers, and stayed at the table until we got it across the finish line.

That is the kind of Senator I will be. I will continue working in coalition with progressive movements, labor, immigrant rights, climate justice, reproductive rights, housing justice, and educators, to deliver real wins for working people. Progressive voters deserve a Senator who not only shares their values, but has a proven record of turning those values into law. I am ready on day one to keep doing exactly that.