



PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS
2026 Legislative
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate: Erika Uyterhoeven

Office Sought: State Senator, Second Middlesex

Party: Democrat

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OVERVIEW

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

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

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

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

*Each section contains open-ended questions and YES/NO questions. **If the question is a YES/NO question, please answer either YES or NO.** 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 am running for State Senate to fight for working people across Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, and Winchester, even when that means challenging the people who currently hold power and corporate interests. I am the proud daughter of a Japanese immigrant single mother who worked as a union flight attendant. I grew up watching corporations bust her union and destroy the company she worked for. That story has played out for working people across this country for decades, and I ran for office to fight back and build a government that works for all of us.

My top 3 priorities are: (1) Housing affordability: rent stabilization, TOPA, real estate transfer fees, and massive investment in public and social housing. (2) Raising progressive revenue and reversing decades-long austerity policies so we can fully fund our schools, public transportation, and social services. (3) Workers' rights: restoring the right to strike, living wages for all workers, and protecting workers from corporate exploitation.

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 immigrant mother, I understand both the struggles working people face and the mechanisms by which corporations rig the rules in their favor.

In three terms as State Representative, I have a track record of challenging and materially changing the political structure of the State House, and through that passing bills and delivering significant tangible wins for our communities. We know from decades of stagnation that making incremental changes within the broken status quo and re-enforcing the concentrated power structure does not work. It is a complete disservice to our communities that are in crisis.

I have passed a law ending predatory broker fees for renters, doubled funding for affordable housing in Somerville, won the fight to make committee votes and testimony public for the first time. The transparency wins has real consequences: I worked alongside climate advocates to block an energy bill loaded with MAGA / Project 2025-inspired poison pills and helped pass a far better bill from the House. I investigated the Healey administration's sole-source \$12.9 million AI contract with OpenAI and filed novel legislation, the Digital Commonwealth Act, to protect all of us from predatory abuse of AI. When legislators claimed there was nothing we could do about ICE at the state level, I shifted attention and narrative back to state policy and we passed the PROTECT Act.

I am so often the only legislator willing to speak out on these issues to shift the narrative and sharpen our advocacy and organizing. Before taking office, I co-founded Act on Mass

and served as National Organizing Director for the Bernie Sanders 2016 presidential campaign. I will bring that fight and my experiences to the Senate.

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

Yes. To me, being progressive means understanding that our system is fundamentally rigged in favor of corporations, the wealthy, and the well connected, and that the role of government is to restructure that system so everyone can live with dignity. It means fighting for housing, health care, and education as human rights. It means centering racial, economic, and environmental justice in every policy decision. And it means having the courage to challenge the powerful interests that stand in our way, including within our own party. I co-founded Act on Mass to hold our supermajority Democratic legislature accountable. Being progressive is not just about voting the right way. It is about being willing to organize, build coalitions, and take political risks for our core values, our movements, and our communities.

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?

Our State House concentrates too much power to a few individuals, including the Senate President, the Speaker, and the Governor, as well as well-connected lobbyists representing corporate interests. We also have an insidious dominant culture that prioritizes “going along to get along” over substantive debate, deliberation, or even meaningful public engagement.

As such many legislators remain silent out of fear of losing access and benefits. The lack of transparency without open meeting law or public records law means it can be difficult for progressive advocates to even know what strategy to take on or who they should engage with to advance legislation. I plan to overcome these obstacles by building broad statewide coalitions that create real political pressure, by continuing to advocate for transparency and rules reform, and by using every tool available to make the case publicly for progressive policies. I am running to bring the organizing energy and coalition-building I built over three terms to push the senate to pass progressive legislation.

5. 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 has a guaranteed debate and vote. I think this would be transformative in Massachusetts, where we file over 7,000 bills and only vote on a small number of substantive bills per year. This would give every legislator the ability to move legislation that matters to their communities and demonstrate to the public and their constituents their true priorities.

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

I facilitated the first live testimony from incarcerated individuals before legislative committees in Massachusetts history, when over 20 women incarcerated at MCI-Framingham testified in favor of the prison moratorium. Building that coalition required organizing across incarcerated individuals, advocates, and my colleagues and House and Senate leadership. As a co-founder of Act on Mass, I built a statewide coalition across labor, progressive advocacy groups, local Democratic Town Committees, elected officials, and community members to fight for State House transparency. When we started, we were told repeatedly that we can't win, that we were daring to touch the "third rail of the legislature". Our coalition organized constituent meetings in over 100 out of 160 districts and was instrumental in winning the fight to make committee votes and testimony public for the first time in decades.

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.

I was honored to receive 100% A+ on my Progressive Massachusetts scorecard this term and have maintained a strong progressive voting record and co-sponsorship record throughout my three terms in office.

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?

I have deep respect for Senator Pat Jehlen and see clear through-lines between her work and mine. Before she held office, Pat was part of Citizens for Participation Politics, a Somerville organization that tracked how legislators voted on progressive issues and published that information in a newsletter she helped write, and handed out as leaflets to voters. That was the direct precursor of the work I did co-founding Act on Mass and winning the fight to make all committee votes and testimony public for the first time in decades. Pat also helped found the Council for Fair School Finance, which sued the state and won the landmark McDuffy decision that forced Massachusetts to fund public schools more equitably. I organized with the Fund Our Future campaign to win the Student Opportunity Act, which was the next chapter of that same fight. Like Pat, we both have clear convictions and a willingness to publicly challenge leadership and the status quo. I am so often the only legislator willing to speak out, whether that means voting against a regressive tax package, calling out the governor's \$12.9 million sole-source AI contract, or blocking an energy bill loaded with MAGA-inspired poison pills. Pat built the progressive foundation for this seat over 50 years of public service. I intend to honor that legacy by fighting just as hard, and just as publicly, for the communities we serve.

II. The Issues

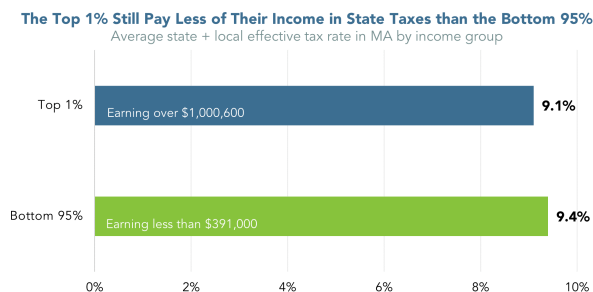
A. Revenue and Taxation

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.

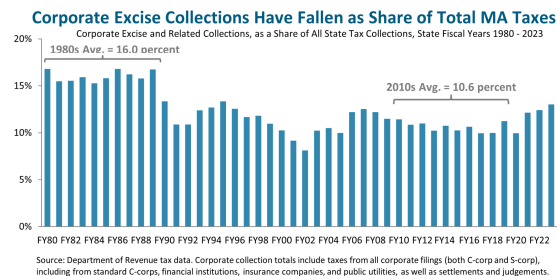
Although we saw a welcome shift when MA voters passed the Fair Share Amendment and added more progressivity to our tax code, the Legislature in 2023 voted to give tax cuts to multi-million-dollar estates, large corporations, and day traders, blunting the full impact of the win. We cannot tax-cut our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

Regressive taxation is immoral. Our taxation system is worse than a flat tax because of its regressive structure. What makes a tax system fair is removing regressive taxes and putting in place progressive taxes. We must fight with the same unrelenting conviction as our opposition does to turn our taxation system right-side up so we can fully fund our schools, public transportation, affordable housing, and infrastructure. With steep federal budget cuts threatening Massachusetts, we must raise new progressive revenue to protect our residents, many of the most marginalized are at risk of losing healthcare or able to make ends meet with ever rising costs. We can meet this moment, but we need the political will. I have fought for legislation and amendments to stop the most regressive and harmful component of Healey tax cuts, the estate tax cut, and have filed legislation to make our tax code more progressive including taxing GILTI, eliminating MBTA fares, and taxing wealthy nonprofits through PILOT reform.

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 \$37M corporate tax cut that was snuck into FY2019 supplemental budget. As a legislator, I was one of two or three Reps who fiercely opposed regressive tax cuts since Governor Baker proposed them in 2022 and when Governor Healey made tax cuts her top priority. I filed the amendment and bill on making the estate tax cut less regressive. I was one of three legislators to vote against the regressive tax package on the House floor. I filed PILOT reform legislation (H.2963) and built a statewide coalition of labor unions, progressive advocacy groups, and municipal leaders. I also worked closely with Mass Budget Policy Center to remove the PPP Double Dip tax break from the Emergency Paid Sick Time bill in 2021.

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, and I'm proud to have filed this legislation with Rep. Natalie Higgins.**
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, thank you for including this question in the questionnaire, I'm proud to have filed this legislation with Senator Pat Jehlen.**
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, I am proud to have filed this legislation (H.2963) and built a statewide coalition to advance it. This is one of my priority bills and I will continue to champion it in the Senate.**
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, Public banks keep capital local by investing in community enterprises and public projects. I am proud to support 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	\$30.58	\$58.26	\$76.55	\$19.63	\$31.61	\$39.61
Poverty Wage	\$7.67	\$10.40	\$13.13	\$5.20	\$6.57	\$7.93
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 union flight attendant for Trans World Airlines. Thanks to her union, my mom had a stable job, earned a living wage, was able to retire with dignity, and I was able to go to college and pursue my dreams. Growing up with a mother in a union showed me how corporations have been busting unions and carving out the American worker since the late 70s. I ran for State Representative to reclaim the State House for the people 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.

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 who publicly supported the Massachusetts State House Employees Union (IBEW 2222) and their right to unionize. I have championed my bills to restore the right to strike for public sector workers (H.2078) and ensure educators are paid a living minimum wage of \$55,000 for paraprofessionals and \$70,000 for teachers. I have been to many strike picket lines and union actions including supporting striking educators, nurses, Starbucks workers, graduate students, and building trades. I filed legislation banning captive audience meetings and expanding PFML and unemployment insurance to graduate workers.

3. **Living 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, Municipal workers and graduate student workers deserve the same rights as all Massachusetts workers and I'm proud to file this legislation with Senator Feeney.**
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! I proudly filed this bill (H.2078) and have worked to build a coalition of advocacy and labor groups to support it.**
8. **State House Unionization.** Would you support legislation to extend collective bargaining rights to State House staff? **YES, and I'm proud to have publicly supported the State House Employees Union since they first went public.**

C. Education

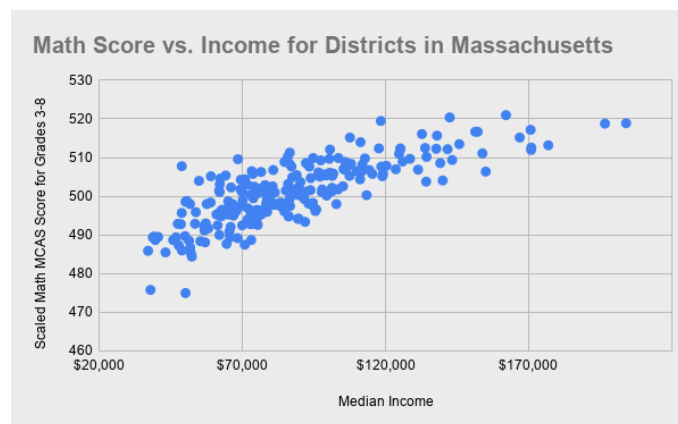
Massachusetts parents and caregivers face the [highest child care and early education costs of any state in the US](#). The average annual cost of infant care in Massachusetts is more than half of what a full-time minimum wage worker earns in a year. These costs are prohibitively expensive for low- and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

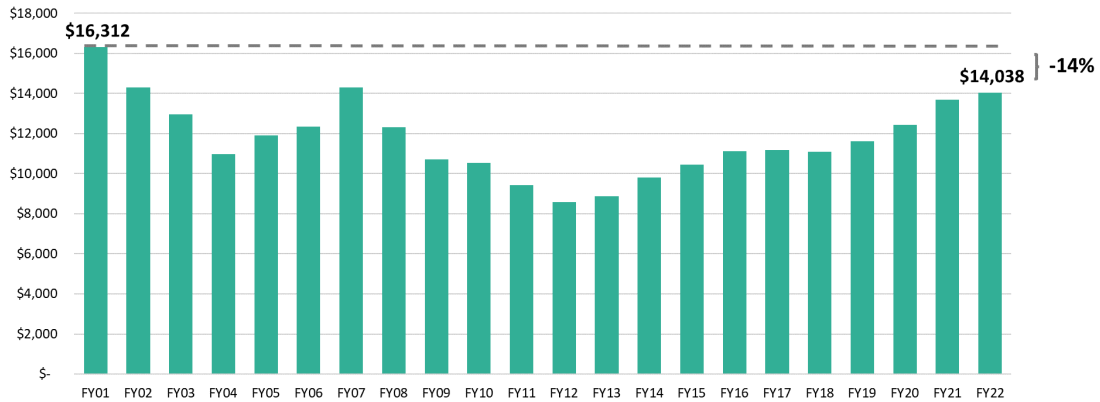
Standardized test scores have a very strong correlation with the income of the school district. ([Source](#))



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.

Public education is the foundation of our democracy. While Massachusetts is often touted as an educational system that scores well, we have deep inequities in how our public education is funded, especially for communities of color, low-income communities, and gateway cities. The Student Opportunity Act was a massive step in the right direction, but the inflation cap glitch has locked in lower levels of aid at exactly the wrong time, and we must fix that gap. We must also invest in the whole student from birth to higher education, meaning universal early education and debt-free higher education. Finally, one key shortcoming to the current Chapter 70 formula is there is nothing factoring educator pay. We must value educators: teachers make 26.4% less than workers with equivalent education and qualifications, and in many districts, paraeducators are paid a meager \$15K-\$29K per year. Not only should one job be enough to teach in our public schools, our budgets should reflect our values and pay educators a fair and dignified salary.

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

I have been the only state legislator to consistently join educators on the picket line and speak in support of their strikes throughout my three terms in office, including in Newton, Brookline, Woburn, Malden, Andover, and rallies in Melrose, Tewksbury, and Somerville. I championed my bill to ensure educators are paid a living minimum wage of \$55,000 for paraprofessionals and \$70,000 for teachers. I

organized with the Fund Our Future campaign to increase public education funding by \$1.5B per year via the Student Opportunity Act.

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, I am vehemently opposed to receivership. It has been applied to schools serving communities of color and immigrant communities and is rooted in racist ideas that marginalized communities cannot govern themselves. The solution is providing communities with resources to thrive, not stripping them of democratic control.**
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, I filed bill H.584 to promote anti-racist education and worked extensively with educators and parents to advance this work.**

- 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**

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

Massachusetts is the 2nd most expensive state for health insurance. 1 in 5 residents are saddled with medical debt. We need a single payer, Medicare-for-all system in Massachusetts, making health care a human right for all residents. We need leadership in the State House that will put people first over profits for the health insurance, hospital, and pharmaceutical industry. With the Trump administration threatening Medicaid and the ACA, Massachusetts must be prepared to step up and protect our residents.

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 advocated for overdose prevention centers by working with Portuguese public health and public safety officials and hosting a conference to bring their expertise to Massachusetts. I worked on legislation to better fund community hospitals and regulate private equity firms like Steward that buy up and strip Massachusetts hospitals. I have cosponsored every Planned Parenthood, Reproductive Equity Now, and RESOLVE New England priority bill, including legislation on doula services, full-spectrum pregnancy care, birth centers, and reproductive health care for incarcerated individuals.

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.**

The need for single payer is the issue that brought me into politics and organizing on the Bernie Sanders presidential campaign in 2016. This is a moral issue. Everyone has the right to health care.

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**

In 2021, Somerville was the first city to pass an ordinance banning crisis pregnancy centers. I would support a complete ban at the state level.

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, I have been working with the Government of Portugal and helped host a conference to bring public health and public safety leaders from Portugal to meet with leaders in Massachusetts including the Governor's administration to learn from Portuguese policies on safe consumption sites. There are more than 100 Safe Consumption Sites in 66 cities and 11 countries around the world, we know they are effective at providing the care people need.**
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**

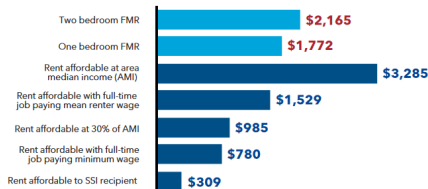
E. Housing

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.

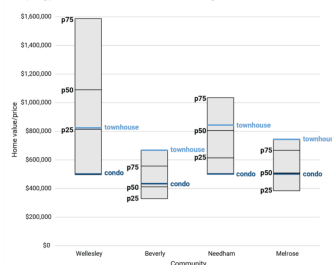
The high cost of housing has led to displacement, and in a growing number of municipalities, the local workforce can no longer afford to live there.

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.

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



Source: Existing home values taken from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey 2014-2018. Prices for new townhouses and condos from Crum, 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.

Since Massachusetts raised the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, roughly 91% of those wage gains have been absorbed by rent increases alone. For too long, policymakers have prioritized the interests of developers over residents, turning the places we call home into investment commodities for profit. Housing is the most expensive purchase we will ever buy or pay out monthly from our wages. Exposing renters and homeowners to wild price fluctuations is inhumane, destructive to our communities, and a market failure. Massachusetts must end the ban on rent control and give cities all the tools they need to address the housing crisis. We must also make massive investments in public and social housing, pass TOPA, pass real estate transfer fees, and reform PILOT so wealthy institutions pay their fair share.

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

I passed a law ending predatory broker fees that were costing Massachusetts renters thousands of dollars. I have fought to end the ban on rent control, pass TOPA, pass real estate transfer fees, and make deep investments in public and social housing. I filed PILOT reform legislation and built a statewide coalition to advance it. I was one of five progressive legislators who voted against the bill that limited shelter stays for families and pregnant people to six months, defending our right-to-shelter protections. I have also advocated for eviction sealing and right to counsel.

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

Governor Healey's response has been inadequate. Time limits on shelter stays will not solve the homelessness crisis. The root cause is a lack of affordable housing, and the solution is massive investment in affordable housing construction, housing-first policies, and addressing the poverty wages, medical debt, and lack of mental health services that push people into homelessness. I was one of five progressive legislators who voted against the bill that imposed time limits.

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, Somerville has filed a transfer fee home rule petition for the last several legislative sessions which I support and have advocated for it and other home rule petitions as well as the local option legislation for the transfer fee.**
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, I filed the Somerville home rule petition for TOPA and will continue to champion statewide TOPA legislation in the Senate.**
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, I was one of only two legislators to vote against HDIP because it had no provisions for affordable housing.**
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**

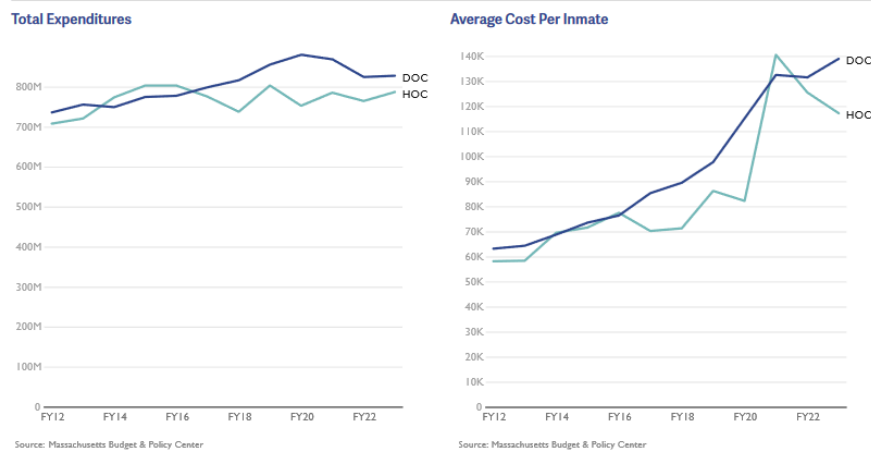
F. Community Safety

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 do not believe the 2018 Criminal Justice Reform Act went far enough, particularly in terms of accountability over the Department of Correction. It created new mandatory minimum sentences when advocates were clear that we need to eliminate them entirely. We must abolish cash bail. It costs nearly \$140,000 per year to incarcerate someone in Massachusetts, while only 2% of the DOC budget is spent on programming and education. Incarcerated people's only option for employment pays less than \$3 a day. The system does nothing to heal or rehabilitate. I am in the fight to decarcerate and reallocate resources into housing, education, and healthcare.

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.).

I worked locally on ensuring police officers stay out of Somerville schools following a horrifying incident when police were called on a 6-year-old Black and Brown student. I fought to ensure the student's records were expunged and for the most comprehensive MOU protecting students from the school-to-prison pipeline. I have advocated against solitary confinement and the DOC's violations of the 2018 CJRA, including conducting multiple unannounced visits to prisons. I facilitated the first live testimony from incarcerated individuals before legislative committees in Massachusetts history. Working with incarcerated advocates, I have researched and drafted original reports on how the DOC systematically overrides individuals into higher security than necessary. Had DOC followed its own objective points-based system and had bail reform, there would be only 20 or so women incarcerated at MCI-Framingham, where the Governor is pushing to spend over \$360M on more prison construction. I am one of only a handful of legislators who has openly criticized the governor for her choice to pursue prison construction especially when we are in a budget crisis. Finally, I'm proud of filing legislation for Elder Parole and restoring the right to vote for incarcerated people both of which has advanced through the committee process.

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 have visited correctional facilities 1-2 times a month consistently throughout my terms in the legislature, including unannounced visits.**
 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, I would also continue to work with CJR advocates to ultimately ban the practice of solitary confinement entirely.**
 8. **Prison Moratorium.** Would you support a moratorium on the construction of new prisons and jails in the Commonwealth? **YES, I submitted testimony in favor of the moratorium and have been working with incarcerated women at MCI-Framingham, activists, and colleagues to ensure no new prisons or jails are built.**
 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**

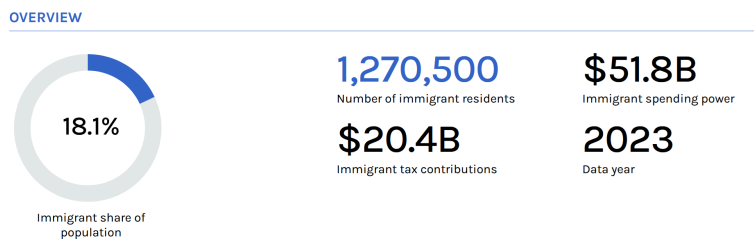
G. A Humane Immigration System

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.

Every person in Massachusetts must be able to live, work, and access public services without fear of detention or deportation. I was driven to get involved with state advocacy during the Trump administration when the Massachusetts legislature failed to pass any legislation to protect immigrants. As a daughter of immigrants and as a legislator having the immense privilege of representing so many immigrants in my community I believe our state must build the protections and do everything we can to get ICE out of Massachusetts.

I voted for the PROTECT Act (H.4507) and the Work and Family Mobility Act in the House and I have supported the Safe Communities Act for many years. The PROTECT Act was an important step, but it fell short in critical ways: the House version only bans the initiation of contact with ICE rather than imposing a broader communication ban and it carves out the Department of Correction's 287(g) agreement. That agreement has funneled 2,047 people from state prisons into deportation since 2009. Massachusetts is the only Democrat-led state with this agreement. In the Senate, I will fight to close those gaps, terminate the DOC's 287(g) agreement, and end ICE detention in Massachusetts.

Restricting individual officer conduct is not enough. The BRIC gang database is

97.7% people of color, and ICE has direct query access to it. Neither version of the PROTECT Act prohibits that access. If ICE already has query access to a database that local police populate, no officer has to do anything for that information to flow. I will push for legislation that addresses data architecture and information flow for gang databases, license plate readers, and biometric data from arrests, not just individual officer behavior.

I support fully funding the Immigrant Legal Defense Act (S.1127/H.1954) to make legal representation for immigrants in removal proceedings permanent. Massachusetts took an important step with the \$5 million Access to Counsel Initiative, but we need \$15 million in permanent funding. No one must face deportation without representation.

Our immigrant neighbors must be able to send their kids to school, go to the hospital, and access the courts without fear. I support driver's licenses for all residents regardless of immigration status, in-state tuition for undocumented students, and municipal voting rights for noncitizens. ICE conducted at least 54 arrests at Boston courthouses in 2025. Schools, hospitals, and courthouses must be off-limits to immigration enforcement and I support those provisions in the Senate version of the PROTECT Act.

As a Japanese American, the parallel between what is happening now and the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II is deeply personal to me. My community was targeted, rounded up, and incarcerated based on race and national origin, justified by "national security." We must do everything we can to protect our immigrant communities.

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.).

I voted for the PROTECT Act (H.4507) in the House. I then dug into the bill's gaps and published a multi-part newsletter series identifying the DOC 287(g) carve-out, the "satisfaction of an imposed sentence" exception that permits ICE notification upon release, and the failure to address ICE's query access to police databases like BRIC. I believe my constituents must understand what the bill does and does not do.

I fought the proposal to bring police back into Somerville schools because of the deportation pipeline risk: any officer as a mandatory reporter is required to file incident reports and enter information into police databases, and there is nothing in current law or in either version of the PROTECT Act that prevents that information from reaching ICE through shared database infrastructure.

I co-founded Act on Mass, which has tracked and advocated for the Safe

Communities Act since the organization's founding. I support the full Safe Communities Act and have cosponsored immigrant protection legislation in every term I have served.

I have shown up in person when our neighbors are threatened or when there is an ICE alert, coordinated with local organizations, supported know-your-rights workshop efforts, and used my office to advocate directly with federal officials. I also led the fight to pass the first-in-the-nation BDS ballot question in Somerville and filed Massachusetts's Israel pension divestment bill (H.2984) as the lead sponsor.

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**
 - 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, the DOC's 287(g) agreement with ICE is the only such contract in New England and the only one in a state with a Democratic governing trifecta. It must be ended immediately.**
 - 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, language access has been one of the top priorities for the AAPI caucus which I am a proud member of.**
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**

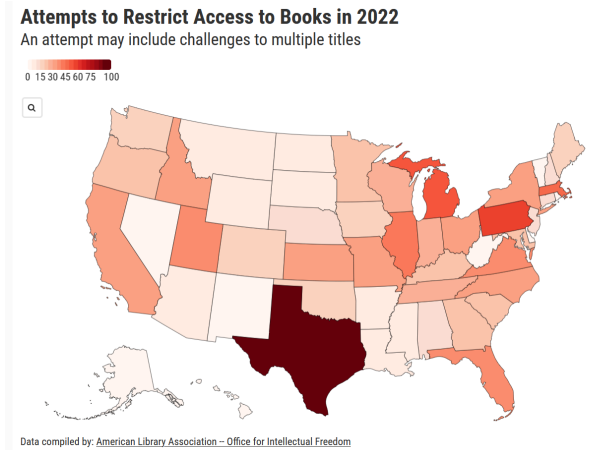
H. A Welcoming Society

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.

As a Japanese American and the daughter of an immigrant, building a welcoming and inclusive society is deeply personal to me. Since taking office, I have fought to expand protections for all residents regardless of race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or background. I was one of very few legislators to vote against the age-based social media ban bill that was opposed by LGBTQIA+ organizations for its harm to queer youth seeking community online. With the Trump administration attacking the rights of LGBTQ people, immigrants, and communities of color, Massachusetts must stand firm. We must protect our residents, not retreat.

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

In the legislature, I filed divestment legislation related to Palestine, publicly supported the State House Employees Workplace Organization, and filed and championed ethnic studies curriculum legislation. I advocated for and we unanimously passed the Massachusetts Parentage Act. I cosponsored the Gender X Bill and pushed for its passage in the House, and have co-sponsored all the bills in the Massachusetts Indigenous Legislative Agenda. I also participated in the 2026 Japanese American Leadership Delegation, which deepened my commitment to fighting for communities that have been historically marginalized and to ensuring Massachusetts leads on inclusion and equity.

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**
 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.

Prior to serving as State Representative, I co-founded Act on Mass 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. As a candidate I have put a strong focus on field and community engagement. My 2020 race brought in nearly 400 volunteers and resulted in a 50% turnout for a Democratic primary. I continued to knock doors (over 5,000 doors per year) during off-election years. In my Senate race, I am focused on bringing that same energy to all four communities in the district.

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. I won the fight to make committee votes and testimony public for the first time in the history of the Massachusetts legislature. I have filed legislation to apply the same open meeting law requirements to the legislature as is required for city councils and school committees. I support extending public records law to the Governor and Legislature. I was one of 64 Representatives to vote against the amendment that killed same-day voter registration. I also filed H.26, a constitutional amendment to restore voting rights for incarcerated individuals, which advanced out of committee for the first time.

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**

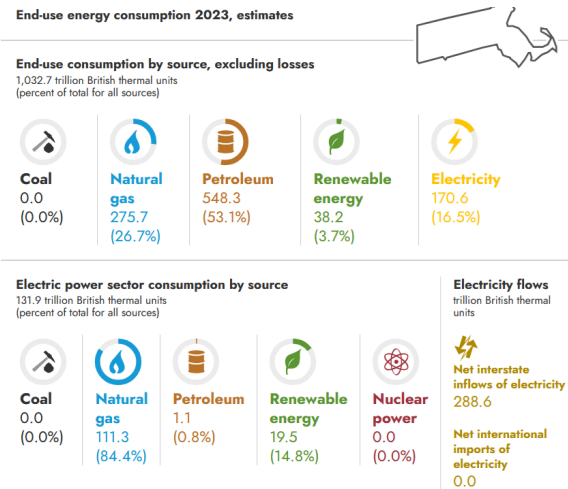
7. **Expanding Access to Public Meetings.** Would you support updating Open Meeting Law so that people can choose to participate remotely in public meetings on a permanent basis and providing the necessary funds to municipalities to implement this? **YES**
8. **Same Day Registration.** Massachusetts 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, I'm proud to file this legislation and successfully advance it out of committee.**

J. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection

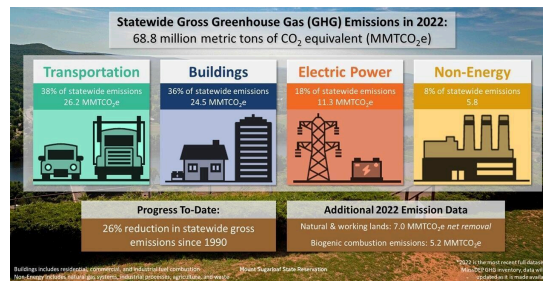
As a coastal state, Massachusetts will be hit particularly hard by climate change, but we are not responding with the necessary urgency. Massachusetts has ambitious and necessary greenhouse gas reduction goals, but we are [not on track](#) to meet them. Our state remains overly dependent on fossil fuels 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.

Over 90,000 homes in Massachusetts are at risk of flooding due to sea level rise, and we are not responding with the urgency this crisis demands. We must pass a Massachusetts Green New Deal that gets us to 100% renewable energy by investing in public transportation, zero carbon housing and buildings, and conservation. The Green New Deal must empower environmental justice communities and workers most affected by the transition to a green economy. With the federal government now hostile to climate action, the responsibility falls squarely on state government. We must hold utility companies accountable, ban new fossil fuel infrastructure, electrify our transportation system, and invest over \$1.6 billion more annually into the MBTA.

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

During the recent debate on the energy bill, I was one of very few legislators to call out the bill for being falsely called energy affordability for gutting Mass Save. In reality, this bill hands Eversource and National Grid more procurement to continue raising energy bills while scapegoating and gutting Mass Save, a vital program we should be investing in. I'm proud to have filed and fought for the amendments to bring more transparency for ratepayers and save Mass Save.

I have supported local fights on behalf of environmental justice communities in Somerville, including protecting residents adjacent to I-93 and fighting to hold Eversource and National Grid accountable for gas leaks. I have been a vocal advocate for funding over \$1.6 billion more annually into the MBTA. I filed a bill to get Massachusetts to carbon neutral by 2030 and worked with the Sunrise Movement to push for 100% renewable energy.

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**

Large areas of Somerville are built around a state-owned highway. My constituents live with the health effects every day, including elevated rates of cardiovascular disease, asthma, and leukemia. The sooner we electrify, and invest in public transit to reduce the number of vehicles on our highways, the better for our environmental justice communities.

11. **Free Public Transit.** Do you support making public transit in the Commonwealth fare-free? **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 and enrich our lives. By eliminating fares, we can establish a right to mobility and ensure that everyone, regardless of income, race, or zip code, has access to these fundamental rights.

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.

I am proud of my work on AI accountability and transparency. I filed the Digital Commonwealth Act to require transparency in how state agencies use AI systems that affect residents' lives. I investigated the Healey administration's sole-source \$12.9 million contract with OpenAI and exposed gaps in data protection and vendor oversight. I am the only legislator to publicly call out this contract. Massachusetts must lead on ensuring that technology serves the public interest, not corporate profit, and I will continue this fight in the Senate.