



PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS
2022 Legislative
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate: Erika Uyterhoeven

Office Sought: State Representative

District: 27th Middlesex

Party: Democratic Party

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OVERVIEW

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

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

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

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

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

Issue Subsections:

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

I. About You & Your Governing Approach

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

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

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

2. What prepares you to serve in this capacity?

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

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

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

Our legislature, particularly the House, is full of career politicians who value getting along with leadership and the perks that come with it over doing the right thing for

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

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

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

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

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

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

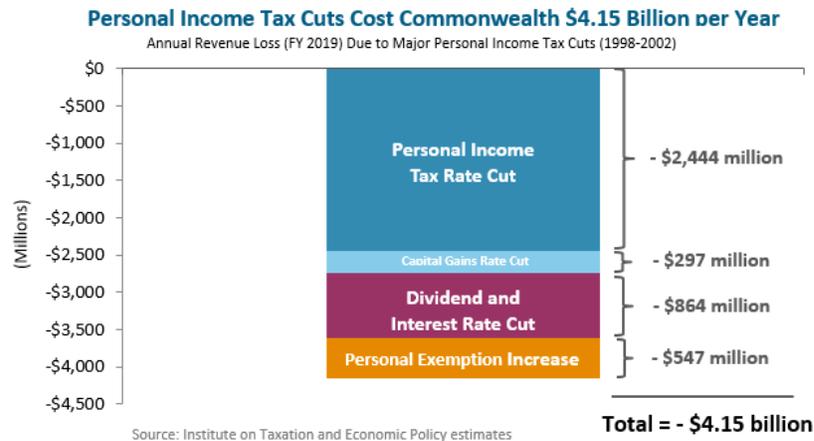
I was excited and honored to receive 100% A+ for my first Progressive Massachusetts scorecard.

II. The Issues

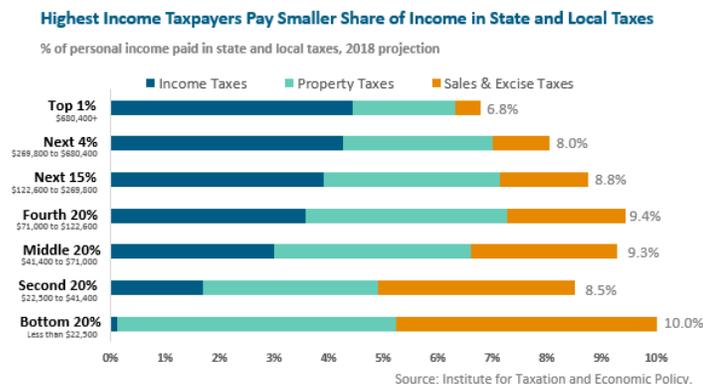
A. Revenue and Taxation

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

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



Massachusetts state and local taxes are regressive.



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

Regressive taxation is criminal. Even the most extreme, right-wing libertarian at worst believes in a flat tax, which is still deeply inequitable, but our taxation system is even worse than that because of its regressive structure. We must both educate our constituents on this inequity and fight with the same unrelenting conviction as our opposition does, to fight to turn our taxation system right-side up to a progressive taxation system.

I have fought to ensure we have progressive taxation in the MA House of Representatives. First, I led the effort to eliminate a controversial and detrimental corporate tax break from becoming law in the Fiscal Year 2019 supplemental budget (Amendment #60). I worked directly with State Representatives to ensure they filed amendments to remove this corporate tax break and mobilized over 1000 Act on Mass members to call their Representatives and Senators to vote against this tax break. Ultimately, we won because the MA Senate refused to include this tax break in conference committee.

Second, through my capacity as cofounder of Act on Mass, I pushed Rep. Mike Connolly to file an amendment to the budget in spring 2018 on a capital gains tax. Act on Mass organized several phonebanks, calling constituents in districts with Reps who were on the fence. Following our work, over 30 State Reps co-sponsored this amendment. Unfortunately, Rep Connolly decided to withdraw the amendment and Act on Mass and Progressive Mass issued a joint press release that received press coverage on the issue of the need for a capital gains tax.

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

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

YES.

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

YES.

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

YES.

In general, I am extremely skeptical of the idea that tax breaks generate economic activity in our state. It often seems to be a way to capture extra money for corporations who were already planning to work in our state. When

a tax break has been proposed, I have filed amendments as lines of defenses. Both to remove the corporate tax break from the bill and to add provisions that ensure the benefits are entirely or largely going to their workers, not their shareholders or executives. If corporations are going to beg the public for aid and receive special treatment, they must be held to a much higher standard. This is what I did working in partnership with Mass Budget Policy Center to remove the PPP Double Dip tax break that was snuck into the Emergency Paid Sick Time bill last year.

In addition, before I vote in favor of adding/maintaining any tax breaks, I want to see an analysis that shows how the Commonwealth can reasonably expect to see more tax revenue after giving the tax break than before. I think very few corporations will even offer such an analysis and that shows the tax breaks are just about profit for them.

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

YES. Absolutely, this is a first step. I believe we need to pass Fair Share and then come back to fight for an even more progressive income tax system overall.

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

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

YES. I do not believe the corporate minimum tax rates as included in the House transportation bill passed in early 2019 are high enough. Act on Mass put out a public statement on this and I have spoken publicly with many constituents that if I were in the State House then, I would have pushed for a progressive corporate minimum tax to fund transportation. The largest corporations ought to be paying a higher rate.

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

YES.

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

YES.

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

YES.

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

YES.

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

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

YES.

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

YES.

Absolutely yes to both. I am proud to have filed H.3080 and work in partnership with Senator Gomez who filed S.1874. As one of my priority bills, we have built a statewide coalition of labor unions, progressive advocacy groups (such as Progressive Massachusetts) and municipal leaders to fight for this bill and to support municipal leaders and local community groups in fighting for and negotiating for the best PILOT agreement in their city or town. I am very excited to share that this bill is still in consideration in the Committee on Revenue, which I serve on. Thank you to Progressive Massachusetts for being an early supporter and endorsee of this legislation!

I am also proud to have worked with Rep Robinson on her bill to require the DOR to collect data on the financial impact of lost tax revenue from tax-exempt institutions. Our coalition Massachusetts Action for Pilot filed this bill together with H.3080 as complementary bills.

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

YES. The idea of a Massachusetts public bank has been gaining momentum this session. It would be a way to help groups and individuals that are often rejected by large corporate conglomerates.

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

YES. I serve on the Committee on Public Service where many of the divestment bills are assigned and I dissented against the recommendation of the chairs to send these bills to study.

B. Jobs and the Economy

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

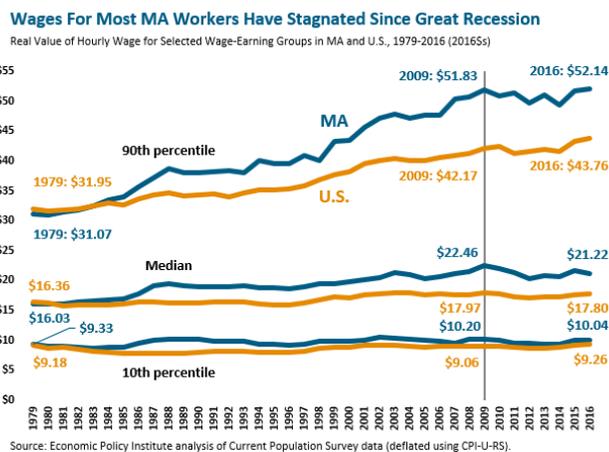
In recent decades, unions have been under attack. However, unions played—and continue to play—a pivotal role in creating a strong middle class. With weaker unions (or no unions at all) come weaker social and economic rights and an imbalanced economy.

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



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

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



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

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

This issue is deeply personal for me because I was raised by a mom who, as a member of a union, benefited immensely from the contracts negotiated by her union. Thanks to her union, my mom had a stable job and earned a living wage. Thanks to her union, I was able to go to college. I truly am who I am today, thanks to organized labor.

I have worked with the Somerville paraprofessionals to ensure they get a living wage for the work they do, which they won, and support them in their current fight for a \$5K raise in their current negotiation with the city. I have also picketed with the MNA when they were fighting for better contracts.

In 2019 I worked very closely with the AFT & MTA to support passage of the Student Opportunity Act and to fight for full funding for low income schools. We worked closely with State Representatives to ensure that they had enough support from their colleagues to fight for funding for low-income students. These funds mainly go to support students, but a component of these funds will be used for better wages for teachers.

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

YES. I've advocated for this bill with the Matahari Workers Center and the One Fair Wage campaign at a local event with fellow electeds. I also support eliminating the subminimum wage for agricultural workers in Massachusetts.

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

YES.

4. **Wage Transparency**. Would you support requiring the submission of wage data to a public database maintained by the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and broken down by gender and race?

YES. I wholeheartedly support this and I plan to file legislation next session based on the initial wage transparency law passed last year by New York City Council that requires employers to include a maximum and minimum salary in all job postings, including for new jobs and for internal promotions and transfer opportunities. I think it is vital that we track and make public such data and to break down the data by gender and race to address equity barriers in employment. We have seen many examples of more equitable pay when unions and workers have demanded (or implemented from the ground up) wage transparency in their company or organizations.

5. **Fair Scheduling**. Many workers in the service sector face irregular working hours, making it difficult to plan for other life events. Do you support providing workers the

right to 14 days advance notice of hours and the right to request specific hours without retaliation from the employer?

YES. Another personal issue for me because I used to work as an EMT. I have felt and experienced the consequences of unfair scheduling. This is an essential step to ensure all workers can live with basic dignity and respect.

6. **Mandatory Arbitration.** Would you support legislation to prohibit the use of mandatory arbitration provisions in employment contracts, i.e., requirements that an employee forfeit the right to sue the employer for discrimination, nonpayment of wages, or other illegal conduct?

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

7. **Paid Vacation Time.** The US is the only advanced industrial country to not guarantee workers paid vacation time to use as they wish. Would you support making Massachusetts the first state to require employers to provide paid vacation time to their workers?

YES. All workers deserve time to unwind, recharge, and not be worried that they could be called in on a moment's notice. Study after study has shown that paid vacation is beneficial to the health and wellbeing of workers, but it also helps the overall productivity of the employer.

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

YES. Municipal workers deserve the same rights as the rest of Massachusetts workers. They provide a crucial service to towns and cities throughout the Commonwealth. Without them, municipalities would not be able to serve their residents or properly function on a day-to-day basis.

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

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

YES.

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

YES.

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

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

YES. I have always been in favor of more work-owned cooperatives. In my first year as State Representative, I filed three bills to help strengthen and promote worker coops in Massachusetts.

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

YES. Having workers on boards would allow them to advocate for their fellow employees and more progressive changes within the company. These boards are overwhelmingly comprised of rich, white, older men. This would at least give the opportunity for the board to hear from voices that they may not hear from often or ever.

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

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

YES. I recently wrote an article in support of the unionization efforts currently gaining momentum at the State House.

- b. **If elected, are you committed to creating a safe work environment for all of your employees in which harassment, especially sexual harassment, is not tolerated?**

YES. Creating a safe environment for my employees has always been a priority for me. This is just another reason why the State House employees need a union. There should be an independent body for all workers to report or file grievances that is completely disconnected from leadership.

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

Massachusetts Legislature?

YES. As stated above, I think this is necessary and truly shocking that there still isn't one for employees. The power dynamics at the State House at all levels do not allow for a fair and independent investigation of complaints. We need an independent commission for everyone, employee or legislator, to be able to investigate complaints.

C. Education

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

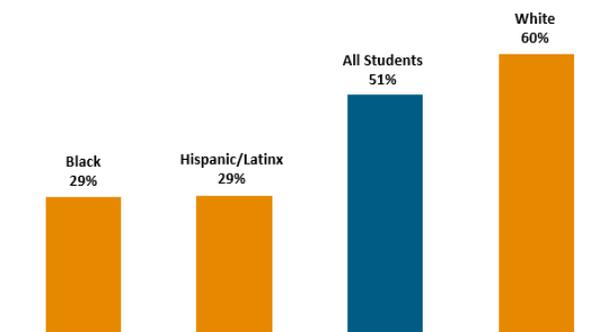
Public education has also been under attack by powerful corporate interests seeking to undermine public schools, teachers, and unions. These groups invest millions of dollars to promote the expansion of privately run charter schools, which siphon money from our public K-12 districts while largely excluding students with the greatest needs. Costly, mandated standardized test results are used to label schools as “failing” and justify these privatization schemes. State receiverships in struggling school districts take power away from communities and often facilitate privatization schemes that could never achieve democratic support.

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

Massachusetts has significant achievement gaps reflective of resource gaps.

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

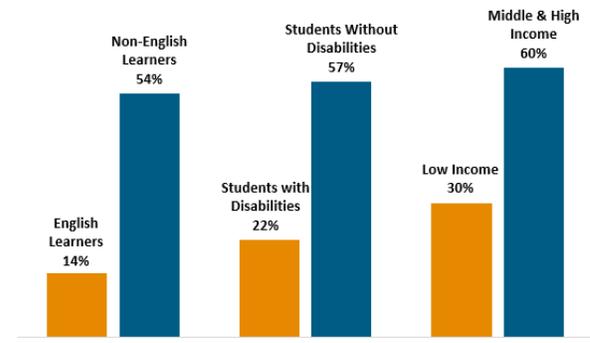
Share of MA 4th Graders Proficient on the 2017 NAEP Reading Exam, by Student Race, all students



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2017

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

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



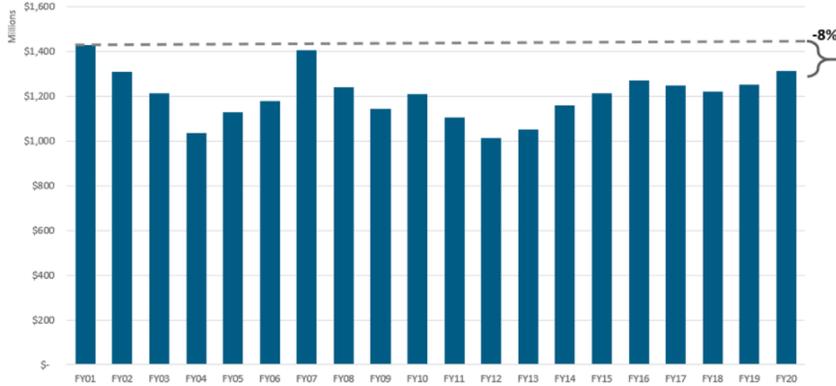
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2017

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

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

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

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



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

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

I absolutely believe in the necessity and the promise of public education. While Massachusetts's educational system scores well compared with other states, we also have one of the largest achievement gaps in the nation (48th). No one's zip code should determine their access to a quality education.

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

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

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

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

YES. We must put a moratorium on high stakes testing, which has been shown to merely punish low-income students while padding the coffers of for-profit, private companies such as Pearson. In particular, due to the consequences of COVID on our students and how it has exacerbated structural inequities in our public schools, I support canceling the MCAS and replacing it with a structural solution like MCIEA.

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

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

YES.

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

YES.

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

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

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

Commonwealth helps districts, not taking away democratically accountable community control and agency.

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

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

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

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

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

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

YES. This is an instance of supposedly very liberal, very blue Massachusetts not actually being as liberal as other states. Nineteen states already allow in-state tuition rates for undocumented students, and seven allow undocumented students to receive financial aid.

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

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

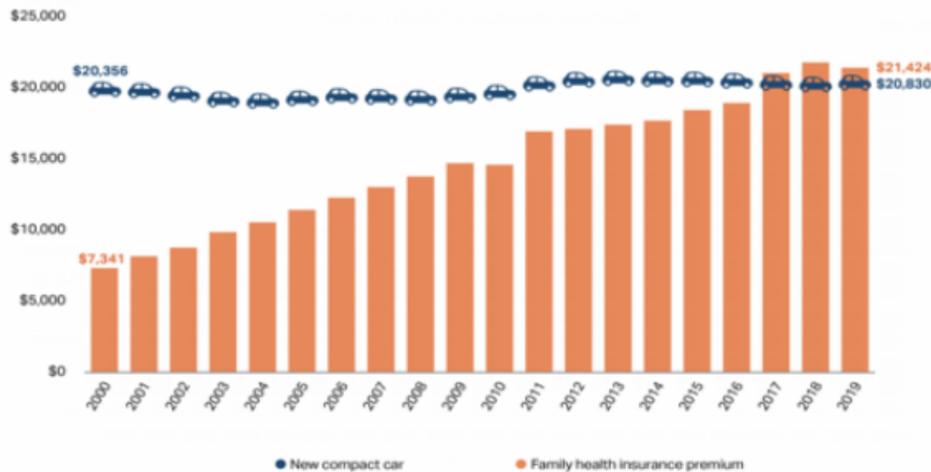
D. Health Care

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

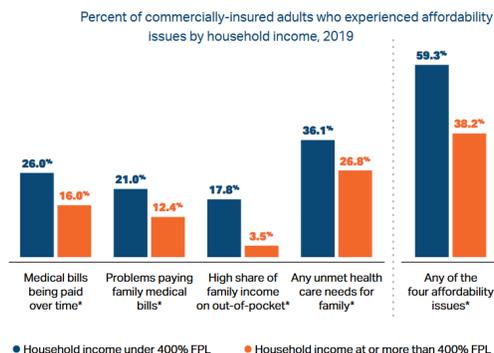
<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/average-new-car-prices-up-nearly-4-percent-year-over-year-for-may-2019-according-to-kelley-blue-book-300860710.html>

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



Image411

Many MA residents face difficulty paying health care bills.



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

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

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

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

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

YES. Oral health and dental care is healthcare and should be treated as such. I've had so many constituents struggle to take care of their oral health because their insurance doesn't cover it. We must raise our state standards to cover oral health.

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

YES. With Roe V. Wade under attack at the national level, now more than ever,

Massachusetts needs to step up and protect all forms of reproductive health care.

5. **Reproductive Justice—II.** Would you support the creation of an uncompensated care program to reimburse abortion providers for services they provide to individuals without other means of paying for care, including those individuals traveling from out of state who would have qualified for MassHealth if they lived in the state?

YES.

6. **Reproductive Justice—III.** Young people under sixteen seeking an abortion must obtain parental consent or judicial authorization. While most young people involve their parents, many cannot, causing delays to timely medical care and counseling. Scared teens may also turn to dangerous measures: going out of state or risking their lives and health with illegal or self-induced abortion. Would you support repealing this restriction on young people's access to abortion?

YES. Reproductive health care is health care and we need to make it easier for people who need abortions to have access to them safely, easily, and with no cost.

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

YES. It is a shame that we need to pass a bill through the legislature to get basic menstrual products in the hands of those who need them.

8. **Harm Reduction.** An essential part of addressing the opioid crisis, safe consumption sites allow medical professionals to respond to overdoses and engage participants in medical and behavioral health services. Would you support the legalization of SCSs?

YES. I am proud to work with local Somerville legislators who have been leading the way on this issue. I will continue to do what I can to push for SCSs.

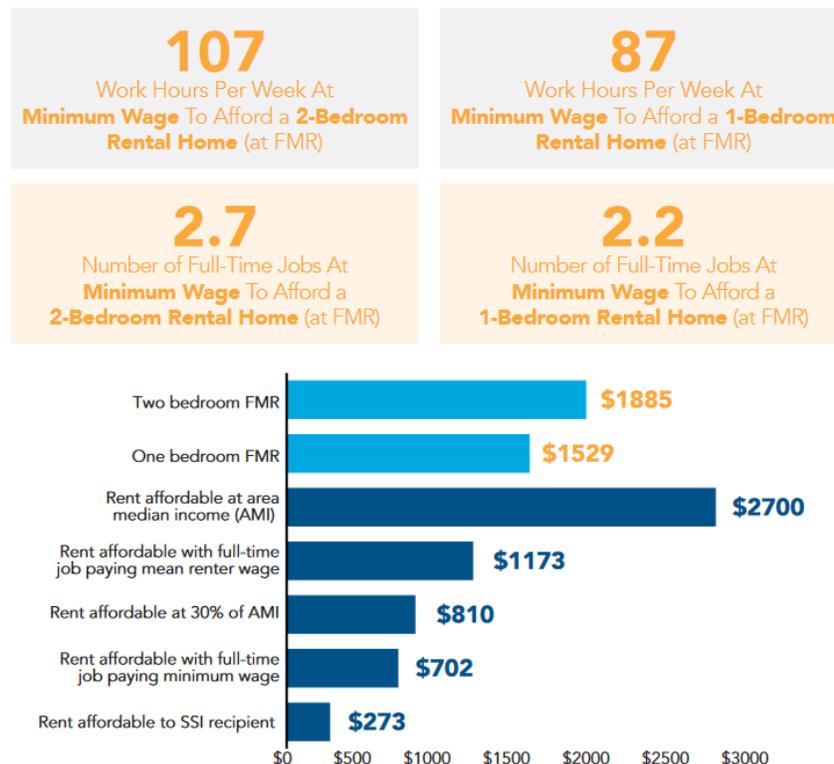
9. **Community Immunity Act.** Would you support strengthening the Commonwealth's immunization policies by standardizing the immunization requirements for all schools, daycare centers, and other covered programs and centralizing within the Department of Public Health (DPH) the processes for obtaining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

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

E. Housing

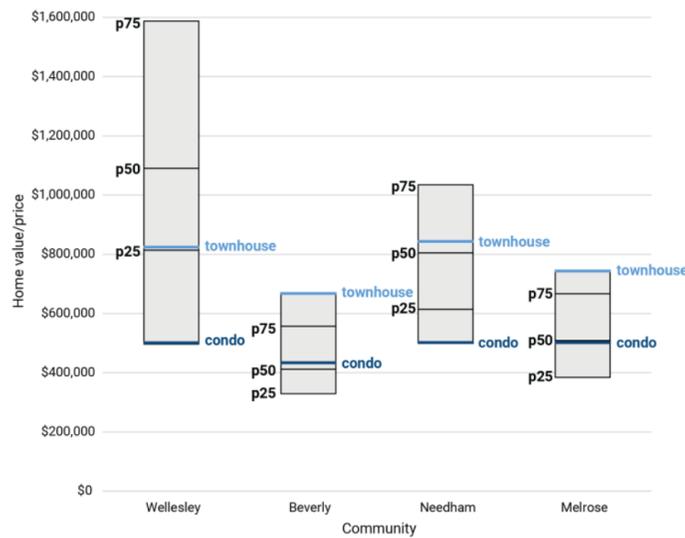
Massachusetts has a lot to offer, but that does little if people can't afford to live here. The [US News & World Report's annual state rankings](#) put Massachusetts at #40 in housing affordability (and #47 in cost of living). A worker earning minimum wage in Massachusetts would have to work [87 hours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

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



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

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



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

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

For too long policymakers have prioritized the interests of developers over residents, turning the places we call home into investment opportunities for profit. Over the past decade, Somerville has had the steepest increase in housing pricing in Massachusetts—we are truly on the front lines of the displacement crisis.

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

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

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

YES. Homelessness is a failure of our society and institutions, but instead we have criminalized it. For those who are experiencing homelessness, we must make housing a human right rather than treating real estate as an investment vehicle.

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

YES. This is just one way that we can try to tackle the housing crisis here in Massachusetts. As we have seen in recent years, so often developers are buying and flipping these family homes. They are profiting while furthering the housing and displacement crisis. Somerville has filed a transfer fee home rule petition for the last several legislative sessions which I support.

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

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

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

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

6. **Tenant Protections.** Would you support providing municipalities with the authority to implement rent control, just cause eviction protections, stronger condominium conversion and foreclosure protections, anti-displacement zones, and options to help tenants manage the upfront costs of leasing an apartment?

YES. Municipalities need to be given more control over how they approach housing in their own community. The State continues to block any type of legislation that could slow the housing crisis.

7. **Tenant Opportunity to Purchase.** Would you support providing tenants of small, medium, and large multifamily properties with right of first refusal when the owner plans to put a building on the market, provided that they can make a bona fide offer to match the asking price in a reasonable period of time?

YES. This is another way to help lifelong residents stay in communities they love. I was proud to file the Somerville home rule petition that does just that.

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

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

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

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

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

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

YES.

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

YES.

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

YES.

Zoning laws in our state have been used to direct development to poorer communities of color and to limit disruption of wealthier white communities, shielding them from many of the negative aspects of rapid growth. This needs to change. Further, zoning reform has been used to pressure the progressive left, forcing it to make compromises around developer-friendly proposals that solve one issue while exacerbating another. We can pass zoning reform but it needs to be on our terms and advanced by communities closest to the pain. The history of Massachusetts suburbs is one of wealthy, primarily white, people fleeing and disinvesting in cities while ensuring that their own families have better services and that is not ok.

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

YES. Communities that benefit directly from having public transit should be required to build high quality, high density, affordable housing around the transit centers. These municipalities are forcing low wage workers into longer and longer commutes while the residents and communities gatekeep who is able to move into their area.

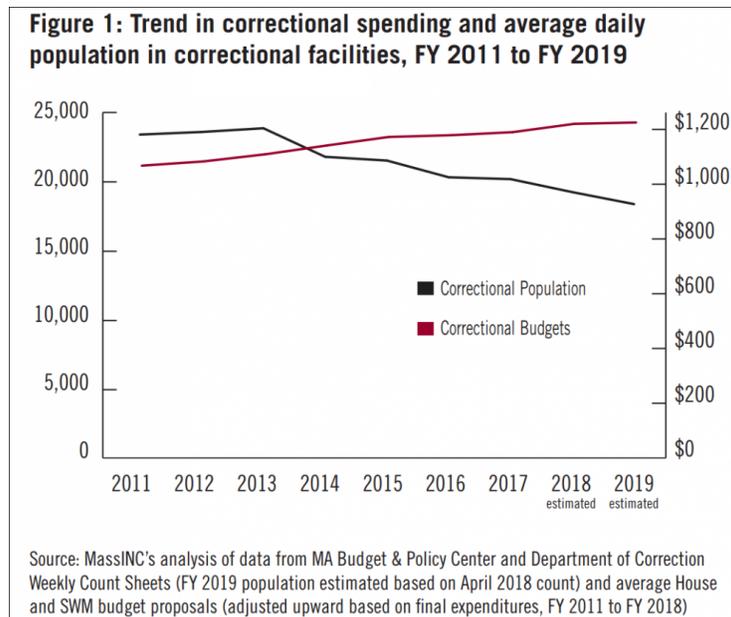
F. Racial and Social Justice

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

Mass incarceration in Massachusetts has proven socially and economically destructive, breaking apart communities across the state. From 2011 to 2016, [spending on prisons](#) grew faster than any other part of the Massachusetts budget, while funding for necessary services languished. The average cost per year to house an individual in the Massachusetts Department of Corrections is [more than \\$60,000](#), money that could be better reinvested into the communities that have suffered from decades of misguided and racially discriminatory “tough on crime” policies. To achieve “justice for all,” we need a judicial system that does not disproportionately target communities of color and the poor and that does not criminalize public health issues such as addiction.

Immigrants make up 16% of Massachusetts’s population; however, demagoguery against, or indifference to, immigrant populations has historically been a mainstay of Massachusetts politics. Even though the administration in Washington has changed, we have seen a deportation agenda from both Democratic and Republican presidents, and it is important for states like Massachusetts to take leadership in protecting and advancing the rights of our immigrant communities and making clear that all are welcome.

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



Significant racial disparities exist in incarceration in Massachusetts.

Imprisonment by Race/Ethnicity (2019)	
White imprisonment rate (per 100,000)	63
Black imprisonment rate (per 100,000)	466
Hispanic imprisonment rate (per 100,000)	260
Racial/Ethnic Disparity in Imprisonment (2019)	
Black : white ratio	7.4
Hispanic : white ratio	4.1
Juveniles in Custody (2015)	
Total juveniles in custody	309
Committed	168
Detained	135
Diverted	0
Juvenile custody rate (per 100,000)	0
White custody rate (per 100,000)	18
Black custody rate (per 100,000)	166
Latino custody rate (per 100,000)	117
American Indian custody rate (per 100,000)	0
Asian custody rate	0

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

I do not believe the 2018 Criminal Justice Reform bill went far enough. In fact, it created new mandatory minimum sentences at a time when CJR advocates at the national level are clear that we need to get rid of them entirely.

I am disappointed that the CJR Bill did not abolish cash bail, something that disproportionately hits low income and vulnerable communities. We ought to get rid of it.

And finally, during covid-19 we should be doing everything possible to release people from the carceral system. Right now, being held in a jail is tantamount to a death sentence and we must do better in MA.

I do not accept money from police unions, because I do not want anyone to question if that is contributing to bias in my legislating. I believe Sheriff Hodgson must be impeached by the legislature for his horrific treatment of the incarcerated in his facilities and denying legislators entry to his facilities.

2. Police Accountability. The 2020 police accountability legislation passed by the

Massachusetts Legislature contained a number of steps forward, but important measures were left out. Would you support legislation to do the following?

- a. **Eliminating qualified immunity for state and local police and correctional officers so that individuals whose constitutional rights are violated can have their fair day in court?**

YES.

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

YES.

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

YES.

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

I also wholeheartedly support strict regulations on facial surveillance and more democratic accountability before a local police can acquire even more military and surveillance equipment.

3. **Alternative Crisis Response.** Do you support creating a grant program through the Executive Office of Health and Human Services to increase funding for non-law-enforcement, unarmed community-based response personnel to respond to emergency calls?

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

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

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

YES.

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

YES.

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

YES.

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

YES.

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

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

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

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

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

7. **Prison Visitation**. Maintaining connections with friends and family outside prisons is one of the most important factors in ensuring successful reentry. In March 2018, the

DOC severely limited the ability of prisoners to receive visits and the rights of family and friends to visit their loved ones in prison. ([Read more on this here.](#)) Would you support legislation to end these restrictions?

YES. We need to treat the people in our criminal justice system as people. I support efforts to help families maintain connections with each other even if someone is incarcerated.

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

YES. This is an outrageous and inhumane practice that reinforces the role the criminal justice system plays as a continuation of chattel slavery. It is a racist system of economic extraction for a wealthy few.

9. **Prison Profiteering—Part II.** The cost of phone calls can be as high as \$4-\$5 (or more) for 15 minutes of phone time for incarcerated individuals in some parts of Massachusetts. Do you support making phone calls free for incarcerated individuals?

YES. I fully support making calls (and all other forms of communication) free for incarcerated individuals. The House budget included no cost calls and I am happy to see the legislature is finally listening to the voices of advocates who have been pushing so hard on this issue.

10. **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 diligently with my colleagues in the Criminal Justice Caucus to see that no new prisons or jails are built.

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

YES. The War of Drugs continues to be a complete failure that targeted black and brown communities. We must do everything in our power to rectify this. Corporations are already making millions of dollars from the legal sale of marijuana while individuals that were targeted prior to it being legal continue to carry the burden of a conviction on their record.

12. **Safe Communities Act.** Do you support the Safe Communities Act, which limits local and state police collaboration with federal immigration agents, bars law enforcement and court personnel from inquiring about immigration status, and ensures due process protections?

YES. It is shocking to me that we went through an entire Trump administration and our state hasn't advanced this legislation past the committee step. This is shameful.

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

YES. I was excited to see that this bill will finally be enacted into law this session, and I support emphasizing the narrative of how Massachusetts laws are some of the least friendly to immigrants in the United States and educating my constituents on this. For this law, 15 states plus DC have already removed immigration status as a barrier to applying for driver's licenses.

14. **Data Equity.** Do you support allowing state agencies to collect, organize, and assemble public data on major ethnic subgroups for all racial groups to create more visibility for the diverse experiences within communities and enable policymakers and community organizations to be more responsive to community needs?

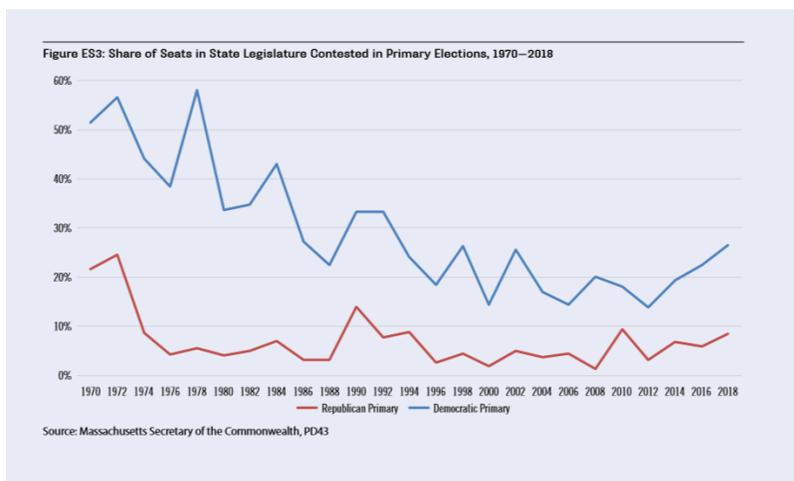
YES. I wholeheartedly support this and this is a top priority for the AAPI Caucus which I am a member of. This is also an issue for so many communities in Massachusetts who's voices, lived experiences, systemic challenges are completely erased because we fail to disaggregate data within very broad categories of diverse ethnic groups. I will add that this is not only an issue for the AAPI community but in Somerville, this is an issue for Brazilians, Haitians, Tibetans, and Nepalese immigrants and community members who are also lumped into broad categories that do not reflect their experiences and the support they deserve from our public institutions.

G. Good Government and Strong Democracy

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

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

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



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

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

Bottom 10 municipalities in terms of 2020 voter turnout

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

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

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

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

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

YES.

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

YES.

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

YES.

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

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

YES. Additionally, I am very likely to support any calls for roll-call even from legislators who I disagree with. We don't need to be afraid to go on record standing for our values.

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

YES.

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

YES. Absolutely.

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

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

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

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

YES. I have heard from constituents time and again how much easier it is to testify virtually. This allows for more people to have their voice heard, especially those that may not be physically able to easily travel to the State House, those that have jobs that make it difficult to take entire days off to travel and testify, and those in the Western parts of Massachusetts.

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

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

7. **Same Day Registration.** Massachusetts lags behind other states in making voting accessible for all. Do you support eliminating Massachusetts's arbitrary and exclusionary 20-day voter registration cutoff and allowing voters to register or update their registration at the polls on Election Day and during the early voting period?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

YES. I have worked closely with Rep. Miranda and my colleagues in the Criminal Justice Caucus to help ensure that incarcerated individuals have their rights restored.

10. **Redistricting.** Would you support legislation to codify the goal of creating [influence districts, crossover districts, and coalition districts](#) in order to expand opportunities for representation and voice for communities of color?

YES. I am very proud of the work and accomplishments of the Drawing Democracy Coalition in the 2020 redistricting but we must continue to remain vigilant for future redistricting and to codify the goal of creating influence districts, crossover districts, and coalition districts so that districts are created to best represent

communities of interest.

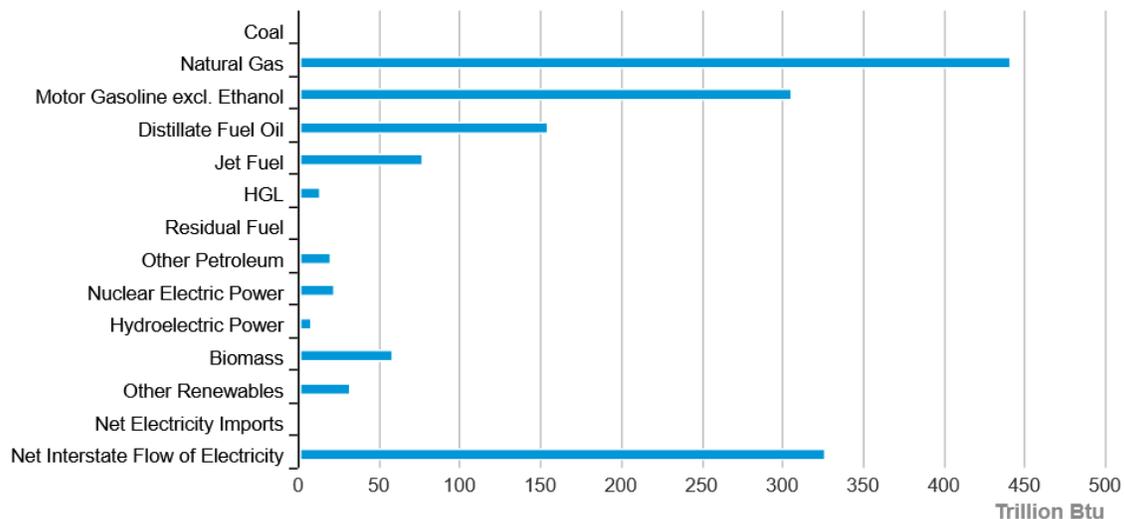
H. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection

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

Public transit must play a role in decarbonizing our transportation system, as well as advancing complementary goals of equity and inclusion. However, Massachusetts politicians have lost their understanding of public transit as a public good that benefits all residents and businesses in Massachusetts, not just those who use it in their daily lives. The greatest evidence of this is their neglect of the MBTA: its debt has grown to nearly [\\$5 billion](#), and it would need [more than \\$10 billion](#) to bring infrastructure and equipment up to a state of good repair. Regional Transit Authorities that serve communities, including Gateway Cities across the state, face enormous capital needs as well.

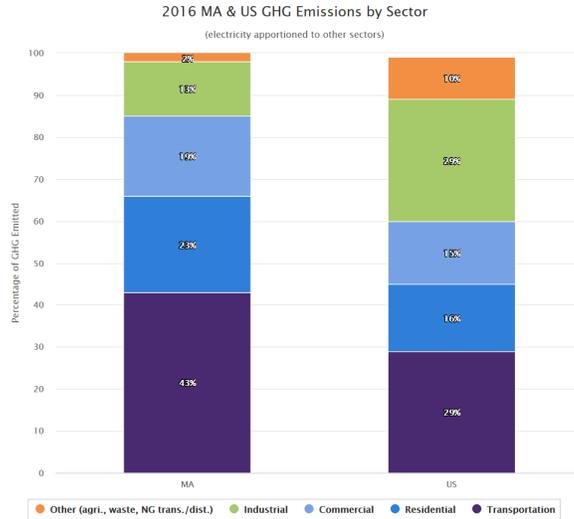
Despite recent progress, Massachusetts is still overwhelmingly dependent on fossil fuels.

Massachusetts Energy Consumption Estimates, 2019



Source: Energy Information Administration, State Energy Data System

Transportation is currently the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in MA.



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

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

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

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

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

The climate crisis continues to be the largest existential threat of our lifetime and

requires us to massively reallocate our society's resources to solve this problem. This is why a Green New Deal for Massachusetts is the top environmental priority for me as a legislator. This includes a transition to 100% renewable energy for the Commonwealth, the creation of new "green" union jobs, investment in sustainable and resilient infrastructure, and protections and reparations for frontline environmental justice communities. As a representative, I voted to greatly increase offshore wind, but we must do more. Every bill tackling the environmental crisis must be viewed through an environmental justice lens. We also need to use progressive forms of revenue to fund investments in renewable infrastructure.

3. **100% Renewable Energy.** Scientists have argued that, with existing technologies, the US could supply 100% of energy needs with renewable sources. Would you support requiring that Massachusetts adopt a target of sourcing electricity from 100% renewable energy sources by 2030?

YES. In my first year as Representative, I filed a bill with Senator Eldridge that would truly get us to carbon neutral by 2030, H.3372, An Act investing in a prosperous, clean Commonwealth by 2030 (or IPCC by 2030 for short). Although an ambitious bill, we have been using such benchmarks set by the annual IPCC report and the solutions put forth in this bill as a way to continue to push for urgency for bills that would get Massachusetts to 100% clean electricity and renewable energy by 2030.

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

YES. I will commit to advocating for legislation that increases the capacity of the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) program. As it currently stands, SMART incentives are insufficient for many residential and commercial solar projects, particularly in lower-income communities -- stifling the potential for state-wide solar energy. Solar energy could be a particularly impactful energy solution in Western and rural areas of MA, however this requires that our government invests in the programs that will ensure its success. The passage of legislation that fully funds SMART, and facilitates our future of solar will benefit our economy, our public health, our environment, and will secure for us a stable and affordable source of energy for our communities.

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

YES. I support the phasing out of fossil fuel infrastructure including hook-ups in new buildings. In addition to environmental harm and fossil fuels driving the climate crisis, in Somerville, we struggle immensely to protect residents from pervasive gas leaks that Eversource fails to fix despite the support of local, state, and federal elected officials and organized community members and leaders. I also want to ensure that we earn the support of organized labor through a just transition to renewable energy and unionized new green jobs. I believe this is best done at the state and federal level rather than the municipal level where there has been significant pushback against one pronged solutions. At the state and federal level we can achieve a comprehensive path that addresses concerns on jobs lost from phasing out fossil fuel infrastructure by replacing them with unionized jobs in

renewable energy construction and infrastructure maintenance.

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

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

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

YES. And I want to see a broad group of EJ stakeholders come together to help draft the legislation, to ensure that the law is equitable and meets the needs of the community.

8. **Just Transition.** Do you support the creation of a Just Transition Office to assist workers that are displaced in the transition from fossil fuels to clean energy?

YES. Environmental justice communities have always been the last to benefit and the first to see the negative effects the climate crisis and our efforts to combat it. We must center their voices and help workers transition to this new economy.

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

YES. We will not be able to meet our climate goals if we do not greatly expand, modernize, and electrify our public transit system. We must work with our colleagues at the federal level to ensure that we can meet our goals. We also need to ensure that residents also have access to affordable electric cars through subsidizing and incentivizing zero-emission vehicle ownership.

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

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

YES. Absolutely. However, I also believe the state has a critical role in funding RTAs. Many of the communities that most need investment in their RTAs have median incomes lower than the statewide average. Corporations & wealthy MA residents in other parts of the state have an important role to play in funding transportation needs of other parts of the states.

III. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

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

I want to expand on racial justice, which is a core issue that drives my work in the State House. In particular, progressive taxation and economic justice is deeply intertwined with racial justice, not only because metro Boston has one of the most obscene wealth gaps between black and white families in the country, but all issues that rely on funding from progressive taxation, such as education, health care, housing, transportation, the climate crisis, all systematically oppress communities of color over white communities. These policies must change if we are to truly center our work on racial justice. I am committed to fighting for this in the House of Representatives.