



PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS
2026 Legislative
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate: Mike Connolly

Office Sought: State Representative, 26th Middlesex

Party: Democrat

Website: mikeconnolly.org (campaign committee); repmikeconnolly.org (State House blog);

Social Media Handles: @MikeConnollyMA (Bluesky, Insta, TikTok, Threads, YouTube, et al.)

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?

In my five terms serving the people of Cambridge and Somerville in the House of Representatives, we've seen what's possible when we work together and fight for policy change. And yet, there's so much more to do.

With criminal justice reform, we reduced the number of people in DOC custody by nearly half. With police reform, we finally made it so officers who engage in misconduct can be stripped of their certification and barred from working as police. We've banned forced brokers' fees, passed eviction sealing, pushed cities and towns to allow for more housing, legalized accessory dwelling units, expanded housing programs, and put social housing, community land trusts, and rent control on the table. We passed the Fair Share Amendment and increased education funding, including universal school meals, in-state tuition for undocumented youth, and free community college — and with the help of Phil Eng, Fair Share revenues, and a growing, unionized public-sector workforce — we've finally achieved some real results in Fixing The T, nearly eliminating slow zones, while also expanding bike infrastructure, bus and train service, and fare-free RTA buses. We made drivers' licenses available to all regardless of immigration status, expanded access to abortion, banned conversion therapy, and passed strong gun laws and legal protections for patients and providers of gender-affirming care. And we finally achieved some real legislative reforms, e.g. making committee votes public, making committee testimony and bill summaries public, and welcoming the public to testify remotely in legislative committee hearings.

The list of what progressives have accomplished over the past decade is long, but as the Trump/MAGA fascist nightmare continues, and as inequality worsens and the affordability and climate emergencies rage on — it is clear we have much, much more urgent work to do.

I am running for re-election to continue doing this work in partnership with the Cambridge and Somerville constituents and neighborhoods I represent, along with our organizing and advocacy partners across the state. This questionnaire is an excellent opportunity to focus on what we need to do moving forward. Thank you to the Progressive Mass. team who put it together.

My top three priorities: 1) Housing/Affordability, i.e. working for policies to resolve the ongoing affordability emergency. 2) Civil Rights/Civil Liberties, i.e. doing everything possible to resist the fascist Trump/MAGA agenda. 3) Constituent Services, i.e. making state government work better for my constituents and the Cambridge and Somerville neighborhoods I represent.

2. What prepares you to serve in this capacity?

My commitment to a progressive agenda stems from my background. I was raised in public housing and spent time in foster care and benefited from a Head Start program and other social services as a child. With the help of these programs and caring community members, I had the support to overcome adversity and beat the odds. I went on to attend Duke University on a football scholarship and earned my degree in computer science. After that, I attended Boston College Law School, served as a managing editor for a progressive law journal, became a licensed attorney, and worked for a global technology company. It was this trajectory in life — from public housing one day — to an elite university the next day — that informs my perspectives on equity, inequality, and justice.

In 2016, with help from volunteers and supporters from across the Cambridge and Somerville community (and from Progressive Massachusetts members and other progressive groups), we won the Democratic primary versus a popular Democratic incumbent. In the years since — through Trump I, the Covid-19 pandemic, and now Trump II — I've been on the frontlines of progressive battles and progressive victories — in the State House, in our Cambridge and Somerville community, and across the Commonwealth. I've worked with colleagues to deliver results for our communities, and I've also been willing to stand up Beacon Hill leaders when need be.

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

Yes, I consider myself a progressive. I also consider myself a democratic socialist. There are probably many ways to define progressive. For me, being progressive means bringing an equity lens to policy decisions, centering the voices of those most impacted and marginalized, standing up for human rights, civil rights, civil liberties, and economic fairness, being willing to work with others to advance a vision for justice and systemic change, and having the courage to stand up to those in power whenever our values are at stake.

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?

There are probably several obstacles — perhaps the easiest answer is legislative leadership — because on some key progressive priorities, House and/or Senate leadership are not in support. That said, I've seen time and time again, when progressives work together to advance good policy and build support for it — we can overcome opposition, open people's minds, and pass laws that even a few years prior may have seemed unlikely or impossible. My plan is to continue doing this work in partnership with constituents, colleagues, advocates, and allies.

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

Social Housing, i.e. public ownership and investment in mixed-income housing. One version of it has been pioneered by Montgomery County, Maryland. Other jurisdictions, such as Chicago, Atlanta, and Rhode Island, are advancing other versions. I was proud to work to include an authorization for a social housing pilot program in the *Affordable Homes Act* law, and now I'm working with stakeholders to advance the program.

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

In 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic struck, I worked in the legislature and alongside advocates to build a broad coalition in support of an eviction and foreclosure moratorium. The law we passed was recognized as being the strongest in the nation, credited with saving lives. Later, I worked with House Leaders to make permanent a key component of the eviction moratorium law, i.e. Ch. 239, Sec. 15, which halts an eviction whenever a tenant has a rental assistance application pending. Subsequently, I've been able to assist constituents in seeking protection under this law.

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 am proud of my record on the Progressive Massachusetts scorecard, having the most progressive overall voting record over the course of my five terms in the House.

That said, differences can arise if the meaning of a vote or the text of a bill or an amendment can be interpreted in different ways. I take every vote seriously and consider it my duty to faithfully represent my Cambridge and Somerville constituents.

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?

II. The Issues

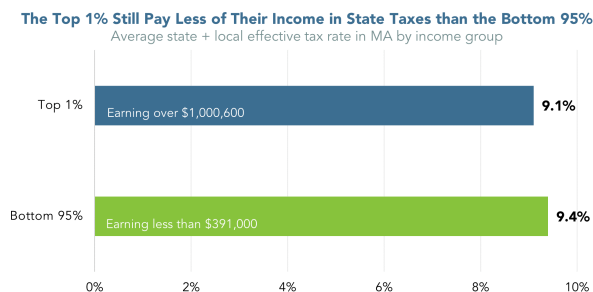
A. Revenue and Taxation

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.

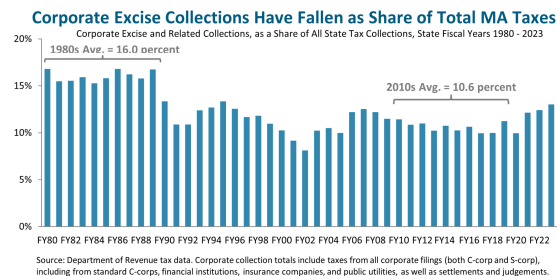
Although we saw a welcome shift when MA voters passed the Fair Share Amendment and added more progressivity to our tax code, the Legislature in 2023 voted to give tax cuts to multi-million-dollar estates, large corporations, and day traders, blunting the full impact of the win. We cannot tax-cut our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

We're living in a time of unprecedented wealth and income inequality. We need to Tax The Rich. In other words, we need a tax code that asks the very wealthy and big corporations to pay their fair share. We made some progress here with the Fair Share Amendment, which I worked for years to support, in the State House and in the community. And yet, we can still do more to raise progressive revenue and ensure tax fairness.

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 long opposed tax cuts that would worsen wealth and income inequality. I fight for tax fairness for working people and seniors and I advance a progressive revenue agenda via legislation and floor amendments.

In 2023, I was the only member of the House to vote "No" on both engrossment and enactment of the \$1+ billion/annual tax cut package — effectively wiping out much of the overall net progress achieved by the Fair Share Amendment. To be sure, the 2023 tax cut bill did include several provisions that helped working-class and lower-income residents — I support such provisions. However, a significant chunk of the benefits flowed to the wealthiest, particularly through cuts to short-term capital gains. I think we can help working families, seniors, lower-income folks, and others in need without including more tax breaks for the very wealthy and the big corporations.

My agenda is focused on a fairer, more progressive tax system. I have sponsored bills to establish a real estate transfer fee to fund local affordable housing; to establish a progressive, tired corporate minimum tax; to enable a local tax on vacant properties, and to tax the largest corporations to fund a Housing For All program to build social housing and fund a universal right to housing.

In 2020, I was a leader in efforts to include a tired corporate minimum tax in a transportation finance bill that passed the House. In 2022, when Chapter 62F offered a tax rebate that disproportionately skewed to the very wealthy, I led efforts to raise awareness and make the law more somewhat more equitable.

3. **Corporate Tax Breaks.** Corporate tax breaks cost Massachusetts [more than \\$1 billion in foregone revenue](#) each year. Which of the following steps would you support?
 - a. Repealing any tax break that does not provide the intended benefits in a cost-effective manner? **YES**
 - b. Establishing sunset dates for all tax breaks to require periodic review? **YES**
 - c. Ending the current sales tax exemptions for aircraft and aircraft parts, which

costs the Commonwealth approximately [\\$30 million](#) each year? **YES**

4. **Corporate Disclosure.** Would you support legislation to make publicly accessible the reports that are already filed annually by publicly traded corporations, detailing their sales, profits, taxable income, and taxes paid? **YES**
5. **Corporate Fair Share.** Large multinational corporations like Amazon and Walmart hide significant profits offshore in order to avoid paying taxes here in Massachusetts and in other states. Would you support legislation to increase the amount of offshored corporate income subject to MA's corporate income tax to 50%, the maximum allowable amount and the amount taxed by most of our neighboring states? **YES**
6. **Taxing Extreme Wealth.** Would you support the establishment of a Massachusetts wealth tax, which applies only to extremely rich taxpayers (with a threshold of at least \$100 million) and taxes them on a percentage (e.g., 1% annually) of their wealth above the threshold? **YES**
7. **Digital Ads Tax.** Would you support imposing new tax targeted at large companies that amass our personal data, either through a data-mining excise tax or a tax on digital advertising, as introduced or passed in states like New York and Washington State? **YES, and I am pushing House Leaders to act on strong data privacy legislation this term.**
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**

When it became clear that Ch. 62F would be triggered in July 2022, I led efforts to raise awareness about the obscure policy and its inequities. I then filed legislation to address those inequities. Our work "fighting a lonely battle to benefit low-income people" was covered in [Commonwealth Magazine](#). I was also proud to have that work endorsed by the [Globe](#): "Chapter 62F "would be a major fiscal policy failure on the part of the Legislature. Since when is it a good idea to send billions of dollars primarily to wealthy residents when both a recession and budget shortfalls are in the forecast? The good news is that it doesn't have to be this way. State Representative Mike Connolly introduced legislation that would cap the tax credits at \$6,500 for the wealthiest households, allowing the state to more fairly redistribute the \$3 billion among the rest of Massachusetts'

taxpayers...” I will continue to oppose the corporate lobby’s attempt to make this policy worse.

9. **Rainy Day Fund.** Massachusetts will see significant budget cuts next year due to Trump’s Big Ugly Bill. Would you support using 15% of the rainy day fund in order to prevent cuts? **YES**
10. **PILOT Reform.** Do you support enabling cities and towns to require large tax-exempt not-for-profit institutions (i.e., with property valued at or above \$15M) to make payments in lieu of taxes to the municipality equal to 25 percent of the amount that would be paid if they were not exempt? **YES**
11. **Public Bank.** Would you support the creation of a Massachusetts public bank chartered to provide cost-effective financing for small businesses and municipalities, land trusts and cooperatives, and climate adaptation/remediation projects? **YES, I am proud to be a lead sponsor of the public bank bill in the House. With public banking, we have an opportunity to provide better opportunities for our small businesses while also addressing economic and racial inequalities in access to capital.**

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.

We need an economy that values work and dignity. Economic gains have been concentrated at the very top, while too many of the workers who generated those gains face job loss and an ongoing affordability emergency. Inequality is a policy choice. We must center racial, economic, and ecological justice. To create good jobs, I support strengthening labor rights, collective bargaining, and wage protections. Workers need real power to negotiate wages and working conditions. We need to support unions, protect the right to organize, and ensure labor laws address issues related to AI.

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 committed to advancing good paying jobs and a fair economy, combining my leadership and efforts in the House with solidarity with organized labor and workers everywhere. I consistently advocate for workers in the legislative process, and I also stand with workers publicly in their fights for dignity, fair wages, and the right to organize.

I am a lead House sponsor of "An Act protecting the right to strike," which would remove the prohibition on striking by many public sector workers. I am also a supporter of the effort to allow State House Staff Workers to unionize, in partnership with IBEW. I regularly co-sponsor bills and amendments that are supported by the AFL-CIO, the Building Trades, and other local unions, including efforts to expand apprenticeship programs and end wage theft.

I've walked the picket line with Harvard Graduate Student Union workers and the United Auto Workers union. I also stand with MIT graduate student workers. I stood in solidarity when Harvard grad workers first considered unionization in 2016 and again when MIT grad workers launched their union in Fall 2021, calling on university leadership to voluntarily recognize them. I worked with MBTA machinists in 2017 to [oppose privatization](#) and stood with teachers and paraprofessionals seeking fair contracts in Somerville and Cambridge. I have also marched and spoken alongside other graduate workers and service employees from Lesley University, to Boston University's strike in 2024 to Harvard's SEIU 32BJ custodial staff in 2021. I expressed support of recent unionization efforts in my neighborhood at Lamplighter Brewing Co., and I recently participated in a labor action with Starbucks Workers United in the Assembly Row section of the East Somerville part of my district. I also advocate in partnership with SEIU local 509; I support proposals by SEIU 1199 for healthcare workers, and I've stood up for Nurses, Fire Fighters, and workers at Mass General Brigham.

3. **Livable Wages.** Although Massachusetts now has a \$15 minimum wage, that is still not a living wage in much of Massachusetts, and \$15 has lost a lot of value due to high inflation. Do you support the following steps...?
 - a. Raising the minimum wage to \$20 per hour? **YES**
 - b. Eliminating subminimum wages? **YES**
 - c. Ensuring that the minimum wage law applies to municipal workers? **YES**
 - d. Indexing the minimum wage to inflation? **YES**
4. **Wage Theft.** Do you support holding businesses responsible for the wage violations of their subcontractors when the work they do is substantially connected to the company's operations? **YES**
5. **Paid Leave for All Workers.** In 2018, MA passed the strongest paid family and medical leave law in the country. However, the law did not include municipal workers or graduate student workers. Would you support extending the law to make sure that all workers have access to these vital benefits? **YES**
6. **Paid Time Off.** The US is the only advanced industrial country where workers are not guaranteed paid time off. Would you support legislation to require employers to offer full-time employees at least two weeks of paid time off each year, which they can use for any reason with no loss of pay? **YES**
7. **Right to Strike.** Would you support legislation to legalize the right to strike for public employees (with the exception of public safety personnel) after six months of failed negotiations with their employer? **YES, I am proud to be the lead sponsor of this bill in the House.**
8. **State House Unionization.** Would you support legislation to extend collective bargaining rights to State House staff? **YES**

C. Education

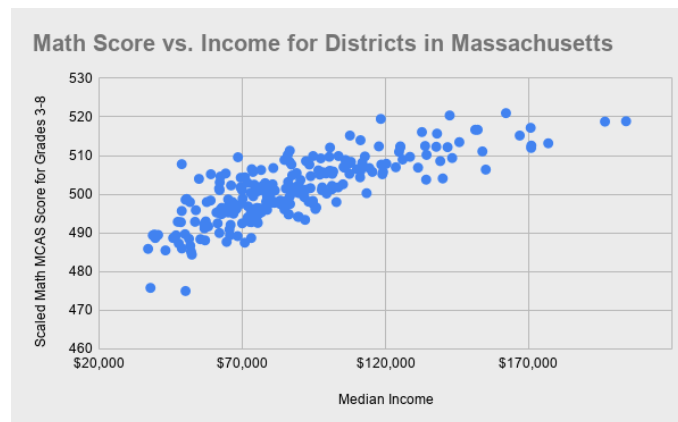
Massachusetts parents and caregivers face the [highest child care and early education costs of any state in the US](#). The average annual cost of infant care in Massachusetts is more than half of what a full-time minimum wage worker earns in a year. These costs are prohibitively expensive for low- and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

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

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

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

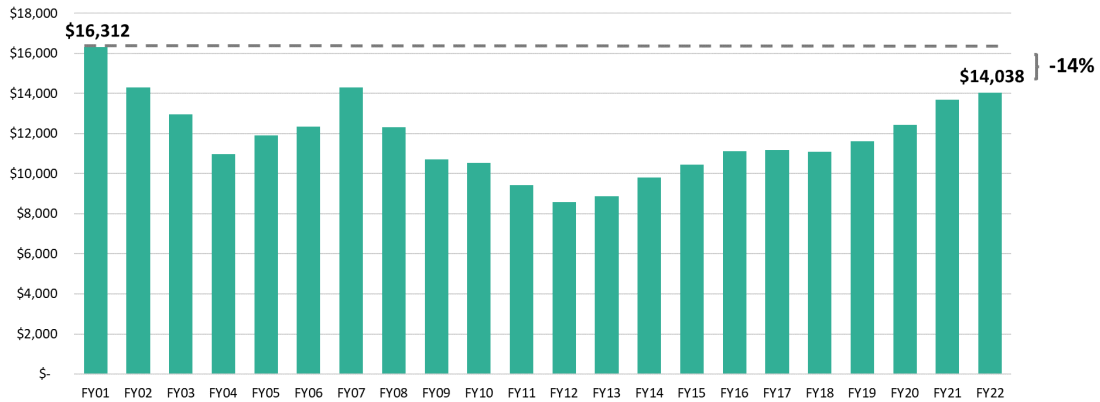
Standardized test scores have a very strong correlation with the income of the school district. ([Source](#))



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

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

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



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

I believe fully funded public education from pre-kindergarten through college is the foundation of our democracy. Public education must be “cherished,” as our state Constitution demands, not commodified to the detriment of our students. Schools must be places where community and relationships are valued and nourished; where we name, confront, and undo racism; where we close the achievement gap, support educators, and actively work to counter the school-to-prison pipeline; and where our immigrant and refugee neighbors are welcome. I have opposed raising the cap on charter schools and supported implementation of the Chapter 70 funding formula as well as a mitigation fund to help districts victimized by Trump’s racist deportation regime. I also have been on the frontlines of the fight to abolish high-stakes testing, and support tuition-free public higher education. To further this agenda, I am proud to uplift our students, families, and educators, and to be a champion for progressive tax reforms to pay for all of it.

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

Earlier this year, the House passed a major bill to promote literacy instruction amidst falling reading scores. During House debate, I led efforts to pass an amendment to help ensure educators retain flexibility in the classroom. Prior to the debate, I spoke with parents and educators and worked with a literacy specialist in the Cambridge Public Schools to draft the amendment, which was

adopted on a roll call vote. It clarified that teachers may continue using pictures as a supplement to the literacy curricula. I continue to be in conversation with parents, educators, school committee members, union leaders, local advocates and curriculum experts. I have also been proud to work to pass the Fair Share Amendment to help pay for investments in education, and to work to pass the Student Opportunity Act. I am now engaged in conversations with parents, educators, administrators, and colleagues about what needs to come next now that we've completed the Student Opportunity Act fund implementation schedule.

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, I was proud to work in opposition to Question 2 in 2016.**
6. **K-12 Education Funding.** Our public schools are losing out on the full benefits of increased funding due to a glitch in how the Chapter 70 formula treats inflation. The combination of several years of high inflation and an inflation cap in education funding calculations has locked in lower levels of aid to districts. Do you support fixing this gap and ensuring that our school districts get the funding they deserve? **YES**
7. **Receivership.** The Lawrence Public Schools and Southbridge Public Schools are currently under state receivership, with a state-appointed receiver assuming the powers of a superintendent or democratically elected school committee. The state takeover has not produced sustainable gains and has at times been characterized by [chronic mismanagement](#). Would you support ending the practice of state receivership and returning power to democratically elected school committees? **YES**
8. **Guaranteed Education for Incarcerated Youth.** Would you support legislation to mandate that at least 6 hours of credited daily education is available for all incarcerated, school-aged youth, including those with IEPs? **YES**
9. **Comprehensive Sex Education.** Do you support requiring public schools to provide age-appropriate, medically accurate information that is inclusive of all sexual orientations and gender identities and includes topics such as consent and the effective use of contraception? **YES**
10. **Inclusive Curricula.** Our educational curricula must speak to students' lived experiences and recognize and celebrate the diversity of our Commonwealth.
 - a. **Racially Inclusive Curricula.** Would you support legislation to ensure that instruction in K-12 education shall include the teaching of accurate histories, writings, and contributions of racial and ethnic groups that have been

historically underrepresented or marginalized? **YES**

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

11. **Redistributing Institutional Wealth.** Would you support legislation that would levy a small excise tax on private college and university endowments above \$1B to fund free public higher education for all in-state students? **YES. I do think there needs to be thoughtful conversation about this, given the recent Trump attacks on our local institutions of higher education. That said, I think we can find a systematic way for those large private endowments to offer such a benefit to in-state public higher ed students in Massachusetts.**

12. **Debt-Free Higher Ed.** Would you support legislation to guarantee Massachusetts residents can graduate Massachusetts' public colleges and trade schools completely free of student loan debt? **YES**

13. **Supporting Public Higher Ed Faculty.** Would you support ensuring that adjunct faculty and part-time staff are eligible for state health care and retirement benefits? **YES**

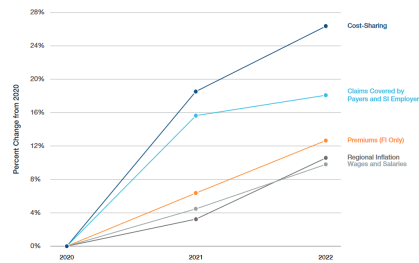
14. **Student Protest & Academic Freedom.** Will you support the unequivocal rights of students and faculty to peaceful protest and freedom of expression in Massachusetts' public and private institutions of higher education? **YES**

D. Health Care

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

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

Private Commercial Insurance Affordability in Context, 2020-2022

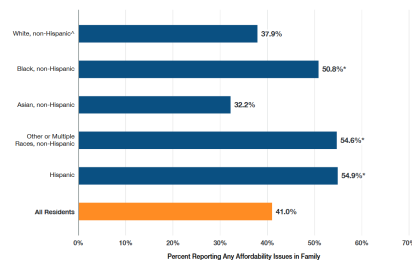


Member cost-sharing and premiums increased at a faster rate than regional inflation and wages and salaries from 2020 to 2022, driven in part by fluctuations in utilization during this time period.

Source: Payer reported data to CNA, Bureau of Labor Statistics data.
 Note: Based on Massachusetts reported membership, which may include non-Massachusetts residents. Claims amounts were adjusted for pharmacy-related reported by payers. Reported cost-sharing, premiums, and claims amounts have not been adjusted to account for benefit carve-outs, which may vary by plan. Claims reported attributable to 2021 and 2022, with 2020 data available as of 2/23. For 2021 and 2022, data from the remaining reported for reporting and data for claims data for 2020-2022. Data for rates in member ID 01000 and 01001. See technical appendix.

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

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



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

Source: 2021 Massachusetts Health Insurance Survey.
 Note: Only individuals listed as either as reporting any of the following issues: problems paying family medical bills in past 12 months, family medical bills at the time of survey, spending a high share of family income in past 12 months on out-of-pocket health care expenses, and unmet family health care needs due to the cost of care in past 12 months.
 *Reference group.
 **Difference from reference group is statistically significant at the 5% level.

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

Health Care is a Human Right. Our system nationally — and to too large of an extent, here in Massachusetts — is too expensive and too often failing. Transitioning to a single-payer, Medicare for All system is the answer. It's time for the United States to ensure universal healthcare, and Massachusetts should continue to lead the way. We also need to protect access to GLP-1s and expand access to dental care, especially in low-income communities. I believe in a compassionate response to curtailing the opioid epidemic that highlights prevention and wrap around care. I also advocate for access to healthy food and improvements to the built environment to fight the obesity epidemic and work to address the social determinants of health. I believe abortion is healthcare and gender-affirming care must be protected.

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 am a member of the Medicare For All caucus, and a longtime sponsor of Medicare for All legislation. In my first term, when Gov. Baker tried to cut affordable health insurance options in Massachusetts, I worked with progressive colleagues to stop him. In 2019, when House leaders asked us to vote on an amendment to take the teeth out of a big proposal to control prescription drug prices, I was one of three House members to vote against this amendment. See [this Boston Globe editorial](#).

3. **Single Payer.** Would you support legislation to enact a single payer health care system in Massachusetts, which would guarantee health insurance as a right? **YES**
4. **Medical Debt.** States like Connecticut and Arizona have taken action, in partnership with RIP Medical Debt, to eliminate medical debt for hundreds of thousands of working-class residents. Would you advocate for similar action in Massachusetts? **YES**
5. **Full Spectrum Pregnancy Care.** Would you support requiring health insurance plans to cover all pregnancy care (including prenatal care, childbirth, and postpartum care), without any kind of cost-sharing, building on the recent mandate to require coverage for abortion and abortion-related care? **YES**
6. **Abortion Access - 1 .** Young people under sixteen seeking an abortion must obtain parental consent or judicial authorization. While most young people involve their parents, many cannot, causing delays to timely medical care and counseling. Scared teens may also turn to dangerous measures: going out of state or risking their lives and health with illegal or self-induced abortion. Would you support repealing this restriction on young people's access to abortion? **YES, I have introduced legislation to repeal parental consent for people seeking an abortion, in partnership with Reproductive Equity Now (then NARAL-MA).**
7. **Abortion Access - 2.** Despite recent overdue updates to abortion care protections in Massachusetts, dozens of patients have to travel out of state every year for necessary care. Would you support expanding abortion access after 24 weeks of pregnancy

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

8. **Anti-Abortion Centers.** In Massachusetts, anti-abortion centers (also known as crisis pregnancy centers), which have a politically-motivated agenda to dissuade and delay patients from accessing abortion care, outnumber abortion clinics by more than 2 to 1. These centers scare and shame pregnant people considering abortion care and often oppose birth control and emergency contraception. Would you commit to opposing any Massachusetts government support and funding for such centers? **YES**
9. **Overdose Prevention Centers.** An essential part of addressing the opioid crisis, overdose prevention centers allow medical professionals to respond to overdoses and engage participants in medical and behavioral health services. Would you support the legalization of overdose prevention centers? **YES**
10. **Vaccination.** Would you support legislation to eliminate non-medical exemptions to the routine vaccines for children required for school entry, as our neighbors in Maine, Connecticut, and New York have already done? **YES**

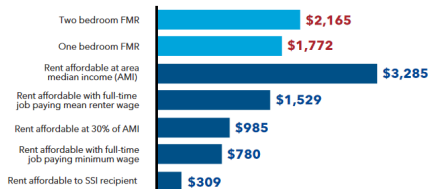
E. Housing

Massachusetts has a lot to offer, but that does little if people can't afford to live here. The [US News & World Report's annual state rankings](#) put Massachusetts at #40 in housing affordability (and #47 in cost of living). To rent the average 2-bedroom apartment in Massachusetts requires an income equal to [\\$41.64 per hour](#), more than twice the minimum wage. A minimum-wage worker in Massachusetts would need to [work 91 hours each week](#) to afford a modest 1-bedroom rental home at fair market rent.

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

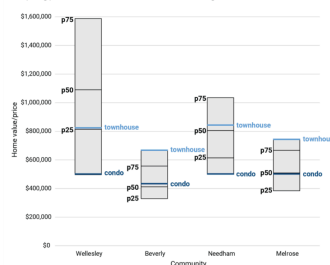
The high cost of housing has led to displacement, and in a growing number of municipalities, the local workforce can no longer afford to live there.

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



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

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, Schatz and Schuster (2020).

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

Housing is a Human Right. The government should make it easier for people to get the housing they want, and we should decide, once and for all, that all people are entitled to decent housing. I believe we have the capacity to make “housing is a human right” a reality here in Massachusetts. I remain committed to pushing the Commonwealth to achieve this vision of guaranteed Housing for All.

In order to achieve this vision, I have championed a comprehensive approach in the state legislature, involving 1) zoning, permitting, and policy reforms to facilitate smart, multifamily housing production across the Commonwealth; 2) bigger public investments in affordable housing programs, including social housing, community land trusts, and public housing renovations; 3) strong tenant protections, including reasonable rent control and tenant opportunity to purchase; 4) support for homeowners, homebuyers; and 5) fairness and predictability for small property owners, landlords and housing developers.

Circa 2018, I wrote an essay describing my views on housing as “YIMBY Socialist” — that is, “Yes, I want housing in my backyard — and, I also recognize that government can and should play a more active role in the financing, ownership, and development of new housing and in the protection of existing affordable housing and in supports for at-risk tenants, homeowners, and homebuyers.”

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

In my first term on Beacon Hill, I worked to advance zoning reform through the Joint Committee on Housing, and I filed local option transfer fee legislation to better fund affordable housing programs. In my second term, I worked with Rep. Nika Elugardo and tenant advocacy groups to introduce the Tenant Protection Act, helping put the issue of rent control on the table in Massachusetts for the first time in decades.

I introduced legislation to require MBTA communities to allow more multifamily housing production, and I helped lead the effort to pass the nation’s strongest eviction and foreclosure moratorium during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, and subsequently worked with House Leaders to make key components of that law permanent.

Last term, I worked closely with the Healey-Driscoll Administration, the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Housing, and my legislative colleagues to pass the Affordable Homes Act into law. This legislation greatly increased state investments in affordable and public housing programs, and it included 48 pro-housing policy

provisions, including ADUs by-right, eviction sealing, and support for commercial-to-housing conversions.

I also founded and co-chaired the legislative Housing For All caucus alongside Senators Juian Cyr and Lydia Edwards; most recently, we hosted experts and advocates for a conversation on single-stair construction buildings. I've also worked to introduce social housing legislation, and I am currently working with the Healey-Driscoll Administration and legislative and municipal colleagues to advance the concept of a social housing pilot program.

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

It's been mixed. On the one hand, we can be proud of having the nation's only statewide Right To Shelter law. Governor Healey and her team have tried their best to uphold the law in some unprecedented times. On the other hand, the extraordinary costs of the emergency shelter program have raised questions about program efficiency, and too often it's seemed like there's been a disconnect between unhoused families, service providers, the Administration, the public and the communities that host shelters. It's a case where Massachusetts might have the best policy in the nation — and yet, we can still do better.

4. **Welcoming New Neighbors.** Would you support efforts to locate both long-term housing and short-term shelter in your district? **YES. Cambridge hosted the first "overflow" emergency shelter in the state — I worked to support the effort and to address neighborhood concerns and facilitate services for unhoused families.**
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, I am the lead sponsor of this legislation in the House.**
7. **Green and Affordable Communities.** Would you support doubling the current Deeds Excise Tax (from \$4.56 per \$1,000 to \$9.12 per \$1,000), upon the sale of real property in Massachusetts, to create a new funding stream to be split evenly between affordable housing and climate resiliency? **YES**
8. **Rent Control.** Massachusetts residents face some of the highest and fastest-growing rents in the country.
- 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, I introduced this bill to the legislature and continue to push for reasonable rent control.**
 - Do you support the proposed 2026 statewide ballot initiative to limit annual

rent increases? **YES, I've also been clear that my strong preference is for the legislature to pass a good rent control law right now.**

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 co-sponsor this legislation.**
10. **Right to Counsel.** Would you support legislation to provide legal representation for low-income tenants in eviction proceedings? **YES, I co-sponsor this legislation.**
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 made a floor speech calling for HDIP reform last term.**
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, I am the lead sponsor of social housing legislation, I've organized on the topic with the Housing For All legislative caucus and in the House progressive caucus, and I worked with the Healey-Driscoll Administration to include an authorization for a social housing pilot program in the Affordable Homes Act law.**
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, I worked to introduce this idea through my own bill and co-sponsorship of other bills.**
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**

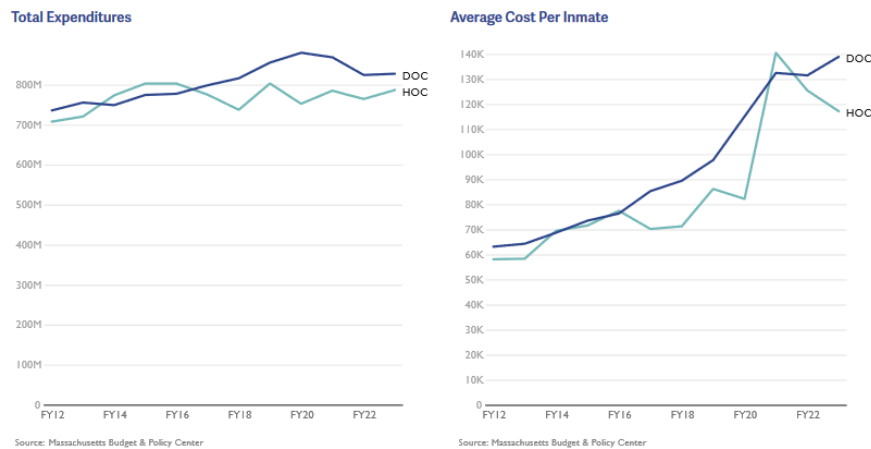
F. Community Safety

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 am proud of the work we did in 2017-18 to pass criminal justice reform; we've seen real results. And yet, we know racial disparities continue. I am also proud of the work we did on hard-fought police reforms in the wake of the murder of George Floyd. Now, finally, police officers who commit misconduct can be decertified. More work remains — that's why I visit state prisons and county houses of correction, and I stay engaged with efforts to pass additional criminal legal reform and police reform. I've also worked to deliver state funding in support of unarmed crisis response.

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.).

During the criminal justice reform and police reform debates, I pushed for progressive policies through the amendment process, including support for an amendment to essentially end "qualified immunity," and I called for a roll call vote on my amendment to ban the use of tear gas by law enforcement. I've also made an unannounced visit to the state's maximum-security prison, Souza-Baranowski, to perform oversight with legislative colleagues, and I have regularly met with people incarcerated at MCI-Shirely, MCI-Framingham, and others.

3. **Police Accountability.** The 2020 police accountability law passed by the Massachusetts Legislature contained a number of steps forward, but important measures were left out. Would you support legislation to do the following?
 - a. Eliminating qualified immunity for state and local police and correctional officers so that individuals whose constitutional rights are violated can have their fair day in court? **YES**
 - b. Enacting the recommendations from the special legislative commission on facial recognition, to implement privacy, civil rights, and due process protections to govern police use of the technology? **YES**
4. **Sentencing Reform.** The 2018 criminal justice reform bill was an important first step in reducing mass incarceration. However, in our "liberal" state, incarceration rates remain much higher than they are in other countries, and sentencing laws can be even more punitive than those in states viewed as conservative. Do you support the following reforms?
 - a. Eliminating mandatory minimums for all drug offenses? **YES**
 - b. Raising the age of criminal majority from 18 to 21, in line with research that shows that young offenders served by a juvenile system are much less likely to reoffend and more likely to successfully transition to adulthood? **YES**
 - c. Decriminalizing consensual sexual activity between adolescents, by creating an

exception to the statutory rape law for youth close in age? Massachusetts is one of only three states that criminalizes consensual sexual activity between two adolescents. **YES**

- d. Eliminating the sentence of life without parole, which is costly and has been shown to be racist in its application? **YES**
 - e. Restructuring joint venture sentencing such that accomplices to murder are sentenced proportionally to their level of responsibility for a death rather than a minimum sentence of life without parole? **YES**
5. **DOC Oversight -- I.** Would you support legislation to establish an inspector general for the Department of Correction? **YES**
6. **DOC Oversight -- II.** Massachusetts legislators have the statutory right to make unannounced visits to correctional facilities run by the state. Would you commit to visiting, whether announced or scheduled, Department of Corrections facilities as a state legislator? **YES, I do this.**
7. **Solitary Confinement.** Would you support legislation to create universal access to productive out of cell time with programming, education and vocational training for all incarcerated people? **YES**
8. **Prison Moratorium.** Would you support a moratorium on the construction of new prisons and jails in the Commonwealth? **YES**
9. **Keeping Families Connected.** Would you support eliminating the arbitrary, unnecessary restrictions on visitation rights in prisons and jails? **YES**
10. **Clean Slate.** The Massachusetts court system maintains a database of name-based court arraignment records, referred to as Massachusetts Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI). Many people are trapped in poverty and shut out of jobs and housing because of the difficult process to expunge their records, even for cases that did not end in a conviction or occurred when they were teenagers. Would you support...
- a. Requiring the Commissioner of Probation to automatically seal criminal and juvenile records after the applicable waiting periods without requiring individuals to file a petition to do so? **YES**
 - b. Requiring the immediate sealing of a criminal offense if the charge did not end in a conviction? **YES**
11. **Reentry.** The Department of Correction's stated mission is to "prepare [individuals in custody] for safe and successful reentry into the community," but regularly fails to live up to that. Do you support the following measures to strengthen reentry efforts...
- a. Mandating that correctional facilities in Massachusetts assist incarcerated individuals in acquiring valid Massachusetts identification cards before their release? **YES**

- b. Increasing funding for reentry-related programming? **YES**
12. **Gun Violence Prevention.** Will you vote YES to protect the 2024 gun safety bill on the ballot in November 2026? **YES**

G. A Humane Immigration System

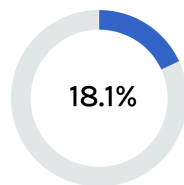
Immigrants make up [18%](#) of Massachusetts's population; however, demagoguery against, or indifference to, immigrant populations has historically been a mainstay of Massachusetts politics. We too often see both Democrats and Republicans fear-monger about immigration and the border, championing policies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

OVERVIEW



Immigrant share of population

1,270,500

Number of immigrant residents

\$51.8B

Immigrant spending power

\$20.4B

Immigrant tax contributions

2023

Data year

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

We are a nation of immigrants, and we must continue to welcome people from around the world. That is what makes America great, and it's a tragedy Trump/MAGA doesn't understand this. I am proud to represent Cambridge and Somerville — two Sanctuary Cities — and I have long stood up for strong immigrant protections in the state legislature. I have protested outside DHS/ICE detention facilities, and I show up when I get LUCE alerts about ICE activity in the district I represent. I believe state government now has a duty to do everything possible and lawful to keep state and local law enforcement separate from federal immigration enforcement and to protect our immigrant neighbors and defend everyone's constitutional rights in response to Trump's fascist ICE crackdown.

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.).

In my first term, I was active in the fight for the Safe Communities Act, culminating with a "No" vote on the state budget in the summer of 2018 due to a lack of

immigrant protections in the conference report. In the next few years, post Lunn v Commonwealth, our focus shifted to passing drivers licenses for all in the legislature (and then, defending it at the ballot box), while also (finally) passing in-state tuition for undocumented kids. As Trump unleashed his latest ICE crackdown, our focus turned to working with immigrant advocates, front-line practitioners, community partners, and my legislative colleagues to help lay the groundwork for passage of the PROTECT Act in the House. I am encouraged by the progress we've made in recent months, with more to do.

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**
 - d. Prohibiting local law enforcement from assisting ICE such as by allowing ICE to use facilities, properties, and equipment or providing information to ICE such as relating to upcoming court appearances? **YES**
4. **Language Access.** Would you support building the capacity of key public-facing state agencies to meet the language access needs of an increasingly diverse population by standardizing and enforcing language access protocols and practices? **YES**
5. **Immigrant Legal Aid.** In 2025, the MA Legislature created a new fund to provide cost-free legal services to immigrants at risk of deportation. Would you support increasing the funding for the program and codifying the fund into law? **YES. We increased the funding again this year in the House Budget.**
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**

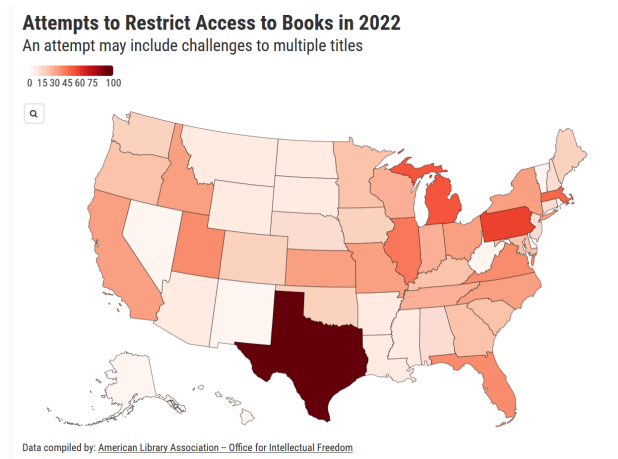
H. A Welcoming Society

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.

Love is love, and everyone should feel supported to show up authentically in the world. We must continue working to protect LGBTQ+ people from discrimination, defending access to gender-affirming care, and ensuring our schools, housing, and public spaces are safe and inclusive for everyone.

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

In 2018, I campaigned to uphold gender identity protections in Massachusetts. I've also voted to ban conversion therapy, voted to protect patients and providers of gender affirming care, and advocated and filed legislation to extend the statute of limitations on filing claims of discrimination in Massachusetts. Most recently, I advocated to DCF to not roll back regulations on ensuring affirming homes for LGBTQ+ youth.

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.

I have long championed efforts aimed at legislative reform, campaign finance reform, and better transparency in government. As a state legislator, I am happy to work with anyone, including House Leaders and the Governor, to make progress for our communities. At the very same time, I am always willing to stand up to anyone, no matter how powerful, whenever our values are at stake. We have made real progress with rules reform on Beacon Hill in recent years, and we've seen more progressives win elections and advance into positions of influence, but I believe we can and must do more.

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

One of the first issues that got me organizing and involved with political activism was responding to the aftermath of *Citizens United* and campaigning to get big money out of politics. While the issue of Super PACs hasn't yet been fixed, we have made progress in building capacity to win grassroots progressive (and democratic socialist) campaigns on the city, state, and federal levels.

When I was first elected to the legislature, I stood against further concentration of leadership power in my very first vote in the House in 2017. And I have consistently stood with fellow progressives in our fights for rules reform.

I was a leader in efforts to pass legislation to make childcare an allowable campaign expense, thereby helping to mitigate one barrier to political participation. In 2022, I was one of 61 House Democrats to vote in support of Same Day Voter Registration in a notable roll call vote. I recently worked with Cambridge colleagues to file legislation to further advance public financing of elections, and I am the lead sponsor of legislation to allow non-citizens to vote in municipal elections.

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, I am a co-sponsor of public records law legislation, and I support the intent of the ballot**

question, although I also acknowledge the SJC recently left the door open to constitutional questions regarding the proposal. My understanding is many state legislatures are fully or partially excluded from public records laws, either by statute or by court/constitutional law doctrine. As a state legislator, it's my duty to follow the will of the voters *and* to uphold our state and federal constitutions and the rule of law, so that is my approach.

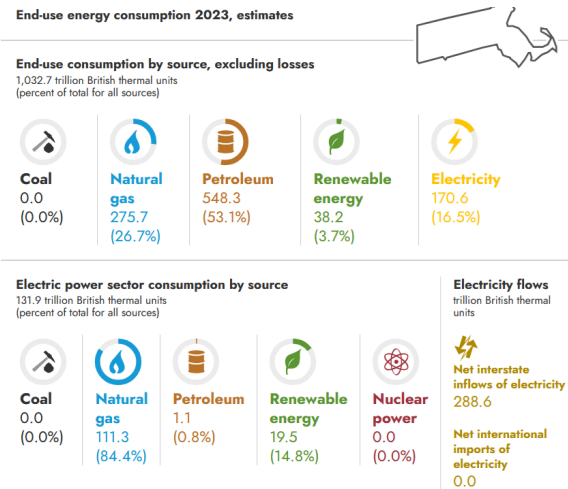
5. **Legislative Accountability.** Massachusetts's system of 'leadership stipends' is an outlier among the 50 states. Do you support the ballot initiative to reform this system to create a fairer pay structure and hold committees to higher standards of transparency and productivity? **YES, I support the intent of the question, although I also recognize the SJC recently expressed significant doubts about the constitutionality of this ballot initiative. Nevertheless, I welcome the ballot question because it could, at the very least, help drive additional legislative reforms.**
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. We have done this for legislative committee meetings and made some further progress statewide.**
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. I have also voted in support of that 2022 SDVR amendment in the House.**
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. I have been a lead sponsor and a regular co-sponsor of RCV legislation, and I volunteered on the 2016 ballot campaign.**
11. **Universal Voting Rights.** Would you support restoring the franchise to incarcerated individuals serving time for felony convictions (Their right to vote was taken away by ballot twenty years ago)? **YES**

J. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection

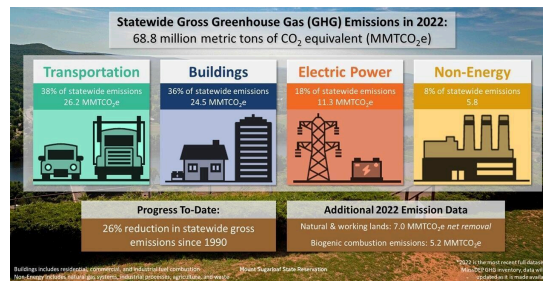
As a coastal state, Massachusetts will be hit particularly hard by climate change, but we are not responding with the necessary urgency. Massachusetts has ambitious and necessary greenhouse gas reduction goals, but we are [not on track](#) to meet them. Our state remains overly dependent on fossil fuels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

Public transit must play a role in decarbonizing our transportation system, as well as advancing complementary goals of equity and inclusion. However, Massachusetts politicians have lost their understanding of public transit as a public good that benefits all residents and businesses in Massachusetts, not just those who use it in their daily lives. The greatest evidence of this is their neglect of the MBTA: it would need [more than \\$24 billion](#) to bring infrastructure and equipment up to a state of good repair. Regional Transit Authorities that serve communities, including Gateway Cities across the state, face enormous capital needs as well.

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



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



1. Please explain your principles and proposals relative to sustainable infrastructure and environmental protection.

We must be working for a world where everything runs on renewable energy, the air and water are clean, climate change is being effectively mitigated, environmental justice is being achieved, and public transportation is reliable, robust, world-class, and free. To achieve these goals, I support taxes on the very wealthy and large corporations to pay for big public investments in sustainable infrastructure and investments in transit, along with Green New Deal-style policies and continued climate and environmental justice and transit advocacy.

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

Circa 2013, I led a grassroots campaign to advance “net zero emissions” building plans in the City of Cambridge. From there, I worked in Cambridge City Hall as a legislative aide and was on the front lines of efforts to pass the city’s plastic bag ban. In each of my first four terms in the House, I was proud to work to pass significant climate protection and renewable energy legislation — including legislation to enable state approval of Cambridge’s municipal fossil fuel free ordinance.

However, in the current term, Trump’s war on offshore wind, combined with his tariffs and other policies have kneecapped our plans for renewables, just as the affordability emergency has worsened. In response, I have been clear — we cannot pit climate against affordability — we need to continue making progress on our climate goals while also achieving real affordability — and the only way to do that is to take on the investor-owned corporate utilities.

For public transportation, I was a leader in efforts to finally bring the Green Line Extension to Somerville, and I was at the forefront of the fight to include the Community Path Extension as part of the GLX. I am a regular T rider and a constant advocate for MBTA improvements. I’ve also been active in advocating for better bus service in Cambridge and Somerville, and for free public transportation and other local infrastructure improvements, including along the Grand Junction Corridor.

3. **Fossil Fuel Infrastructure.** Do you oppose the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure in the state? **YES, and I played a key role in working to advance Cambridge’s fossil fuel free development plans through the state legislative process.**
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. And, I go further; I am the lead sponsor of legislation to facilitate public ownership of our public utilities.**
8. **Data Centers.** Data centers across Massachusetts and the country have been driving heavier energy and water usage, leading to higher costs for everyday customers. Would you support the following measures...?
 - a. Requiring primary-use data centers to pay for the cost of utility infrastructure upgrades, procure renewable back-up energy sources, and provide quarterly water and energy usage data? **YES**
 - b. Imposing a moratorium on new large-load data centers while a commission is convened to define appropriate community and environmental regulations? **YES**
 - c. Repealing tax exemptions for data centers? **YES**
9. **Plastic Bag Ban.:** Would you support a statewide ban on single-use plastic bags? **YES**
10. **Electrifying Public Transit.** In Massachusetts, 43 percent of GHG emissions in 2016 came from transportation infrastructure and vehicles. Tackling this will require a shift away from cars and toward public transit, as well as electrification of both. Would you support requiring the MBTA to operate an all-electric system by 2035? **YES**
11. **Free Public Transit.** Do you support making public transit in the Commonwealth fare-free? **YES**

III. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Limit answer to 150 words or fewer.

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

I could talk about many of these issues in much greater detail if time allowed. So please reach out to me via mike@mikeconnolly.org or at Mike.Connolly@MAhouse.gov should you wish to offer feedback or further discuss any of my thoughts here — and thank you to Progressive Mass leaders and PM members for all that you do!!