

# PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS

## *2016 Primary Race for the 17<sup>th</sup> Worcester Legislative District*

*Endorsement Questionnaire*

*Candidate Responses*

**Donald Belanger, [dougbelangerstaterep.com](http://dougbelangerstaterep.com)**

**Moses Dixon, [mosesdixon.com](http://mosesdixon.com)**



**PRIMARY ELECTION:** THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2016

**17 WORCESTER DISTRICT** consisting of Leicester; Worcester: Ward 7, Ward 8: Precincts 2, 3, 4.

AVAILABLE ON THE WEB

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## **I. About You**

### **Motivations and Priorities**

1. Why are you running for office? And what will your top 3 priorities be if elected? Q.I:1

#### **Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.I:1**

The people of this District and of this State need an advocate that is more focused on getting the job done than just getting or keeping the job. Improvements to Schools, Public Safety, the Environment, Senior and Veterans' Services, Pay Equity, Minimum Wage, and Healthcare, should not be just slogans to appease voters during election time and then put into "study Committees.

I am running for State Representative because I have and will continue to stand up, speak up, and fight to cause improvements to the quality of life of the residents of my District and State.

#### **Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.I:1**

"I'm running to do good work for the people and communities of the 17th Worcester. This may seem naive or simplistic, but that's why I'm doing it, why I think I can win, and why I'll show up every day to do the work.

Priorities:

1. Pay equity for women--time to "Level the Playing Field."
2. Activating, engaging, and helping give voice to diverse constituencies of the 17th Worcester. That means paying attention to issues, large and small, that affect these communities.
3. Universal broadband for unserved communities--high-speed broadband is a necessity, and communities that invest in broadband for all will see benefits for years to come."

### **Background and Experience**

2. What prepares you to serve in this capacity? Q.I:2

#### **Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.I:2**

I am currently the Chairman of the Leicester Selectmen, serving in my 21st year on the Board. I am the V.P of Healthcare for UFCW New England, and have been employed by UFCW Local 1445 as Business Agent and lead negotiator; representing support staff at UMASS Memorial and St. Vincent Hospitals among others.

I can confidently say I am prepared to Represent the people of the District because I have been effectively doing so for over 30 years. I have drafted, authored, testified, and passed Legislation both locally and at the State House. Additionally, my motivation is to get the job done.

#### **Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.I:2**

Right values, right experience, right motivation and energy:

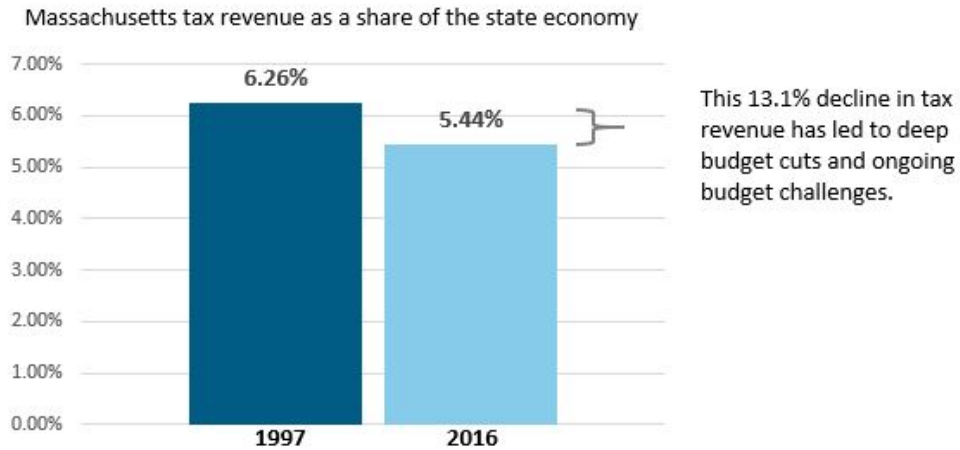
"Hands-on" Legislative and Policy Experience:

- Legislative Aide, Massachusetts Representative Mary S. Keefe
- Legislative Fellow, Office of Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid
- Legislative Intern, U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Budget
- Public Relations and Community Affairs Officer, CENTRO Inc.
- Webster Square Business Association, Board of Directors
- Coes-Zone Task Force, Executive Board Member

II. The Issues

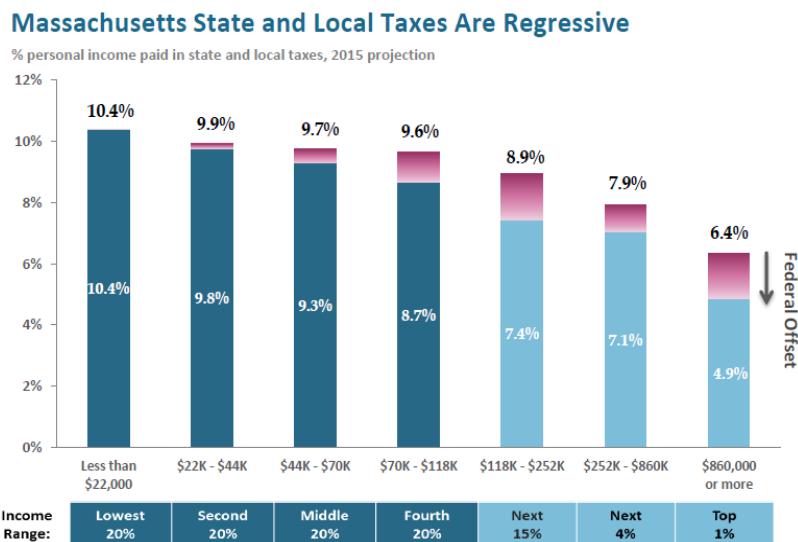
**A. Revenue and Taxation**

Despite the label of “Taxachusetts,” Massachusetts actually ranks 22nd among states in terms of state and local taxes as a share of total personal income and below the national average. Between 1977 and 2012, Massachusetts reduced state taxes by more than all but one other state. Because of income tax cuts enacted between 1998 and 2002, Massachusetts is taking in over \$3 billion less in tax revenue each year. Such cuts to the state income tax have meant increasing reliance on fees, as well as sales, gas, and property taxes, exacerbating the overall regressivity of our revenue. Regressive taxation strains low- and middle-income families, and reduced revenue.



Section A, Figure 1 - Declining revenues have meant drastic cuts, limiting our ability to invest in our communities and future economic stability.

Section A, Figure 2 - Massachusetts state and local taxes are regressive.



### **Statement/Experience**

1. What principles do you bring to considerations of state revenue and tax reform (individual and corporate)? *How should we raise more revenue to adequately fund our communities for the future?* Q.A:1
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.). Q.A:2

#### **Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.A:1**

I feel strongly that we the public have let too many officials get away with filing and sometimes even voting for issues that appease us but not actually passing or funding the Legislation. I would apply to myself and colleagues a measure of effectiveness, accountability, and transparency by emphasizing that if the stated issue before us is worthy of passage, we must have the courage of our convictions to assign a steady and identifiable revenue stream to fund it. [Q.A:1, Revenue and Taxation, ]

*Belanger, Related Experience, Q.A:2*

As a public and Union official I have openly and regularly stood up for identifying or creating the necessary funding for education, public safety, and equality in all aspects of employment. [Q.A:2, Revenue and Taxation, experience ]

#### **Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.A:1**

Tax policy and revenue generation for the Commonwealth must be based on principles of fundamental fairness--that is, people and corporations should pay a fair share of taxes, and should not be able to rig the system so that the burden is shifted unfairly onto those with no political or economic power.

*Dixon, Related Experience, Q.A:2*

When I worked for Rep Mary Keefe, An Act to Invest in communities was being discussed and debated. Fact is, tax policy is unfairly weighted in favor of the wealthy and corporations, and against the interests of people who struggle to support themselves and their families.

### **Progressive Taxation**

3. Currently, Progressive Massachusetts is working on a constitutional amendment to increase the income tax on income over \$1 million by 4%. Do you support or oppose this effort (the Fair Share Amendment)? Q.A:3

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** See above

### **Sales Tax Holiday**

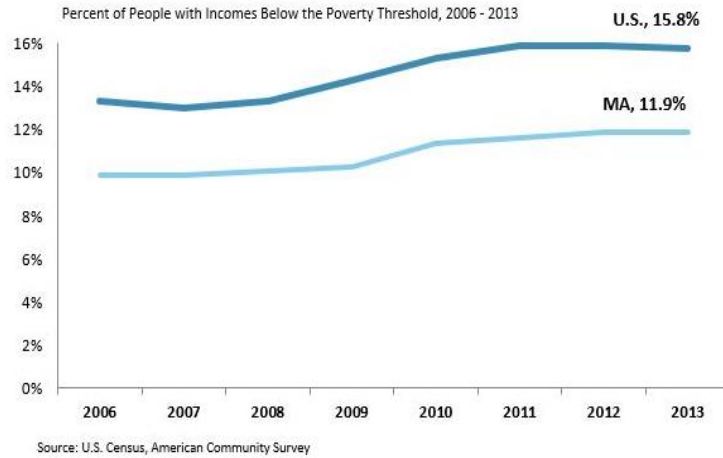
4. It has been demonstrated over and over that the annual sales tax holiday does not serve its intended purpose of increasing sales, but rather just shifts sales to the weekend of the holiday. Will you support or oppose efforts to extend the sales tax holiday? Q.A:4

**Oppose:** Belanger; Dixon

**B. Job Growth and the Economy**

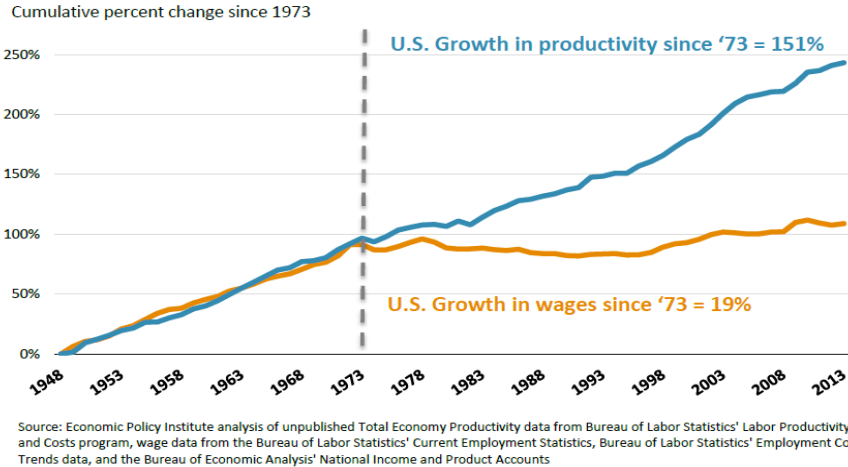
The Massachusetts economy has continued to grow and recover from the Great Recession, but the gains have not been shared equally. Poverty levels continue to increase, while the minimum wage loses value every year. Massachusetts now ranks as one of the top ten most unequal states according to various measures of income inequality.

**MA and U.S. Poverty Rates Remain Elevated Despite Years of Recovery**



Section B, Figure 3

**Growing Wage and Productivity Gap is Our Central Economic Challenge**



Section B, Figure 4 - Productivity has grown significantly since the 1970s, but it is not being reflected in higher wages.

**Statement/Experience**

1. Share your personal values and principles on job growth and the economy. *How can we improve the economy and economic security for all people? How do we grow the number of good paying jobs in the Commonwealth? How do you view wealth and income inequality, and what would you do about it, if anything?* Q.B:1

2. *Optional/As Applicable:* Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on job growth and the economy (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.). Q.B:2

**Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.B:1**

Income equality, job growth, economic security have been the foundation and motivation of my professional and public career for over 30 years.

*Belanger, Related Experience, Q.B:2*

Again as a Union official, and elected official I have regularly and successfully won improvements in pay and benefits for tens of thousands of workers, retirees, and veterans.

**Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.B:1**

Generally, I believe that government exists in part to act as a barrier between people and the predatory, harmful effects of an unfettered economy. Government should advance people's interests through its tax and business polices, and as a State Rep, I will put this philosophy into action.

*Dixon, Related Experience, Q.B:2*

In my work for Centro, I help people get training for jobs in a changing economy, as well as advancing policies that value women and their role in the economy.

**Minimum Wage**

3. Do you support or oppose raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour? Q.B:3

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** Absolutely. There's a photo of me at a "Fight for 15" march on my lit piece.

**Tipped Minimum Wage**

4. Do you support or oppose making the tipped minimum wage equal to that of the regular minimum wage? Q.B:4

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** Tips should be extra, not just a way to get to the minimum. Tips aren't reliable enough to make up the difference, so they should be in addition to the base minimum wage

**Indexed Minimum Wage**

5. Do you support or oppose indexing the minimum wage to inflation? Q.B:5

**Support:** Belanger, Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** Higher minimum wages boost the economy and are the right thing to do.

**Paid Family Medical Leave**

6. Do you support or oppose efforts to mandate access for up to 12 weeks of Paid Family Medical Leave? Q.B:6

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** Healthy children and families make for a healthy Commonwealth, and people should not be deprived of income simply for staying at home to care for a newborn or a sick relative.

### **Corporate Tax Incentives**

7. Do you support or oppose legislation to impose greater accountability on corporate tax incentives (such as through automatic five-year sunsets or revocation of incentives that do not meet promised job, wage, and benefit standards?) Q.B:7

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** Companies too often take advantage of incentives and don't follow through on employment or economic development goals and promises. They should be held accountable.

### **Corporate Tax Incentives and Good Jobs**

8. Do you support or oppose legislation to require any corporation that receives tax incentives to meet wage and benefit standards befitting of a "good job"? Q.B:8

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** Should go hand-in-hand, too often don't.

### **Equal Pay**

9. Do you support or oppose legislation to further the principle of equal pay for equal work? Q.B:9

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Belanger, Additional Comments:** I would publicly point out that in all of the union contracts that I have negotiated, there is never a distinction between pay or benefits based on gender, race etc. The pay and benefits are based on the job title, qualifications and/or experience only. I would further accent that all of those companies are flourishing even as they meet those standards.

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** From our lit piece: Pay Equity for Women – Let's "Level the Paying Field"

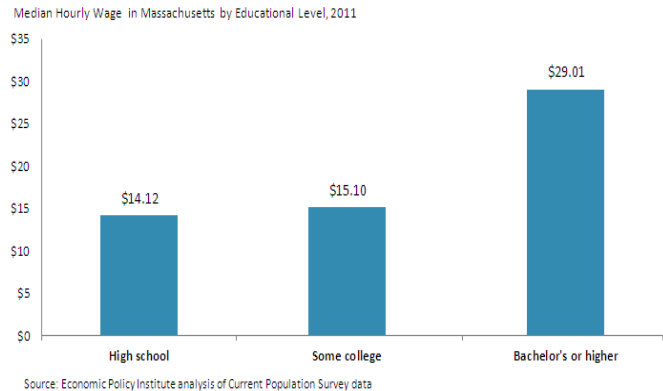
- Women in Mass. are paid 82 cents on the dollar for the same work, less than that for women of color. That's bad for women, men, children, families, and communities.
- As your State Rep, Moses will work with the Attorney General, like-minded legislators, and business and labor leaders to 'Level the Paying Field.'



**C. Education and Workforce Development**

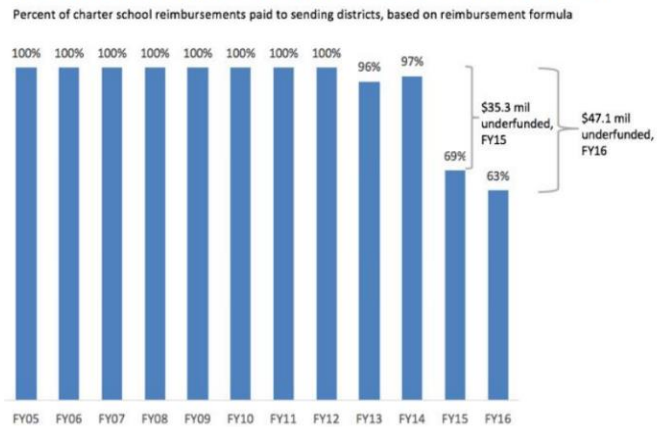
Public education has always been a gateway to opportunity and mobility for all, regardless of economic circumstances, a cornerstone of the American dream for all residents. The mission of public schools is to serve all students, including English Language Learners and those with special needs. However, powerful corporate interests are working to undermine public schools, teachers, and unions. These groups are investing 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. Various forms of privatization are being proposed and implemented, including charter schools and “turnaround” schemes that put private management groups in charge of struggling public schools. Costly, mandated standardized test results are used to justify these privatization schemes. Finally, the soaring price of higher education over the last several decades has made access to this opportunity increasingly out of reach, at the very moment when higher education makes a greater difference to one’s economic future.

Section C, Figure 5 - Higher educational attainment leads to higher wages



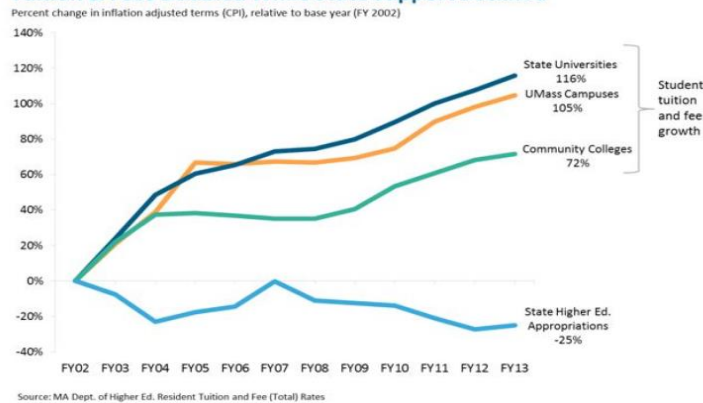
Section C, Figure 6 - The state hasn't been living up to its responsibility to fully fund our public schools.

**The State Has Not Fully Funded Charter Reimbursements in Recent Years**



Section C, Figure 7 - Massachusetts has been disinvesting from higher education and shifting the cost burden onto students.

**Tuition & Fees Doubled While State Support Declined**



### **Statement/Experience**

1. Please share your personal values and principles regarding public education and workforce training. *What value does public education and workforce development have in improving our economy as well as in addressing matters of economic justice? What measures should the Commonwealth take on these issues?* Q.C:1
2. Optional/As Applicable: Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on public education and workforce development? Q.C:2

#### **Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.C:1**

I am and have been a passionate and vocal advocate for our Public Schools. As the third of seven children raised in a low income family we are all living examples of the benefits of a good public education. We are all gainfully employed, raising our own families who attend public schools, and we all contribute to society through taxation and community service.

*Belanger, Related Experience, Q.C2*

In my capacity as a Selectman and as a Union Representative, I regularly advocate for full and honest funding for our educational system. In particular, I lobby and testify for identifiable and sustainable funding and oppose the ongoing system of unfunded mandates, the shell game of negating any announced gains in Chapter 70 through increased assessments and offsets on the Cherry Sheet, and the drain of critical funds to Charter Schools.

#### **Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.C:1**

A quality, affordable education is a step-up to success for people and for society. From pre-K to grade, high, and vocational schools, on through public and private colleges and universities, learning is the pipeline for achievement.

As a successful beneficiary of the public school system, I believe that we must continue to invest in, and improve, our public schools across the board. Siphoning resources away from public schools is a sure way to further weaken them and the hopes of the people they serve.

*Dixon, Related Experience, Q.C:2*

Worked for State Rep Keefe, whose membership on the Labor & Workforce Development Committee helped inform my knowledge and activism around issues of economic justice and opportunity.

### **Achievement gaps**

3. How would you address persistent racial and economic achievement gaps in education? Q.C:3

#### **Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.C:3**

Much like my examples of equal pay and benefits, I would use real examples of how our entire economy and society benefit from equal and fair treatment and how such investments are rewarded; conversely I would use real examples of the cost of not applying such standards as a means of motivating my colleagues.

#### **Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.C:3**

1. Not siphon resources away from public schools
2. Bridge the “digital divide” by helping provide universally available, affordable broadband access and technology to low-income households. This will help students do homework, parents do professional development or job searches, and help provide opportunity.

### **Universal Pre-K**

4. Do you support or oppose creating universal, free Pre-K, accessible to any resident of Massachusetts, integrated into the public school system? Q.C:4

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** All the Way Pre-K.

### **Standardized Testing**

5. Do you support or oppose the use of high-stakes testing for such things as student promotion, high school graduation, teacher evaluation, and the evaluation of schools and districts? Q.C:5

**Oppose:** Belanger; Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** Evaluation of teachers, students, schools, and school systems should be holistic and comprehensive, not based just on test scores.

### **Funding Structure**

6. Do you support or oppose changes to the Chapter 70 Education formula, including the Foundation Budget, to incorporate proper state funding for ELL students, Special Ed. students, transportation costs, charter school reimbursements to sending schools, and class size reduction? Q.C:6

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Belanger, Additional Comments:** See #2.

### **Charter School Cap**

7. Do you support or oppose the 2016 ballot question that would lift the cap on charter schools? Q.C:7

**Oppose:** Belanger, Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** Public schools need all the resources they can get.

### **Charter Accountability**

8. Do you support or oppose legislation measures to bring greater accountability and transparency to charter schools, such as by requiring the backfilling of students throughout the school year and by requiring charter schools to adhere to the same disciplinary procedures and public disclosure standards as public schools? Q.C:8

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** If they receive public funds, they should meet the same standards as public schools.

### **Higher Ed Access**

9. Do you support or oppose legislation to grant in-state tuition and financial aid to undocumented students? Q.C:9

**Support:** Dixon

**Belanger, Additional Comments:** I believe in eventual tuition free higher public education starting with Community Colleges. Although I am not opposed to the principal the question poses, I would need to know which of the many proposals that have been put forward are being considered here. In general if we had tuition free Public colleges, the question is moot. Additionally, I would like to use such discussion as another positive means of finding consensus to a path to citizenship.

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** Our universities are not the immigration patrol; let's let them do their job of educating students. If you are a resident of Massachusetts, you should get in-state tuition, period.

### **Universal Higher Education**

10. Do you support or oppose the goal of providing free, publicly funded higher education for every student who wants it? Q.C:10

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon



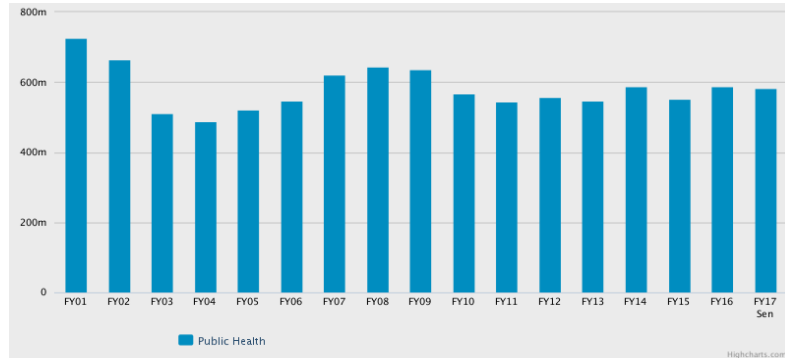
**Belanger, Additional Comments:** I intend to propose legislation in my "maiden speech" or first opportunity that would provide a tuition free community college education as a first step toward the higher goal. I would argue that as a High School diploma was once the minimum standard for better employment, an Associates degree or advanced Trade training is now essential to an individual's economic success.

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** At least at community colleges, more if it's economically feasible.

**D. Health Care**

Massachusetts has led the way in providing near universal health insurance coverage, with 96% of the state having health insurance. But there is still work to do. Significant disparities in health insurance coverage and health care access continue to exist along income, racial, and education lines. Premiums continue to rise, and medical debt remains a persistent problem. We still spend an oversized portion of public and private money on health care, but without necessarily achieving better health outcomes.

*Section D, Figure 8 - Public health funding has decreased 19% since 2001.*



**Statement/Experience**

1. Please share your personal values and principles regarding health care insurance, delivery and outcomes. Q.D:1
2. *Optional/As Applicable:* Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on health care (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.). Q.D:2

**Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.D:1**

Single payer healthcare for all.

*Belanger, Related Experience, Q.D:2*

Lobbied, circulated petitions, written articles for local newspaper in support.

**Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.D:**

Healthcare should be a universal human right, but in our society access to healthcare, as with so much else, is dependent on money. I believe that a single-payer, universal healthcare system is the best, fairest model--"Medicare for All." Disparities in access of course result in disparities in outcome, and that is unacceptable.

*Dixon, Related Experience, Q.D:2*

Rep Mary Keefe is a member of the Joint Committee on Public Health, and through working for her I learned more about environmental injustice and its health effects on poor communities.

**Single Payer**

3. Would you support legislation to enact a Mass. single payer health care system? Q.D:3

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** See above.



***Reproductive Rights***

4. Would you support or oppose legislation to support women accessing abortion care without dangerous delay, isolation, and obstruction? Q.D:4

**Support:** Belanger, Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** Strongly pro-choice and strongly in favor of funding women's healthcare.

**E. Housing**

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. Currently, there is a waiting list of up to ten years for a rental voucher, and the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment requires a wage 40% higher than the average renter wage. Half of families in Greater Boston alone pay over 30% of their income in housing and utilities costs—and over 25% of households pay *more than half* their income to housing. 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.

**Funding for housing vouchers has fallen--  
 costs for shelter has increased**

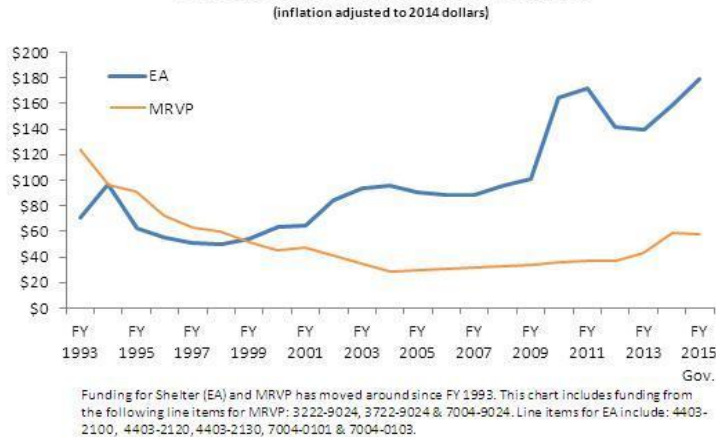


Figure 9

**Statement/Experience**

1. Please share your personal values and principles regarding affordable housing. *How would you ensure that there is suitable housing for all who need it, within reasonable distance of job opportunities? How would you address the need to link housing, jobs, and transportation? How would you tackle homelessness?* Q.E: 1
2. *Optional/As Applicable:* Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on housing (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.). Q.E:2

**Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.E:1**

As in job opportunities, equal pay, healthcare, and fair treatment for all; available and affordable housing is the cornerstone of a successful society.

*Belanger, Related Experience, Q.E:2*

In my various capacities, I have opposed overly restrictive zoning proposals, and supported those that have extended those development opportunities.

**Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.E:1**

By requiring developers to integrate affordable housing with market-rate housing units, we accomplish a praiseworthy social goal while also fueling the housing market and economy. This kind of creative policy works, and I will work to develop mixed-use, diverse developments that meet communities' and developers' needs.

*Dixon, Related Experience, Q.E:2*

The population served by Centro, where I work, often faces housing issues, and I deal with them regularly, and successfully.

### ***Funding Housing Programs***

3. (a) Do you support or oppose increasing state funding to housing programs, and  
(b) how would you work to see increases (if relevant) realized? Q.E:3

#### **Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.E:3**

- a) Support.
- b) I have had great success in building coalitions through factual and undeniable fact finding and by persistence in lobbying colleagues.

#### **Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.E:3**

- a) Support.
- b) Among other things: Develop better PILOT programs and payments from non-profits in Worcester and across the Commonwealth. This is a particular problem in Worcester, where many of the hospitals, colleges, etc., are non-profit and therefore tax exempt.  
  
Funds from a more well-structured PILOT program could go to better affordable housing for veterans, seniors, and people with disabilities."

### ***Affordable Housing***

4. Do you support or oppose efforts to weaken affordable housing goals under chapter 40b, such as by lowering the affordable housing percent in a community to below 10% or counting market-rate housing as "affordable"? Q.E:4

**Oppose:** Dixon

**Belanger, Additional Comments:** Although I do not support making affordable housing less available, the wording of this question creates more questions than answers for me. In principal I oppose weakening the goals of 40b but the examples presented in my opinion could have unintended consequences that would further divide communities on this issue.

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** Affordable housing is essential, and I will vigorously oppose efforts to weaken funding or support.

### ***Zoning Reform***

5. Would you support or oppose legislation to upgrade Massachusetts' zoning laws to encourage more affordable housing and transit-oriented, walkable development and to allow municipalities to adopt inclusionary zoning practices? Q.E:5

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

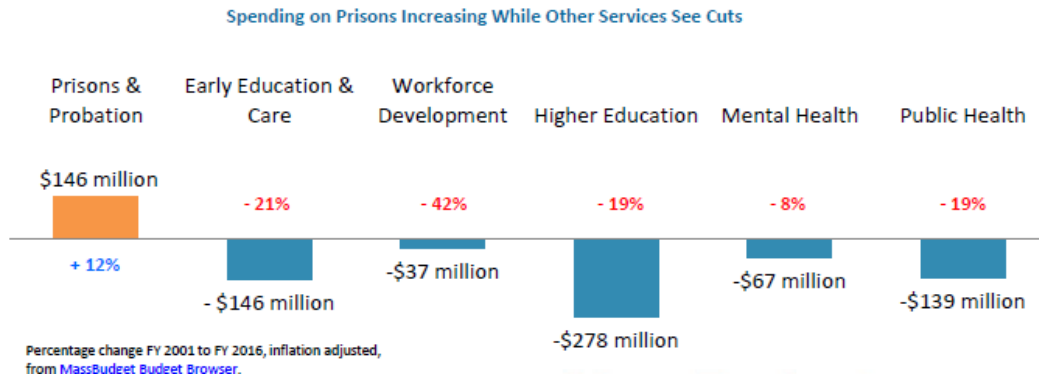
**Dixon, Additional Comments:** See above.



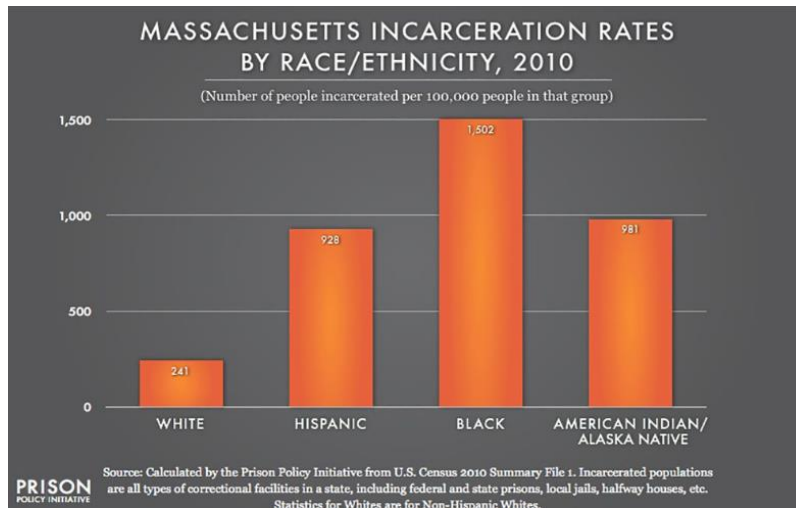
**F. Racial and Social Justice**

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. The social and economic costs of mass incarceration and the policies that created it, in particular, have put our aspirations of “justice for all” into crisis. We support a judicial system that does not disproportionately target communities of color and the poor, that does not criminalize public health issues such as addiction, that reorients away from ineffective and costly ‘tough on crime’ policies. A comprehensive approach to reform must be taken in all aspects of the criminal justice system.

Section F, Figure 10 - Spending on prisons has increased while other services have been cut.



Section F, Figure 11 - Significant racial disparities exist in incarceration in Massachusetts.



### **Statement/Experience**

1. Please share your personal values and principles regarding Racial and Social Justice. Q.F:1
2. Please indicate work you personally have done to combat racism, Islamophobia, xenophobia, transphobia, and other attempts to marginalize disadvantaged classes. Q.F:2

#### **Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.F:1**

As in previous answers, I have spent a lifetime fighting for equality for all. Such values are not reached as a political convenience, but engrained in my very soul through a christian upbringing with strong family values and sense of righteousness.

*Belanger, Related Experience, Q.F:2*

As a husband of 30 years and father of two young adults, I have continued to teach by example and stand up for those principles and values that were instilled and inspired to be in me. Witnessing my children live and continue those traditions and beliefs are great steps in the expansion of that education and goal.

#### **Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.F:1**

If elected, I will be the first person of color elected to the State House from Worcester County. I am intimately familiar with issues of racial and social justice, and will advocate for equality at the State House.

*Dixon, Related Experience, Q.F:2*

Lots.

### **Mandatory Minimum Sentencing**

3. Do you support or oppose legislation to eliminate mandatory minimum sentences related to drug offenses? Q.F:3

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

### **Safe Driving Act**

4. Do you support or oppose the Safe Driving Act, which would remove immigration status as a barrier to applying for a license or learner's permit? Q.F:4

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** The RMV is not the INS or ICE. This is about road safety and insurance for all drivers.

### **Bail Reform**

5. Do you support or oppose legislation to reform the pretrial process (bail reform)? Q.F:5

**Support:** Dixon

**Belanger, Additional Comments:** Need more specific information

### **Marijuana Legalization**

6. Do you support or oppose the 2016 ballot initiative to legalize recreational marijuana and regulate it like alcohol? Q.F:6

**Oppose:** Belanger; Dixon

### **School-to-Prison Pipeline**

7. Do you support or oppose legislation to defuel the school school-to-prison pipeline, such as by stopping zero tolerance disciplinary policies? Q.F:7

**Support:** Dixon.



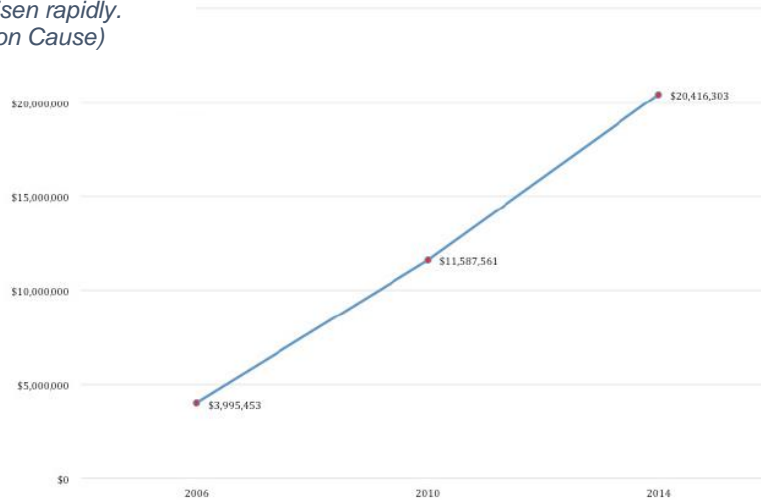
**Belanger, Additional Comments:** Need further information

**G. Good Government and Good Citizenship**

The influence of big money in politics is detrimental to democracy. Independent expenditures in MA elections have grown by a factor of five over the past decade. A centralized power structure on Beacon Hill, is undemocratic, and makes it easier for lobbyists to target the top and undermine the system. Key to any vision of good government is citizen engagement. Voter turnout in midterm elections, and especially local elections, remains low. The Election Modernization Act of 2014 helped eliminate Massachusetts’s embarrassing status as one of the ten worst states in terms of voting rights, but there is still much work to be done.

Section G, Figure 12 -  
 Independent expenditures in MA  
 elections have risen rapidly.  
 (Source: Common Cause)

**MA Independent Expenditure Totals**



**Statement/Experience**

1. Please share your personal values and principles regarding Good Governance Reform. Q.G:1
2. Please indicate work you personally have done to promote transparency, campaign finance reform, legislative rules reform, and access to voting. Q.G:2

**Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.G:1**

Public confidence is understandably eroded when access is determined more by the size of the contribution than the issues at hand. Although government funded campaigns would likely solve those concerns, I do not believe it will ever be accepted and therefore we all must continue to make progress in the system we have. More transparency and legislating a reversal of the Citizens United ruling and eliminating corporate donations.

*Belanger, Related Experience, Q.G:2*

I have and continue to speak out publicly on all of the above in all of my capacities.

**Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.G:1**

I agree that too much money in politics corrupts the process, and think that though lobbyists represent legitimate interests, often their influence is disproportionate to the amount of social good they accomplish and the values they promote.

All lobbyists are not equal. The ASPCA is not the NRA is not the ACLU, etc .

*Dixon, Related Experience, Q.G:2*

I am running a campaign that includes and reaches out to constituency groups and populations that should be at the decision-making table, but are too often left out.

***Power and the Legislature***

3. If elected, would you support or oppose efforts to dilute the amount of power held by leadership in your respective branch of government? For example, would you support a rule change allowing committees to appoint their own chair, instead of leadership? Q.G:3

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Belanger, Additional Comments:** As an elected official in my community for over 21 years, Selectmen and all other Boards and Committees are required (Ironically by the State Legislature) to elect their own chair etc. It has proven to be a successful system and creates more credibility and accountability than resting such authority with one individual.

***Public Campaign Financing***

4. **Public campaign financing.** Do you support or oppose legislation to create a robust public financing system for state elections? Q.G:4

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** This is the only real way to ensure equal access to all who desire to run for office.

***Election Day Voter Registration***

5. **Election day voter registration.** Do you support or oppose Election Day Registration? Q.G:5

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Dixon, Additional Comments:** 100%.

***Automatic Voter Registration***

6. **Automatic voter registration.** Do you support or oppose automatic voter registration?

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**H. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection**

Massachusetts will be hit particularly hard by climate change. In order to avoid catastrophic climate change, global carbon emissions need to be reduced by 70% by 2050 and brought to 0 by 2080. Massachusetts has been a leader in increasing energy efficiency and reducing carbon production and must continue this leadership role in the United States. This 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 incentivizing reduced carbon usage and assisting in coordination between agencies and moving forward local government understanding of looming climate threats.

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 \$5.5 billion, with over \$7 billion in deferred maintenance costs. Regional Transit Authorities that serve communities, including Gateway Cities across the state, face enormous capital needs as well.

Figure 13 - The cost of keeping transit in good repair grows as we continue to defer maintenance.

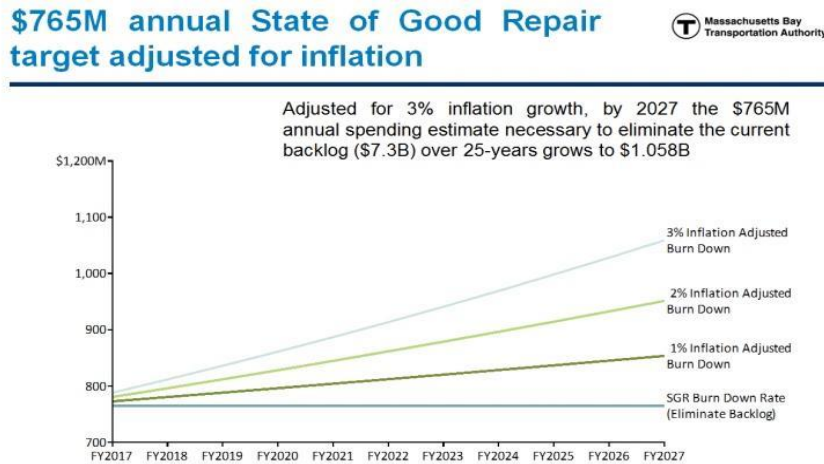
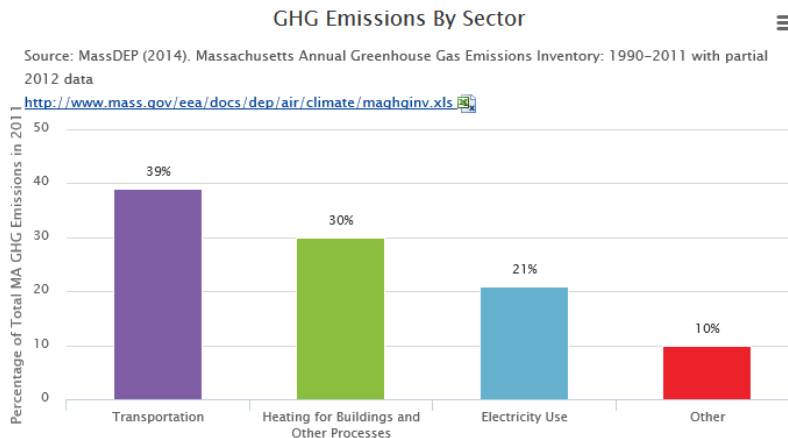


Figure 14 - Transportation is currently the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in MA, although heating and electricity are also major



### **Statement/Experience**

1. Please share your personal values and principles regarding Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection. Q.H:1
2. Please indicate work you personally have done to protect the environment and expand access to public transportation. Q.H:2

#### **Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.H:1**

I support expansion and increased funding for all forms of public transportation. Additionally, increased funding and planning for better and safer movement for pedestrians and bicyclist.

*Belanger, Related Experience, Q.H:2*

For the past 15 years as a member and Treasurer of Worcester Regional Transportation Authority Advisory Board, I have been an outspoken advocate for the expansion and modernization of that system. As a Selectman, I have fought for and won annual funding for sidewalks and cross walks to improve the ease and safety for residents and visitors.

#### **Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.H:1**

We should use our purchasing power as a Commonwealth to favor vendors and manufacturers who conserve energy and other resources. Efficiency in transportation helps minimize carbon pollution, and I will fight for strategic investment to help incorporate energy efficiency into every level of state government.

*Dixon, Related Experience, Q.H:2*

Rep Keefe was a member of the committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture, and her commitment to the environment has informed my own.

### **Global Warming Solutions Act**

3. Earlier this year, the Massachusetts SJC ruled that the state has not met the emissions reductions requirements of the 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act. What steps would you support to meet and go beyond the targets set by this act? Q.H:3

#### **Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.H:3**

This is another issue that needs an advocate that is able and willing to clearly articulate the absolute necessity and benefits of expediting and not delaying clear and specific rules and regulations to protect our survival.

#### **Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.H:3**

Stop gas leaks in Worcester, a chronic problem in our poor communities.

### **Funding Climate Change Adaptation**

4. Will you support or oppose increasing funding and collaboration between state and local governments on resiliency and climate adaptation efforts to help mitigate the consequences of climate change? Q.H:4

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

### **Solar Energy**

5. Do you support or oppose efforts to increase equitable access to solar power by pushing to remove caps on solar generation and restore compensation for low-income and community solar? Q.H:5

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Carbon Fees**

6. Do you support or oppose legislation to put a fee on carbon emissions? Q.H:6

**Support:** Belanger; Dixon

**Gas Pipelines**

7. Do you support or oppose the expansion of gas pipelines in the state? Q.H:7

**Oppose:** Belanger; Dixon

**MBTA Fiscal Challenges**

8. Do you believe that the fiscal problems facing the MBTA can be solved by reform alone, or is new revenue require? Which reforms? Which additional revenue sources? Q.H:8

**Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.H:8**

When I was appointed to serve on the WRTA and elected by that body to serve as Treasurer, the entire program was in jeopardy of being shut down or downsized out of service. It was running in annual deficits, had antiquated equipment, low personnel morale, and a generally bad reputation. I can say that with vision, tenacity, lobbying, and a concrete plan the entire system is thriving and boasts the largest fleet of all electric buses in the country. Gas tax revenue dedicated to all Public Transportation systems would encourage additional use and provide needed revenue.

**Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.H:8**

I believe that additional revenue may be necessary to maintain and upgrade aging MBTA infrastructure, and am open to any reasonable proposal to generate that revenue.

**MBTA Fare Hikes**

9. Do you support or oppose capping MBTA fare hikes at 5% (or less) for every two-year period? Q.H:9

**Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.H:9**

Having served on Boards that regularly consider such issues, I will say fare hikes are a last resort. All other options and efficiencies should be considered and in my experience fare hikes can take on different forms through promoting packages with discounts etc.

**Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.H:9**

Support. I believe that we can upgrade and maintain our infrastructure while also charging rates that are affordable to all users.





III. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

***Limit answer to 250 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.

**Doug Belanger, 17th Worcester, Q.III**

I am running for State Representative because I am uniquely qualified to do the job that desperately needs to be done. I am a lifelong resident of the District and have won numerous elections including 21 years to the Board of Selectmen.

We currently have a first term, Republican Representative that is wrong on most issues and silent on the rest. I came within 43 votes of winning the seat in 2014 after winning the Primary by a 2-1 margin. The current Rep. had no record to point out and rode in on the low turnout, off year republican wave that hit Central Mass.

My views and ability to articulate them are a result of over 30 years of community activism and from my training and service as a Union Organizer, Business Agent, and Negotiator. I can and will be an outspoken advocate and champion for the progressive causes that have defined my life.

**Moses Dixon, 17th Worcester, Q.III**

Thank you for your consideration. I would be honored to have your support.