

# PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS

## *2016 Race for the First Hampden & Hampshire Senate District*

*Endorsement Questionnaire*

*Candidate Responses*

**Eric Lesser, [www.ericlessor.com](http://www.ericlessor.com)**

**GENERAL ELECTION: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2016**

**First Hampden & Hampshire Senate District:** Consisting of the cities of Chicopee, ward 1, precincts A and B, ward 5, precincts A and B, ward 6, precincts A and B, ward 8, precinct B and ward 9, precinct B and Springfield, ward 2, precinct G, ward 4, precinct F, ward 5, precincts D, F, G and H, ward 6, precincts B, D and H, ward 7 and ward 8, precinct A and the towns of East Longmeadow, Hampden, Longmeadow, Ludlow and Wilbraham in the county of Hampden; and the towns of Belchertown and Granby in the county of Hampshire.

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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?**

I am running for office to continue the work I have already accomplished in my first two years in office and to be a strong voice for Western Massachusetts up on Beacon Hill. If elected, top three priorities will continue to be:

- 1) The opioid epidemic is running rampant in Western Massachusetts. I am laser-focused on combating substance abuse, and committed to reversing the harmful effects this crisis has had on our region.
- 2) Economic development and job growth have been highly concentrated on the other side of the state, and I am focused on creating and sustaining high-quality, high-paying jobs in Western Massachusetts.
- 3) Connecting the eastern part of the state to us in the west is key to improving our economic, housing, and overall well-being in Western Massachusetts. I will continue to champion the establishment of High Speed rail service between Springfield and Boston.

### **Background and Experience**

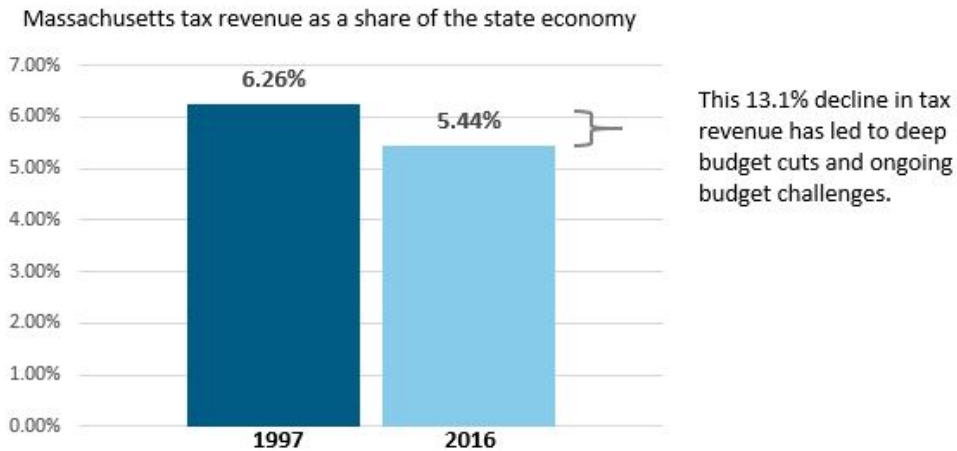
#### **2. What prepares you to serve in this capacity?**

I have the experience as a member of the Senate to continue the work I have done for Western Massachusetts. I have worked with leadership and across party lines to get the job done, and I have concrete accomplishments in my three priority focus areas as a result.

**II. The Issues**

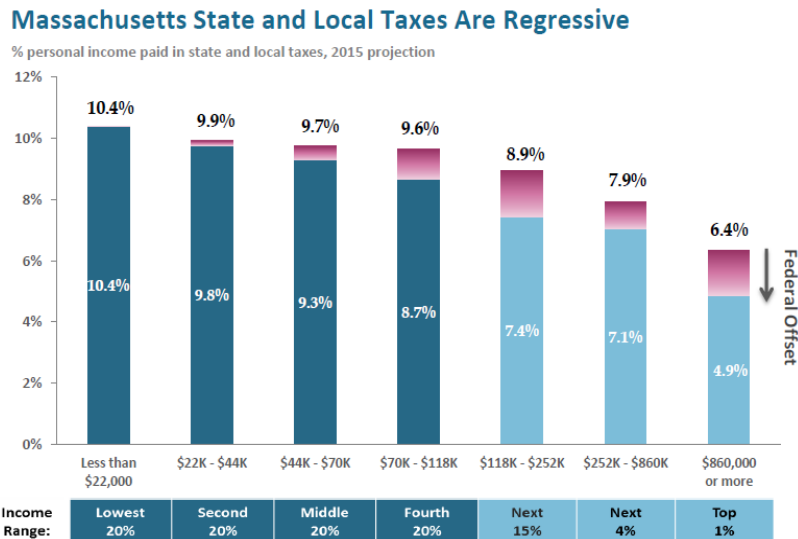
**A. Revenue and Taxation**

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?*

I believe that everyone should pay their fair share to ensure that the most important needs of Western Massachusetts residents such as education and infrastructure are supported.

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.).

As a member of the Joint Committee on Revenue and a member of the Senate, I took votes to expand the Earned Income Tax Credit and increase revenue through the Fair Share Amendment.

**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)?

**Support**

I support the Fair Share Amendment. I voted in favor of this constitutional amendment as a member of the Joint Committee on Revenue and during the May 18, 2016 Constitutional Convention.

**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?

**Oppose**

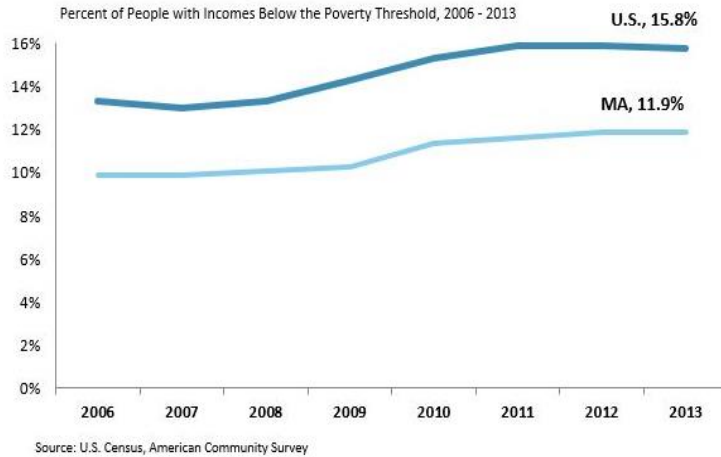
I voted in support of the 2015 sales tax holiday; however, I understand there is research to suggest that the benefits of a sales tax holiday may not be as significant as once thought; and I supported the decision to forgo the sales tax holiday in 2016.



**B. Job Growth and the Economy**

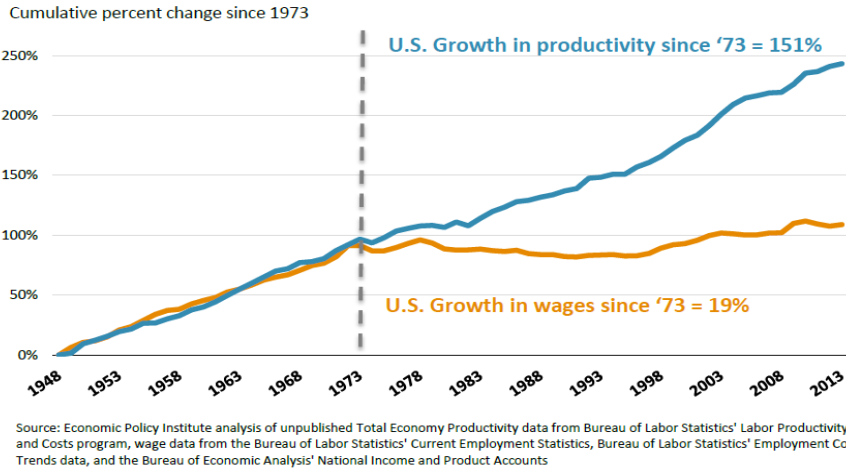
The Massachusetts economy has continued to grow and recover from the Great Recession, but the gains have not been shared equally. Poverty levels continue to increase, while the minimum wage loses value every year. Massachusetts now ranks as one of the top ten most unequal states according to various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

Economic development and job growth have been highly concentrated on the other side of the state. We need to connect Western Massachusetts to the red hot economies in the east, ensure our schools and training programs have the resources they need to close the job skills gap, and connect employers with open positions to trained workers ready to do the job.

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.).

I secured more than \$1.5 million in funding for precision manufacturing pilot program, with programs located in Hampden County. I served as a member of the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies, which took the lead in crafting the 2016 Job Creation and Workforce Development law. I authored legislation to promote new investment in high-tech businesses in Gateway Cities like Springfield and Chicopee. I sponsored successful amendments to the 2016 economic development bill providing capital funding authorization to set up an engineering program at Belchertown High School and to support the carpentry and electric, machine tool technology, and auto technology programs at Chicopee Comprehensive High School. I also voted to increase the Earned Income Tax Credit from 15% to 23%, providing boosting incomes for 400,000 working families in Massachusetts.

### **Minimum Wage**

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

**Support**

I support raising the minimum wages to \$15 an hour in a manner that is not detrimental to both large and small businesses in Massachusetts.

### **Tipped Minimum Wage**

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

**Oppose**

### **Indexed Minimum Wage**

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

**Support**

### **Paid Family Medical Leave**

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

**Support**

I support efforts to mandate access for up to 12 weeks of Paid Family Medical Leave. I voted in favor of this legislation in the Senate and am a co-sponsor of the original legislation filed by Senator Spilka.

### **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?)

**Support**

I support legislation to impose greater accountability on corporate tax incentives.



***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”?

**Support**

***Equal Pay***

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

**Support**

I support legislation to further the principle of equal pay for equal work. I voted in favor of this legislation in the Senate and am a co-sponsor of the original legislation filed by Senator Jehlen. I wrote this op-ed on my beliefs around gender equality:

[http://www.masslive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2015/05/equality\\_for\\_women\\_and\\_girls\\_g.html](http://www.masslive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2015/05/equality_for_women_and_girls_g.html).

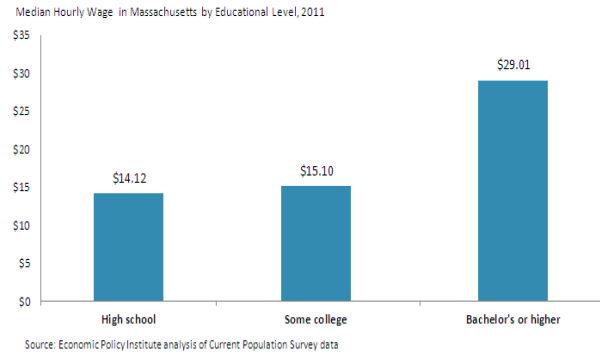




**C. Education and Workforce Development**

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**

Percent of charter school reimbursements paid to sending districts, based on reimbursement formula



**Statement/Experience**

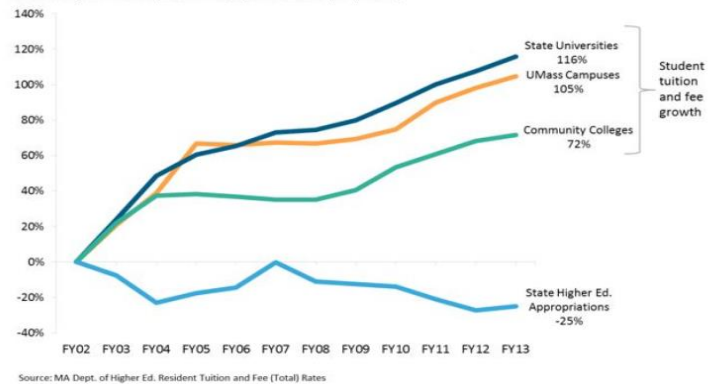
1. Please share your personal values and principles regarding public education and workforce training. *What value does public education and workforce development have in improving our economy as well as in addressing matters of economic justice? What measures should the Commonwealth take on these issues?*

Adequate public education and workforce training are a matter of economic and regional fairness, and they have the ability to lift everyone up. In Western Massachusetts, we are, in many respects, behind in both our public education and workforce training efforts. I will keep fighting for resources to ensure Western Massachusetts residents receive education and training from birth through adulthood that will giving them the opportunity to lift themselves up.

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**

Percent change in inflation adjusted terms (CPI), relative to base year (FY 2002)



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

I serve as a member of the Senate's "Kids First!" initiative, a working group tasked with developing strategies and investments that will comprehensively support strong and resilient children in Massachusetts from birth through college. I worked to successfully restore \$18.6 million in funding for kindergarten expansion grants in the FY16 budget, and I was the Lead sponsor of an amendment to the FY17 budget to fully fund kindergarten expansion grants. I am a co-Sponsor of An Act relative to universal pre-kindergarten access and An Act for universal early education and full-day kindergarten.

I supported the inclusion of \$4.63 billion in the FY17 budget for Chapter 70 education funding, an \$116.1million increase over FY16 and an increase of \$11.9 million for the nine cities and towns of the First Hampden & Hampshire District. I co-sponsored successful amendments in both the FY16 and FY17 budgets that increased state aid for regional school transportation. I Secured funding for a new machine tech training program at the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative, serving the school districts of Agawam, East Longmeadow, Longmeadow, Easthampton, Hampden-Wilbraham, Ludlow, Southwick-Tolland-Granville, West Springfield and South Hadley. I sponsored successful capital funding authorization to set up an engineering program at Belchertown High School and to support the carpentry and electric, machine tool technology, and auto technology programs at Chicopee Comprehensive High School. I voted in favor of the RISE Act and co-sponsored An Act for language opportunity for our kids.

I voted to override higher education funding reductions, including the restoration of \$5.25 million in cuts to UMASS-Amherst and worked with colleagues to secure \$500,000 for the UMass Center in Springfield. I fought for successful legislation setting up a Massachusetts 529 Plan, which creates a tax deduction for contributions made to qualified college savings plans. I sponsored a successful measure aimed at reducing the cost of college textbooks, which was included in the final FY17 budget. I also sponsored a successful amendment enabling uniform financial aid shopping sheets be made available on mobile devices, making vital information easier to access when parents and students are making decisions about where to attend college.

### ***Achievement gaps***

3. What would you do to address persistent racial and economic achievement gaps in education?

I would ensure all public schools have the resources they need to give our children the education they need to thrive.

### ***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?

**Support**

I support creating universal, free Pre-K and have co-sponsored legislation that would do the same.

### ***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?

I support initiatives to review the testing climate & limit tests to 2% of the school year.

### ***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 Education students, transportation costs, charter school reimbursements to sending schools, and class size reduction?

**Support**

I support changes to the Chapter 70 Education formula, which is outdated and in need of improvements to ensure all children receive the education they deserve.



***Charter School Cap***

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

**Oppose**

***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?

**Support**

I support legislation that brings greater accountability and transparency to charter schools and voted in favor the the Senate's RISE Act that would do the same.

***Higher Ed Access***

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

**Support**

***Universal Higher Education***

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

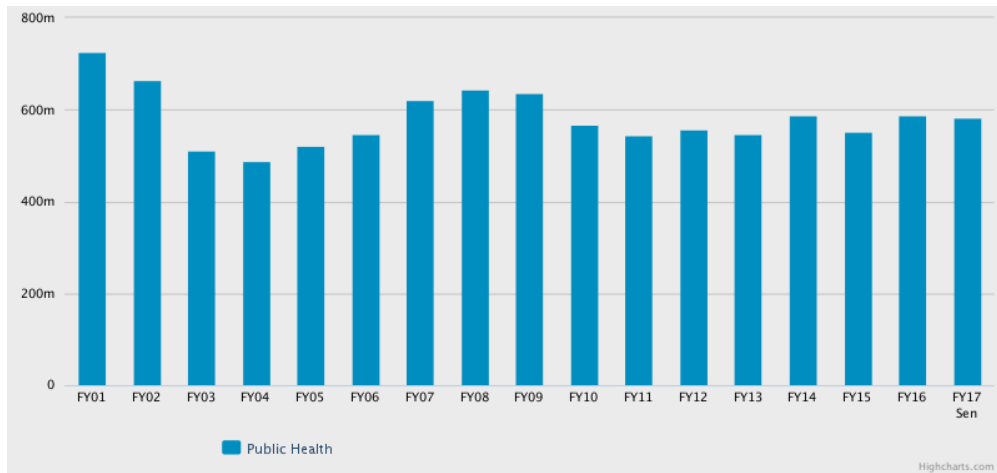
**Support**



**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.

My dad is a family doctor in Holyoke. I believe healthcare needs to be high quality, accessible and affordable.

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 worked in the White House during the passage of the Affordable Care Act, and was very proud to play a small part in the passage of the historic legislation. As David Axelrod’s special assistant, I was able to witness up-close President Obama’s fight for health care for every American.

**Single Payer**

3. Would you support legislation to enact a single payer health care system in Massachusetts?

**Support**

Yes, I've been endorsed by MassCare.

**Reproductive Rights**

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

**Support**

Yes, I've been endorsed by Planned Parenthood.



**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**

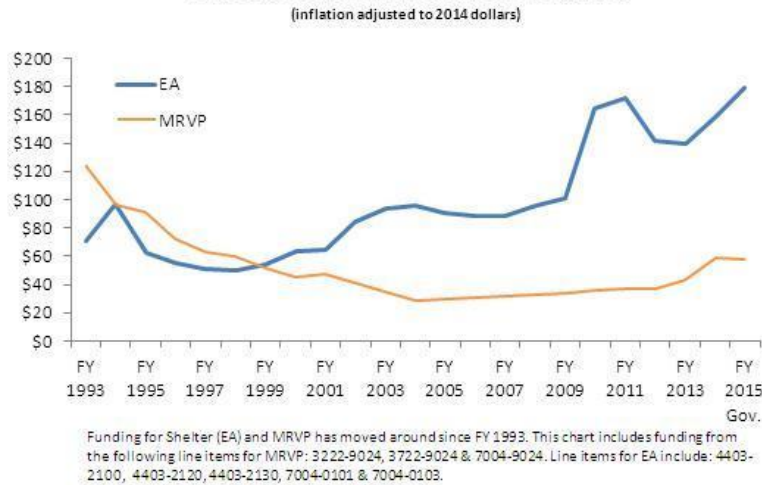


Figure 9

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

**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?
  - a) Support
  - b)

**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"?
 

**Oppose**  
 I oppose efforts to weaken affordable housing goals under chapter 40b.



***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?

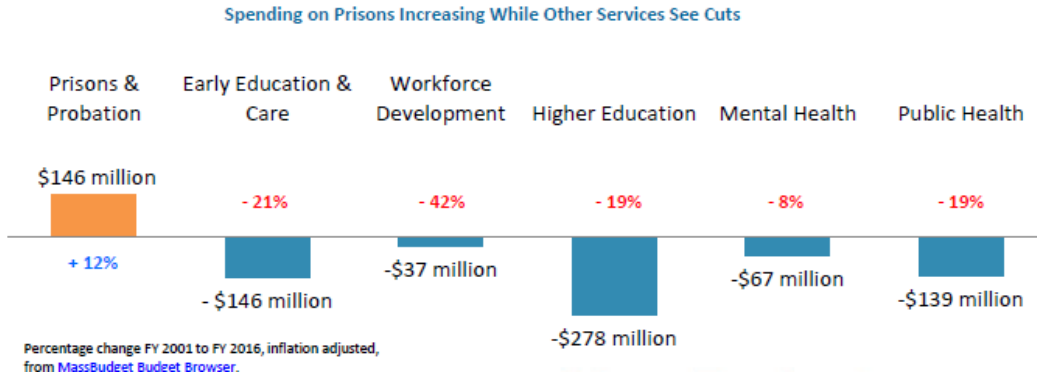
**Support**

I support 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. Moreover, I voted in favor of a zoning reform bill in the Senate that would do the same.

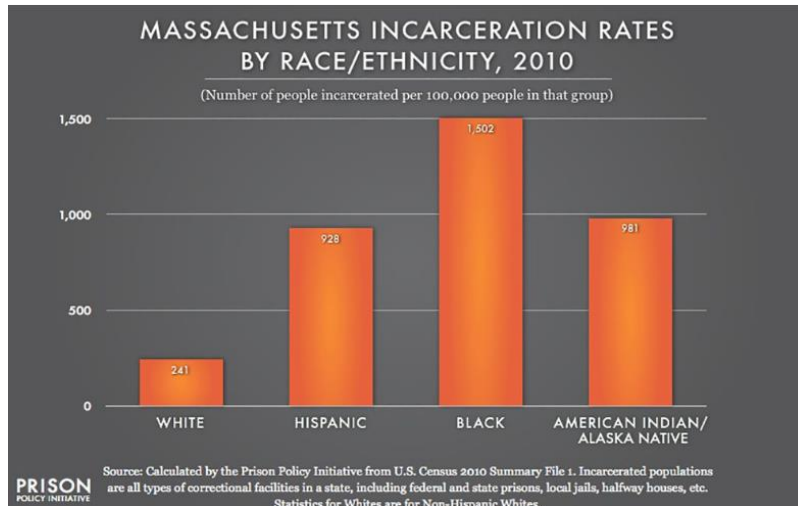
**F. Racial and Social Justice**

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.
2. Please indicate work you personally have done to combat racism, Islamophobia, xenophobia, transphobia, and other attempts to marginalize disadvantaged classes.

**Mandatory Minimum Sentencing**

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

**Support**

**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?

**Support**

**Bail Reform**

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

**Support**

**Marijuana Legalization**

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

**Oppose**

I favor legalization because our criminal justice system has been too focused on this drug for too long. It doesn't make sense to spend our law enforcement resources on this issue. However, I'm concerned about the referendum process and its implications. If we legalize too quickly, it will create headaches for our law enforcement officers and public health officials as we determine penalties for OUIs and regulations around edibles, as well as setting up systems to keep the drug out of the hands of children and teenagers. In the midst of the opioid crisis, it's my belief that the Commonwealth should proceed with caution. I'll be voting NO on question 3.

**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?

**Support**



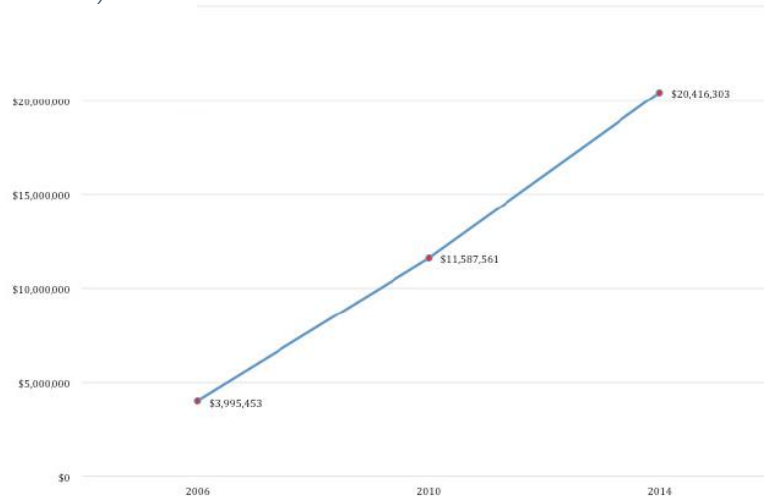


### G. Good Government and Good Citizenship

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.  
I believe the best form of government is one in which our constituents are informed and involved. Access to information, transparency in the Senate’s work and encouragement to participate are all paramount.
2. Please indicate work you personally have done to promote transparency, campaign finance reform, legislative rules reform, and access to voting.  
I voted in favor of revised Senate Rules that increased transparency and accountability of senators and our work. I participated in Commonwealth Conversations, a Senate initiative to ensure voters from around the Commonwealth are heard in the policymaking process. I serve as Chair of the Senate’s Millennial Engagement Initiative, an endeavor to get more young people involved in the lawmaking process. I am a co-sponsor of Senator Creem’s bill, An Act establishing election day registration.

#### 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?  
**Oppose**  
I believe Senate President Rosenberg has shared the power he holds with the remaining senators to the best of his ability.



***Public Campaign Financing***

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

**Support**

I support legislation to create a robust public financing system for state elections.

***Election Day Voter Registration***

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

**Support**

***Automatic Voter Registration***

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

**Support**



**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.

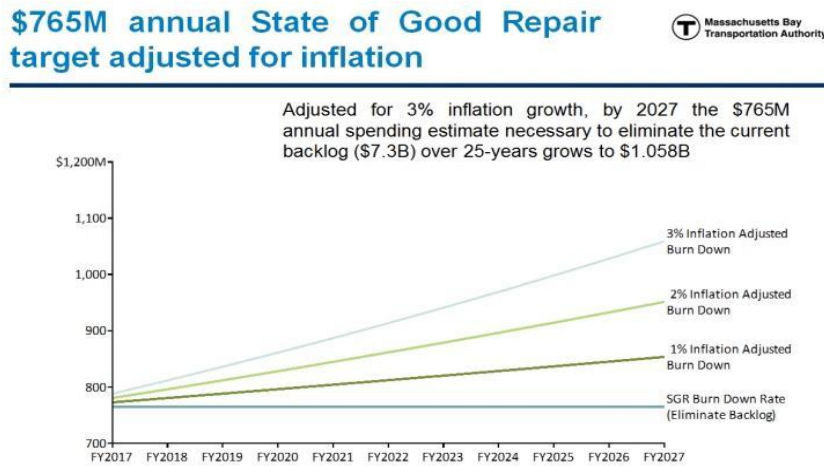
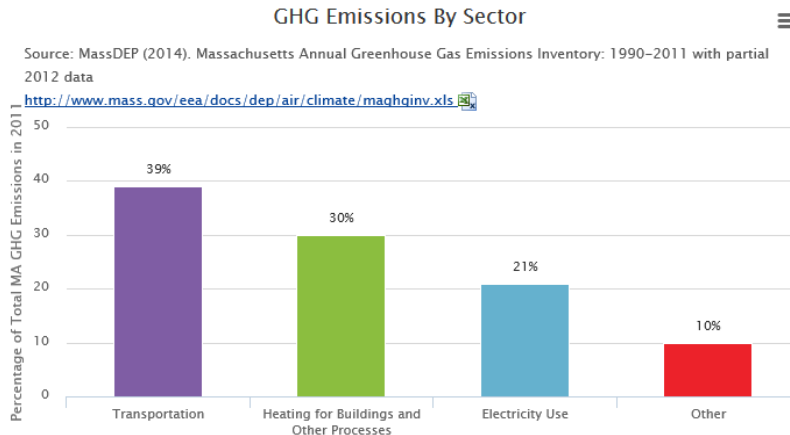


Figure 14 - Transportation is currently the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in MA, although heating and electricity are also major



**Statement/Experience**

1. Please share your personal values and principles regarding Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection.

I believe we need to make significant investments in both our infrastructure and our clean energy future. It is important to remember, however, that Western Massachusetts deserves the same attention and access to clean energy, infrastructure and transportation as every other part of our Commonwealth.

2. Please indicate work you personally have done to protect the environment and expand access to public transportation.

I have worked to ensure our energy portfolio is diversified and includes significant green energy investments, to create clean energy jobs, to prevent climate change, and to promote local agriculture. Twice I supported the Senate's climate change preparedness bill. I supported the creation of home energy efficiency audits at the time of sale. I voted to raise the limit on the amount of solar energy public and private customers can sell back to energy grids, known as the net metering cap. I voted for a ten-year ban on fracking in Massachusetts. I voted for the Senate's 2016 clean energy legislation, which significantly increased the state's procurement of clean solar, wind and hydropower. I supported and voted for legislation mandating the development and ultimate achievement of performance standards for solid waste recycling. I voted for legislation establishing a plan for state buildings to recycle solid waste. I supported and twice voted for comprehensive agricultural legislation that promotes and protects local farming in Western Massachusetts.

As a member of the Joint Legislative Committee on Transportation, I have championed legislation requiring the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to conduct a feasibility study on High Speed Rail Service between Springfield and Boston. I helped obtain over \$8.3 million in Chapter 90 road repair funding for the nine cities and towns in the First Hampden and Hampshire District in 2015 and 2016. I supported legislation financing improvements to municipal roads and bridges, including \$50 million over five years to support approximately 1,300 smaller bridges between 10 and 20 feet long. I served as a member of the Senate's Transportation Network Companies working group that crafted the Senate version of a bill regulating the ride-sharing industry. I co-sponsored legislation that would require the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to develop and publish a comprehensive assessment of current capacity, safety conditions and state of good repair for the Commonwealth's transportation system and make recommendations for reform, cost savings, and new revenue. I supported creation of the MBTA Fiscal and Management Control Board, to ensure transparency and accountability of the state's MBTA spending and to help spur needed reforms. 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?

I would continue to support expanding our clean energy portfolio and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

**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?

**Support**

**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?

**Support**



**Carbon Fees**

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

**Gas Pipelines**

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

**Oppose**

**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?

I believe that the reforms I voted for in the Senate will slowly help to improve the problems the MBTA is currently facing. However, Western Massachusetts should not have to pay for the many inadequacies of the MBTA, when there are many infrastructure issues plaguing our region that need attention.

**MBTA Fare Hikes**

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

**Support**

**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. *Optional response; not all candidates chose to respond.*