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*2016 Special Election*



# PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS

## *Endorsement Questionnaire*

*Candidate Responses*

*First Suffolk & Middlesex Senate District*

☐ LYDIA EDWARDS

☐ DIANA HWANG

☐ JAY LIVINGSTONE

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# ABOUT

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## Progressive Massachusetts & Our Questionnaire

Progressive Massachusetts is a grassroots member organization, with a mission to bring true progressive change to the Commonwealth through sustained, citizen-focused, year-round organizing.

We aim to provide support and tools — such as our one-of-a-kind scorecards and our substantive candidate questionnaires in races of strategic interest — that are crucial for an engaged progressive electorate.

Our endorsement questionnaires are adapted from our **Progressive Platform** and our **2015-2016 Legislative Agenda**. We invite you to learn more about them on our website:

- [ProgressiveMass.com/progressiveplatform](http://ProgressiveMass.com/progressiveplatform)
- [ProgressiveMass.com/legislativeagenda](http://ProgressiveMass.com/legislativeagenda)

We firmly believe that in order to get a progressive grassroots movement, it must be supported by progressives with grassroots funding. **When we fund our politics, then we can truly own our politics.** Our members are building Progressive Massachusetts ourselves — for progressive organizers and citizen activists, by progressive organizers and citizen activists.

Our work (including our endorsement materials) requires many hours and resources, funded by members' contributions of dollars and many volunteer hours. You can help build on and expand our efforts by becoming a member. **The progressive movement needs you and your investment in our progressive Massachusetts.**

BECOME A MEMBER: [Progressivemass.com/contribute](http://Progressivemass.com/contribute)

We welcome distribution of this questionnaire, with attribution: *Progressive Massachusetts, First Suffolk & Middlesex Special Election Questionnaires, 2016 Apr.*, [ProgressiveMass.com/elections](http://ProgressiveMass.com/elections)

## The Graphs and Charts

Many sections of the questionnaire feature charts and graphs that illustrates one facet of the issue under discussion. All images and data are from Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center ([massbudget.org](http://massbudget.org)).

## First Suffolk & Middlesex Senate Special Election

Former Senator Petrucci, who previously served the First Suffolk & Middlesex district, has resigned from the seat, leaving a vacancy that will be filled by this special election.

## The Voters and the District

Registered Democratic voters in the District can vote in this primary (April 12, 2016) and all registered voters can vote in the special general election (May 10, 2016).

The **First Suffolk & Middlesex district** consists of the cities of Boston, ward 1, precincts 1 to 14, inclusive, ward 3, precincts 1 to 4, inclusive, 6 and 8, and ward 5, precinct 1, 3 to 5, inclusive, and 11, Revere and the town of Winthrop, all in the county of Suffolk; and the city of Cambridge, ward 2, precincts 2 and 3, ward 4, precincts 1 and 3, and ward 5, all in the county of Middlesex.

Check registration status, view sample ballots and register to vote (if necessary) at the Massachusetts Secretary of State's website: <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/eleidx.htm>

## Election Dates: Special and Regular Fall Elections

The winning candidate in the May 10, 2016, special election will be serving out the balance of Senator Petrucci's term and not the full two-year term. As such, she or he will face a reelection campaign in fall 2016. The primary election is September 20, 2016, and the general election is November 8, 2016.

### ***Mark Your Calendars!***

- ☐ **April 12, 2016** – Democratic Primary for the Special Election (there is no Republican primary)
- ☐ **May 10, 2016** – Special Election
- ☐ **September 8, 2016** – Primary Election (all Massachusetts voters with contested seats)
- ☐ **November 8, 2016** – General Election

### **The Candidates**

As is often the case with special elections, where there is no incumbent advantage at play, there are several candidates who have thrown their hats into the ring for the First Suffolk and Middlesex special senate race. We invited every candidate to submit a questionnaire for consideration. Some chose not to pursue an endorsement from Progressive Massachusetts; voters making decisions in this campaign may want to take that under consideration.

Three candidates chose to seek our Progressive Mass endorsement, submitting for your review substantive responses to our comprehensive questions. Unlike many organizations, we make our questionnaires available for public review, in order to provide as many progressive voters as possible with more tools to make informed choices at the polls.

Candidates **Lydia Edwards**, **Diana Hwang**, and **Jay Livingstone** each have impressive records of accomplishment – both inside and outside of elected office -- on issues important to progressive voters. The breadth and depth of their experience is reflected in their substantive responses.

We are grateful for their engagement with the questionnaire, not only as part of our process, but also, importantly, as a means to communicate their values and stances on the issues in more detail and depth. They should be congratulated for their well-run campaigns that are advancing the dialogue, awareness, and viability of the important progressive causes and values we share. We hope that you will review the candidates' full responses, share and discuss with other voters in the district, augmenting your research via campaigns' websites and voter outreach efforts.

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*This is your member organization – share your thoughts with us at [grassroots@progressivemass.com](mailto:grassroots@progressivemass.com)!*

*Please share our questionnaire with attribution:*

*Progressive Massachusetts, First Suffolk & Middlesex Special Election Questionnaires, 2016 Apr., [ProgressiveMass.com/elections](http://ProgressiveMass.com/elections)*

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# QUALIFICATIONS AND VISION

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## About the Candidates

### Motivation

*Why are you running for office?*

#### *Lydia Edwards*

I'm running for State Senate because I want to advocate for the working families of Boston, Cambridge, Revere and Winthrop. I've already begun this work with my involvement in campaigns for better wages, earned sick time, protection from discrimination and the earned income tax credit. In my work as a public interest attorney, I am reminded every day how hard it is for many people to afford housing, find work that pays a living wage and achieve the American dream. I have fought time and again for the working people of Massachusetts, and I would be honored to represent the great people of First Suffolk and Middlesex as their Senator.

My top priorities are ensuring an [economy that works for all](#) and fostering a [strong and inclusive community](#). You can read more about these priorities on my website, but I will prioritize the fight for economic justice, racial equality and access and equity for all people, regardless of age, documentation or ability. Ensuring living wages and eliminating subminimum wages, funding affordable housing and child care, and access to drivers' licenses for immigrants (i.e. the Massachusetts TRUST Act) are specific areas I would focus on.

I am currently part of the movement to organize Harvard graduate students into a union and have been working on forming the Boston Chamber of Cooperatives. I get things done through grassroots community organizing, creative thinking and building bridges.

I am proud to say I have been endorsed by over 11 unions, including the Massachusetts Teachers Association; SEIU 32BJ; Bricklayers and Masons Local 3, Sprinkler Fitters Local 550, Sheet Metal Workers Local 17, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1445, Plumbers and Gasfitters Local 12, New England Joint Board Unite Here!, United Auto Workers, Wreckers Local 1421. I have an additional trade union that asked to me to wait until they release a press statement.

I have also been endorsed by the Domestic Worker Legal Fund the 501(c)(4) of the National Domestic Workers Alliance an organization that speaks on 2.5 million domestic workers in the country.

What I hope people see is that I am the candidate for working people and families. It's already my career choice. I am not running to *be* a senator I am running to *do* more for working families.

*Diana Hwang*

I'm running for State Senate because I believe that everyone in this very diverse district needs a tireless advocate who understands their needs and fights for them. As the daughter of struggling immigrants, my story is the story of this district. Whether your family arrived from Southern Italy in the last century or from El Salvador in the last decade, the people of this district need someone who understands that struggle; someone with a history of working the halls of power as an advocate for women, immigrants and working families; and someone who knows, first-hand, the power the State House has to directly impact the lives, the health and the well-being of the residents of the Commonwealth.

I have spent my entire career working within the system to change the system. From my time as a staffer on Beacon Hill to my work creating the country's first political leadership organization for young Asian-American women, I have made lasting relationships in the State House that ensure I'll be able to serve this district from Day One. I have a history of fighting for programs that make a difference in everyday peoples' lives – health care, education, and funding for addiction treatment and supports. And I am not afraid to take on and build coalitions around a cause that others have forgotten.

- a) Issues impacting women and families including domestic violence, sex trafficking and access to reproductive health.
- b) Public safety including gang violence, addressing the opioid crisis and related drug violence.
- c) Youth development, including school and career preparation, closing the achievement gap, and mentoring young people.

As a State Senator, I would address each of these issues in the same way that I have spent my entire career: by changing the system from within the system. As a woman of color, I would stand up and speak on issues that are critical to women and girls – like the Healthy Youth Act that has not passed the legislature after being filed for years and would finally provide age-appropriate sex education to every student across the Commonwealth. I would also work with advocates who have been champions of these issues, and the issues of public safety and opiate addiction, to bring parties together to find solutions that work for my communities.

I am also passionate about criminal justice and sentencing reform, which must be prioritized to really repair the damage done to communities of color by systemic abuses and an unfair criminal justice system.

I have also led on many of these issues already through my work as Executive Director of AAWPI. I led my organization to join the "Coalition for Choice" which brings progressive nonprofits together to advocate for important issues that impact women. As the Executive Director of AAWPI, I have personally mentored over 50 young women, offering paid fellowships to help women access the halls of power through a State House fellowship program. I will continue to create pathways to lift up underserved communities, as I have done my whole career.

I believe strongly that working to protect women and families also includes working to help seniors be able to afford to stay in their homes, and to age with dignity in the communities they helped to build.

To that end, I will prioritize issues like funding home health aides so seniors can stay in their homes and not have to move to nursing homes.

### *Jay Livingstone*

I am running for State Senate to fill the seat vacated by Senator Anthony Petrucci. I'm running because our diverse district deserves a Senator with the experience to move our communities forward. As a State Representative, I'm proud to be an independent voice who works with and listens to our community to craft comprehensive policy solutions that benefit our region. In the State Senate, I will continue to fight for great schools, safe streets, good jobs, sustainable transportation options, more affordable housing, and a thriving economy for all.

As a Senator, my top three priorities will be:

1. Increasing access to early education for all of our children
2. Closing the gender wage gap
3. Fixing our transportation infrastructure

### Qualifications

*What prepares you to serve in this capacity?*

### *Lydia Edwards*

I've spent my career advocating for working people as a public interest lawyer with Greater Boston Legal Services. I focus on labor issues: fighting for access to unemployment insurance, back wages, fair treatment for domestic workers, and combatting human trafficking. I served as the Coordinator of the Massachusetts Coalition for Domestic Workers, which advocated for the passage of the Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights.

I was recently named as Top Woman Attorney for 2016 by Boston Magazine. I received a fellowship from Sustainable Economies Law Center, and a Racial Justice Fellowship from Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation to provide legal services the working poor, immigrants and people who were formerly incarcerated that helps them form cooperative businesses, land trusts and community lead development. I'm a board member of the Boston Independent Living Center, a member of the Women's Bar Association, Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association, NAACP, and the National Lawyers Guild.

The successful grassroots movement and navigation of the Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights helped me to understand how to navigate the statehouse with unapologetic progressive legislation. It was the opening of the nation's first legal and policy clinic in a worker center for domestic workers that helped me understand the key systemic issues that left domestic workers unprotected, the historical context and how to craft a legislative response. I believe firmly that a senator should be able to take individual issues connect them to systemic problems and then write, navigate and pass a progressive response. That's what I did and that's why I am prepared to be the next Senator. The Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights passed in one session and protects 100,000 workers in the state (including 33,000 SEIU 1199 members) I am proud to say I am the only person running in this race that has passed legislation in one session that protects that many workers. I am even more proud of the fact that it was movement of



women, immigrants, working poor people and their employers that came together to get it done. I helped to build that coalition and to lead and navigate it.

My other awards and recognitions include:

- 2015 Boston Rising Stars, 40 under 40 - The National Law Journal & The Connecticut Law Tribune
- 2015 Super Lawyers Rising Star - Super Lawyers Magazine
- 2014 Excellence in Law, Up and Coming Lawyers in Massachusetts - Lawyers Weekly
- 2013 Community Peacemaker Honoree - Community Dispute Settlement Center
- 2012 Attorney of the Year, Matahari Women Workers' Center
- 2012 National Award of Distinction, Edna Award - Berger Marks Foundation (young women organizers)

### *Diana Hwang*

After graduating college, I served as legislative aide to the late State Representative Debby Blumer. The Rep. from Framingham was widely known as a champion of immigrants' rights and was a lead sponsor of in-state tuition and the affordable care act that became the basis for Obamacare. As her sole staff member, I researched, drafted and guided key legislative proposals and served as her spokeswoman on these critical issues. It was through this work that I came to know, first-hand, the power of the State House to directly impact the lives, the health and the well-being of the residents of the Commonwealth.

After Rep. Blumer's untimely death, I served as Executive Director for the Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators, managing day-to-day operations, planning and implementing programming as well as promoting legislation on critical issues to women and families such as healthcare, domestic violence and public education. I understand the importance of pressing for more inclusion and a greater voice for the women who work in the Legislature and saw a need for more diverse voices in the halls of Beacon Hill.

In 2008, I created the Asian-American Women's Political Initiative (AAWPI), the country's first leadership initiative to get young Asian-American women into politics. The organization grew out of my direct experience of being one of few Asian-Americans in the State House – and the recognition that those numbers would not increase unless the role of politics – and the power of government were better understood by the next generation of young women leaders. Over the last 6 years, nearly 50 young women completed a one-of-a-kind State House fellowship and mentoring program and most have gone on to work on campaigns, in legislative offices and in community organizations.

I have always been keenly aware of the importance of leadership on issues that impact people who have been marginalized – including the nearly 52% of the Commonwealth who are women. I have devoted my personal time to serving organizations whose primary purpose is to support women and families. As Board member of the Center for Women in Politics (UMass-Boston); as co-chair of the Boston Women's Fund; and as a founding commissioner for Mayor Walsh's Women's Commission, I have been a leading advocate in Massachusetts for women. Each of these organizations shines a light on the issues that confront women and families and works to enhance their power in addressing those issues.





***Jay Livingstone***

As State Representative, I am the only candidate with a proven record of delivering for Massachusetts in the legislature. I am proud to be the lead House sponsor on the Equal Pay Bill, and I have worked hard to pass progressive legislation that will benefit residents across the Commonwealth.

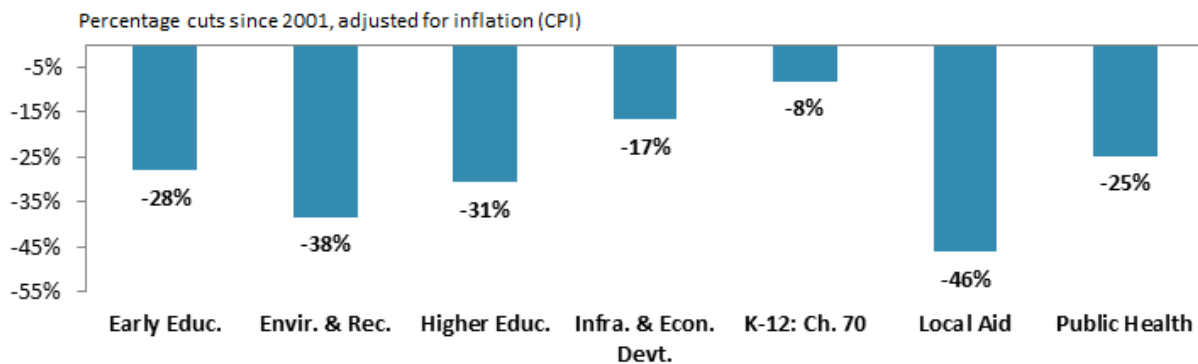
Three years ago, Progressive Massachusetts endorsed my candidacy for State Representative and helped me win a seat in the legislature with 70% of the vote. Since then, I have been working hard to support progressive causes on Beacon Hill.

# REVENUE AND TAXATION



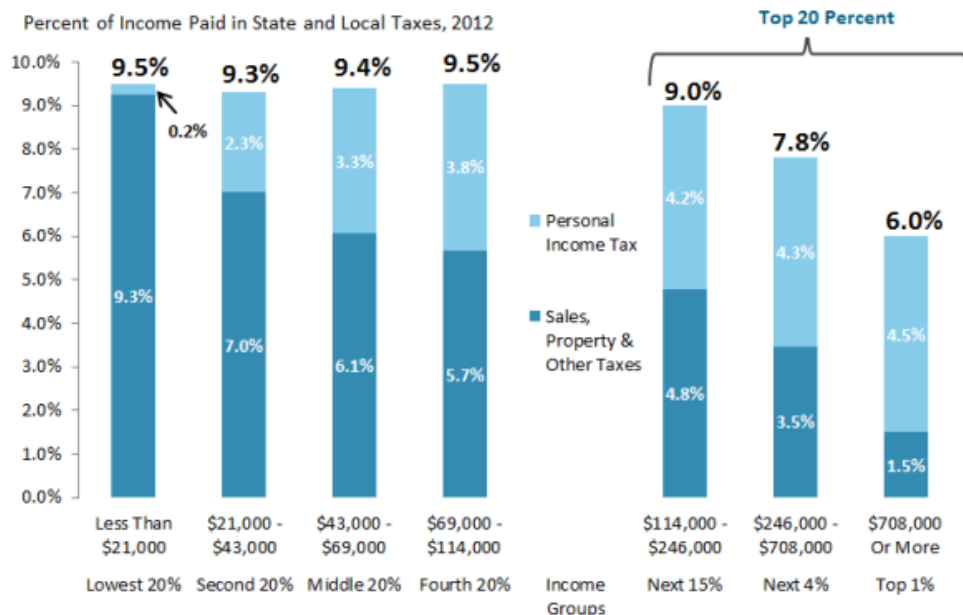
[Section A.] Because of income tax cuts and the effects of the recession, Massachusetts has lost nearly \$3 billion in revenue over the last 12 years. We now collect less revenue than 21 other states, and our tax revenue is below the national average. Since 1982, local aid has dropped 58%. Cuts to the moderately progressive state income tax have meant increasing reliance on fees, sales, gas and property taxes, exacerbating the overall regressiveness of our revenue. Regressive taxation strains low- and middle-income families, and reduced revenue collection curtails our ability to invest in vital infrastructure.

## Select cuts across the state budget (FY2001 - FY2012)



\*Ch. 70 figures are adjusted using the inflation factor specified in Chapter 70

## Top Earners in Massachusetts Pay Less of Their Personal Income in State and Local Taxes than Do Low Income Earners



## Statement/Experience

*[Question A1/A2.] What principles do you bring to considerations of state revenue and tax reform? For example, how should we raise more revenue to adequately fund our communities for the future?*

### LYDIA EDWARDS

I believe our tax policies should advance social equity. Those who have benefitted economically from our society and the opportunities it has provided them should contribute accordingly to the maintenance of the whole. Progressive taxation lifts everyone up by supporting public and common goods. Corporations, too, benefit from public infrastructure like roads and bridges and quality public schools—not to mention from a healthy workforce and livable environment. Beyond that, we have social obligations to the general public that require funding and our tax policies need to adequately fund areas like public education that we deliver as a right.

#### *Edwards/Related Experience*

I graduated from American University Washington College of Law, and received an LLM in taxation from Boston University School of Law. I got my second law degree in taxation specifically to work on tax policies that impact the working and middle class and immigrants (regardless of their immigration status). I am excited about making sure we move tax policy in a way that is inclusive and assures that working families have access to all credits necessary.

I am currently working with a cohort of Boston-area allies to develop economic policy reforms that would benefit cooperatives such as worker- and consumer-owned businesses and create land trusts. Part of my campaign platform is refunding the Massachusetts Office for Employee Involvement and Ownership (<http://www.masseio.org/>) which was eliminated in 2008 due to fiscal crisis. I look forward to dedicating revenue to that department and advancing other measures, such as Employee Stock Ownership Plans, cooperative development seed grants, etc.

I have also collected signatures for the Fair Share Tax amendment and I am part of the Earned income Tax Credit coalition. At GBLS we helped to write and push for EITC credit reform to increase the earned income tax credit and to make sure that married filing separately was an option. Having married filing separately would help many of my clients who were in abuse shelters leaving their abuser but not quite divorced. Under Massachusetts state law they couldn't access the EITC.

### DIANA HWANG

I believe strongly that income inequality threatens not only the well-being of the most vulnerable but also the very fabric of our society and democracy. I think we have seen direct evidence of this in the current Presidential election. And income inequality is the direct result of our tax system being unfairly tilted toward the wealthy. No where is this clearer than here in Massachusetts where we have, as you point out, a very regressive tax system and downward pressure has been placed on that system year after year. This has resulted in the cutting of vital services and the erosion of our infrastructure, failure to properly fund our public education system and to maintain – and, indeed, expand our public transportation system

As State Senator, I would fight for the millionaire's tax amendment and other reforms like the elimination of corporate tax loopholes.

## JAY LIVINGSTONE

As laid out in the preface to the question, our tax system is inadequate and unfair. Important programs are underfunded, important investments aren't being made, and our highest earning citizens are subject to the lowest overall tax rate. There are many opportunities to address this situation. For example, I support a thorough review of both business tax breaks and corporate tax loopholes and I have supported and continue to support an increase in the gas tax.

I also strongly support the Fair Share Amendment. I am a co-sponsor of legislation proposing the amendment and have committed to vote for it in a Constitutional Convention. I have advocated for it in the Statehouse and outside it. The amendment will add 4% to the tax rate on income over \$1M annually. This long-overdue, equitable adjustment is expected to increase revenue by \$1.9 billion, all of which will be directed by law towards education and transportation infrastructure. The public benefit of investing in education and infrastructure is strongly supported by the data.

I'm proud to stand with Progressive Mass and their partner organizations on this important initiative.

### *Livingstone /Related Experience*

As a State Representative, my biggest connection to issues concerning taxation and revenue have come from my experiences in the budgetary process. Each budgetary cycle and fiscal year has brought a lot to light regarding the priorities of the people in my district, the lack of funds available, and the need for compromise and advocacy to ensure that at the end of each cycle, most needs are met.

I have a proven record of promoting increased revenue. I was a vocal advocate for the increased gas tax and I have been vocal about my support for the Fair Share Amendment as well. Revenue is a crucial issue which is especially pertinent when considering the deteriorating public transit system and important programs throughout the State.

## Policies and Proposals

### Tax Rates for Upper Incomes

*[Question A3.] 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: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone
- EDWARDS: I supported the Raise Up Massachusetts campaign in its efforts to boost wages and ensure earned paid sick time, and support the current ballot initiative. I have collected signatures for it.

### Sales Tax Holiday

*[Question A4.] It's been repeatedly demonstrated that the sales tax holiday doesn't increase sales, and merely shifts when consumers make purchases. Do you support or oppose efforts extending the sales tax holiday?*

- OPPOSE: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone.

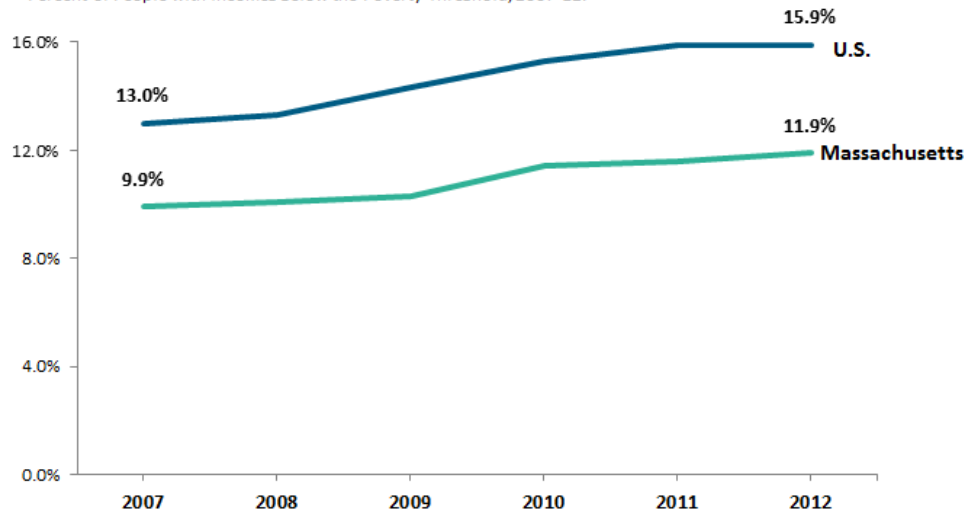
# JOB GROWTH AND THE ECONOMY



[Section B.] 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 8th in the nation for income inequality.

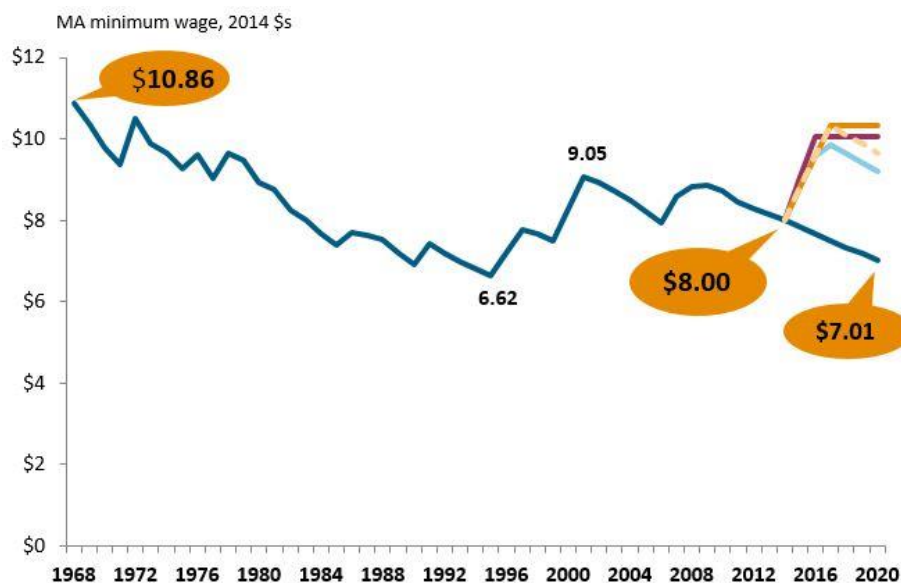
## Poverty Rates Still Elevated Since Onset of Recession

Percent of People with Incomes Below the Poverty Threshold, 2007-12.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

## The minimum wage loses value every year to inflation



## Statement/Experience

*[Question B1/B2] Share your personal values and principles on job growth and the economy. POSSIBLE TOPICS: 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?*

### LYDIA EDWARDS

Every person deserves the opportunity to succeed in our society. I believe an [economy that works for all](#) depends on strong sources of revenue, guaranteed labor protections and the right to organize, community control and participation, and stable, affordable housing. I will work to raise the minimum wage to \$15/hour, eliminate subminimum wages for people with disabilities and leverage creative investments in innovative solutions like economic cooperatives. Read more about my positions on the economy [here](#).

#### *Edwards/Related experience/record*

I served as the lead organizer for the Massachusetts Coalition of Domestic Workers and won labor protections for nannies, house cleaners and care workers/attendants in a single legislative session. You can learn more about the Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights and our campaign [here](#) (<http://www.lydiaforsenate.com/new-page-2/>.)

### DIANA HWANG

As I mentioned before, I believe income inequality is one of the most, if not THE most corrosive forces in our society today. And I am embarrassed by the fact that [Boston has the highest level of income inequality in America](#). Working families, seniors on a fixed income, recent immigrants and young people just starting out are all struggling with economic insecurity. That's something that hits home for me. I grew up feeling how worried my parents always were about keeping their jobs, being able to take care of me and my brother, about being able to retire.

It's absolutely a priority for me to ensure that our community has good paying jobs. That means, small businesses and entrepreneurs must have access to capital. That they are connected to programs like Small Business Banking Partnership or the state run program for women and minority business owners.

It also means that companies, particularly those who get state contracts and tax incentives hire local talent – plumbers, electricians, carpenters. And that every company receiving any benefit must show direct positive impact on the well-being of our community – or face clawbacks.

I will fight to ensure that the people of this district get the job training they need to succeed in the new economy. It begins with young people – ensuring that everyone who wants to go to college can afford to do so and not get saddled with huge debt – and that those who don't want that path can access vocational training.

But this is not just a young person's game. Older workers should have the support and access to training they need to find their next opportunity particularly when we see businesses like Suffolk Downs closing and people had 20 or 30 years there are losing their jobs.

And each and every one of these jobs should pay a living wage. No one who works for a living should live in poverty. That's why I support the Fight for \$15 and believe it applies beyond fast food workers.

### **JAY LIVINGSTONE**

For the past forty years, income growth has gone almost exclusively to those already at the top. Meanwhile, those at the top pay the lowest percentage of their income in state and local taxes. This situation is unjust and has significantly eroded the government's ability to make necessary investments in education, infrastructure, or other forms of economic development. That's why I strongly support the Fair Share Amendment as discussed in Question A.

As a result of a law that I played a major role in passing in 2014, the minimum wage has increased from \$8/hour to \$10/hour, and it will increase to \$11/hour on January 1, 2017. We must not stop there. I strongly support raising the minimum wage to \$15/hour, equal to the current minimum wage in Seattle, one of the biggest and most prosperous cities in the country.

Women in Massachusetts earn only 82% of what men earn for comparable work. This differential is exacerbated for women of color.

I am the lead House sponsor of the Pay Equity bill, which will help to close the pay gap by providing a definition of comparable work, encouraging employers to conduct internal reviews of their payroll to ensure equitable compensation within industry standards, preventing employers from asking people about their previous salary in the interview process, and protecting employees from termination for disclosing their compensation to their co-workers and colleagues. I will continue to prioritize this important legislation if I am elected state senator.

I am a proud supporter of organized labor. As a former union member, I know how important it is to have allies in government. I do not support actions that eliminate the collective bargaining rights of any worker. I have supported union organizing efforts, joined picket lines, attended rallies, and taken many other actions in support of public and private sector unions. I am not a member of any business-funded group.

### ***Livingstone/Related experience/record***

As a state legislator, I have done everything I can to ensure that everyone that works hard and plays by the rules has a chance to succeed. This work is informed by my private sector work as an attorney on behalf of workers that had faced discrimination in the workplace. I have advocated for increased minimum wage, better working conditions, and of course, pay equity.

I was honored to join SEIU1199 and the Airport workers in their Fight for \$15 hunger strike in November. I have worked with businesses and supported the unionization of hotel workers. I helped pass the Domestic Worker's Bill of Rights. And, I have made Pay Equity, or equal pay for equal work, my top priority in this legislative session.

I am honored to work with Sen. Jehlen, MassNOW, the Women's Bar Association, and many other advocates as the lead sponsor in the House on the Pay Equity Bill. The bill received unanimous support in the Senate and has over 100 co-sponsors in the House.



It has been humbling to be a part of such a major piece of legislation, and as a State Senator I will continue to work towards a truly equitable workplace.

## Policy Proposals

### Wages and Leave Policies

*[Question B3.] Do you support or oppose:*

Raising the minimum wage to at least \$15/hour:

- SUPPORTS: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone

Making the tipped minimum wage equal to that of the regular minimum wage:

- SUPPORTS: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone

Indexing the minimum wage to inflation:

- SUPPORTS: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone

Eliminating time-and-a-half pay on Sundays:

- OPPOSES: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone

Mandating access for up to 12 weeks of Paid Family Medical Leave:

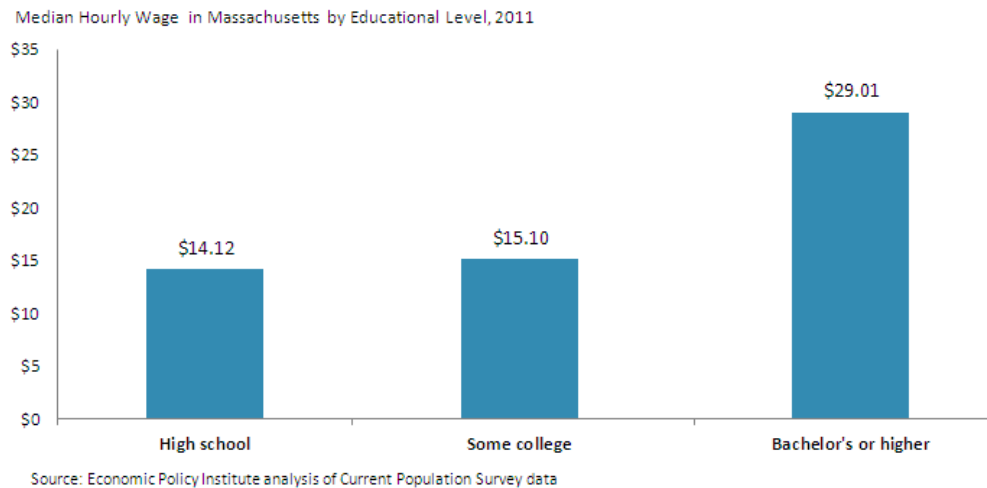
- SUPPORTS: Edwards Hwang, Livingstone

# EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

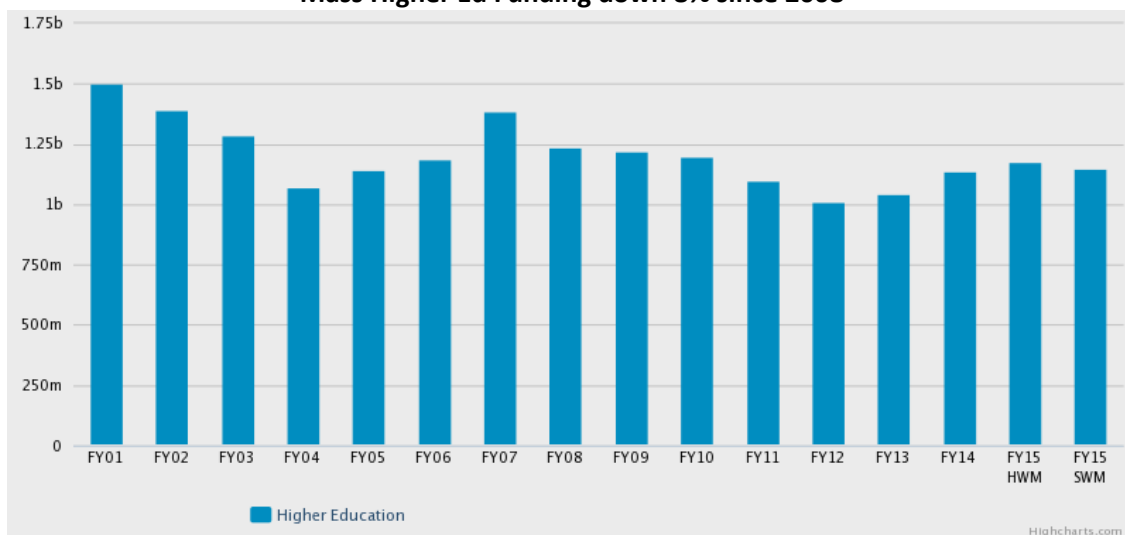


*[Section C.] Public education has always been a gateway to opportunity and mobility for all, regardless of economic circumstances, a cornerstone of the American dream for all residents. However, the soaring price of higher education over the last several decades has made access to this opportunity increasingly out of reach, at the very moment when higher education makes a greater difference to one's economic future. Meanwhile, powerful corporate interests have been steadily undermining public school teachers and unions and siphoning money from our public K-12 system.*

## Wages and Education



## Mass Higher Ed Funding down 8% since 2008



## Statement/Experience

*[Questions C1/C2] Please share your personal values and principles regarding public education and workforce training. SUGGESTED TOPICS: 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? You might address, for example, charter schools, school vouchers, standardized testing and federal programs like No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top.*

### LYDIA EDWARDS

Education creates opportunities. It's the right of every child and every adult to be welcomed into society with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed. Disparities in education worsen preexisting racial and economic disparities. To address these disparities, we need to fund education adequately. I support increasing revenue to fund education. I oppose lifting the cap on charter schools, primarily because the currently funding formula drains substantial funds from traditional public schools.

I believe we succeed as a state when we embrace a diverse, skilled workforce and provide multiple pathways to prosperity. I support vocational schools as well as workforce training programs, and I also think we can be creative with developing new enterprise, such as cooperative models of business.

### DIANA HWANG

**I am the product of public schools.** My public school education got me to Dartmouth. I strongly believe in the power of public school education to break cycles of poverty and educate immigrants and children of immigrants like me to succeed.

When I hear from young families in East Boston with babies in their arms that they are already worrying about the lottery – and whether there will be a quality nearby school to send their child to.

When I meet that the mothers of young men from El Salvador who worry that their boys will be swept up in gang violence because they have no other support

When I hear about college graduates who worry that they will never, ever be done with paying for off their student debt.

I realize that for decades the state really hasn't invested nearly enough in public education and individual municipalities are struggling to find the resources to implement the things we know work – universal pre-K, full day kindergarten, smaller class size, longer school days, even longer school years.

As State Senator I would:

- Increase funding for public school from pre-K to higher education so that every child can get a truly free public education. Period.
- Invest in some of the innovations that have worked at charter schools – longer school days, homework support, smaller class sizes – we can't just say it works – and then not pay for it.

I know that this will all take money – and it's about time we paid for the things we really care about by taking the wealthiest. That's why I support a constitutional amendment to make our tax code more progressive – and more fair – while raising more revenue.

### *Hwang/Related Experience*

As sole staffer for Debby Blumer I researched, wrote and served as her spokesperson for legislation to increase funding for education in general as well as higher education in particular

### JAY LIVINGSTONE

As a product of public schools and as a parent of a newborn son, I am deeply invested in providing a high quality public education to all. Properly funding our schools is a prime example of a necessary investment in our society that will pay many times over in countless ways.

Per the NAEP, Massachusetts has a lot to be proud of. The Commonwealth consistently ranks at or near the top in the nation, but there's also much to be done, as we have a persistent achievement gap.

I strongly support the Fair Share Amendment. In Massachusetts, the top 1% pay 4.9% of their income in state and local taxes, while middle income families pay 9.3%. The Fair Pay Amendment will add 4% to the tax rate on income over \$1M. This long-overdue, equitable adjustment is expected to increase revenue by \$1.9 billion, all of which will be directed by law towards education and transportation.

I am also a strong supporter of Early Education. Pre-kindergarten programs enable working parents to continue to contribute to the Massachusetts economy and provide students with skills they need to be successful in school and in life. A growing body of research shows that low-income children in model pre-kindergarten programs are 30% more likely to complete high school and twice as likely to attend college.

In 2013, I filed a budget amendment to increase early education funding for income-eligible working families on the Early Education wait list. By the end of the budget process, we had successfully increased funding for this important program from \$7.5 million to \$15 million.

I've also co-sponsored important bills requiring the Department of Early Education and Care to create a grant program to implement high-quality pre-kindergarten education in the Commonwealth (H.462) and, in recognition that early education is a part of our core public education system, adding pre-school students to districts' Chapter 70 enrollment (S.253).

If a child's basic needs aren't being met, they can't be expected to learn. I am proud to be the lead sponsor in the House of the Healthy Kids Bill (H.429). This bill, the result of collaboration with the nonprofit Healthcare for All, works to address nutrition, shelter, and healthcare concerns for low-income children. The Healthy Food, Healthy Homes, Healthy Children (HHH) Coalition, a diverse group of human service providers, researchers, and advocacy organizations, has backed this legislation and views it as a holistic approach to fixing these issues.

According to the BLS, those with some college or an Associate's Degree earn 13% more than those with a high school diploma alone. We hear every day how our educated workforce attracts employers like GE.

Meanwhile, young adults are burdened with crushing school debt that they carry for decades. We owe it to our youth to offer them the opportunity to continue their education at community colleges for free. I was proud to cosponsor legislation that would make community colleges in Massachusetts free for residents of the state (H.1070). I hope this will particularly benefit first-generation students who might otherwise think that college isn't for them.

### *Livingstone /Related Experience*

Please see my answer to question 1.

## Policy Proposals

### Achievement Gaps

*[Question C3.] What would you do to address persistent racial and economic achievement gaps in education?*

#### *Lydia Edwards*

I believe we need to increase school funding, soften disciplinary plans that “push out” youth and effectively place them on the school to prison pipeline, make affordable housing and economic opportunity available in every community, and work to address other issues, such as discrimination against immigrants or the overburdened criminal justice system—each of which can separate children from parents and remove a critical family support so needed to cultivate strong learners.

#### *Diana Hwang*

I believe that we must do a number of things to address persistent achievement gaps. These include:

- Universal pre-K and full-day kindergarten
- Support for parents, particularly non-English speaking immigrants, who struggle to feel included and heard by the school system
- Homework support for students who need it
- Longer days and longer school years so that learning can be accelerated and not lost over idle summer periods
- Access to quality health care, nutrition and dental care

#### *Jay Livingstone*

A fundamental responsibility of the government is to ensure a level playing field for everyone. Regrettably, socio-economic obstacles contribute to enduring inequality among many minority groups, which is particularly devastating to school-age children.

I am proud of my work securing additional funds for early education for at-risk students as well as the Healthy Kids Bill that aims to take a comprehensive approach to ensure that children are housed, well-fed, cared-for, and prepared to succeed in school. I have also introduced a bill to highlight the issue of the lack of nurses in many public schools.

We must invest more resources in these students in order to lower class size and provide much-needed learning services. Funds that are continually diverted from classrooms due to budget cuts leave teachers to do more with less.

In order to pay for these priorities, we must reform a tax system that disproportionately burdens working families. I support the Fair Share Amendment to tax individuals earning \$1 million annually at a higher rate as well as eliminating corporate loopholes and formalizing agreements between state and local governments and institutions that make only voluntary PILOT payments.

### Universal Pre-K

*[Question C4.] Do you support creating universal, free Pre-K, accessible to any resident of Massachusetts, integrated into the public school system?*

- **SUPPORT:** Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone

### High-Stakes Testing

*[Question C5.] Do you support or oppose high-stakes testing for:*

- a) Student promotion? – **OPPOSE:** Edwards, Hwang,
- b) High-school graduation? – **OPPOSE:** Edwards, Hwang
- c) Teacher evaluation? – **OPPOSE:** Edwards, Hwang
- d) School and District evaluation? – **OPPOSE:** Edwards, Hwang
- **EDWARDS:** I oppose high stakes testing.
- **HWANG:** Testing can and maybe should be a part of a fair and proven system for evaluating student, teacher and school performance but it can never be the sole determinant – and it must be developed with the support of teachers and administrators who understand how to educate the whole child.
- **LIVINGSTONE:** I will definitely advocate for a moratorium on PARCC. The current system of testing is flawed both because of the tests used and the use of the results, but I'm concerned about completely eliminating testing as a diagnostic tool and as part of what we consider for graduation requirements. Testing was ostensibly implemented in response to students being passed through the system without learning and I think we can use it more wisely to help improve outcomes and measure success, so we should improve testing and its use. Testing can be useful for evaluating student performance and using the results to improve their future performance, but is not as effective for grading schools or teachers. There are many more important things that we should do as a State, for example making sure to maximize the learning time during the school day and keeping class sizes low enough for effective instruction. Finally, we need to make sure that "teaching to the test" does not dominate the curriculum and that all children in the State receive a well-balanced education.

### Funding Structure

*[Question C6.] 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?*

- **EDWARDS:** I support changes to accomplish the ends specified and would be happy to review specific policy proposals to accomplish this
- **HWANG:** Support
- **LIVINGSTONE:** Updating Chapter 70 Education funding formula is necessary to ensure that all students have access to a high quality education. Currently, too many English Language Learners and students with special needs don't have access to the programming and services they need to thrive. Revisiting how Chapter 70 is funded is a potential solution to this problem.

### Charter schools

*[Question C7] Do you support or oppose the 2016 ballot question that would lift the cap on charter schools??*

- **OPPOSE:** Edwards, Hwang
- **EDWARDS:** I oppose the 2016 ballot question and I oppose lifting the charter cap
- **LIVINGSTONE:** I do not support lifting the cap on charter schools unless the significant issues created by charter schools are addressed, including access for students with special needs, respect for the existing collective bargaining rights of current public school teachers, suspension practices, and fairness in the funding formula.

### Universal higher-ed

*[Question C8] Do you support a program that provides free, publicly funded higher education for every student who wants it?*

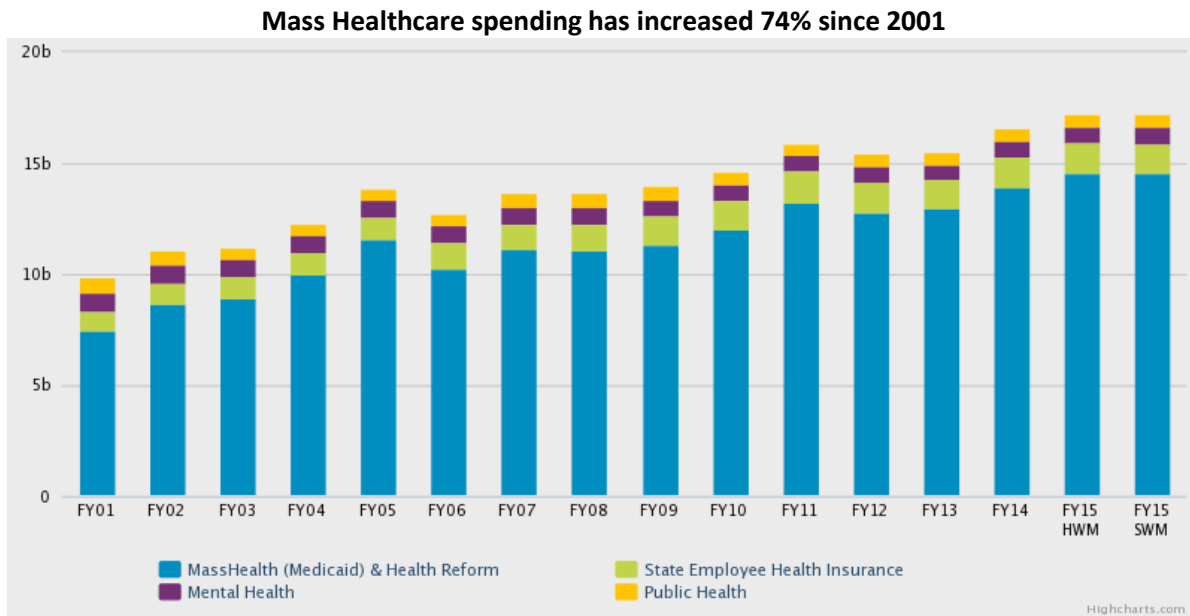
- **SUPPORT:** Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone



# HEALTHCARE



*[Section D.] Massachusetts has led the way in providing near universal health care insurance coverage. However, we still spend an oversized portion of public and private money on health care, without necessarily achieving better health outcomes.*



## Statement/Experience

*[Questions D1/D2] Please share your personal values and principles regarding health care insurance, delivery and outcomes.*

### LYDIA EDWARDS

Access to affordable, quality health care is a right, and we must strive for good health outcomes in every community. With regards to health care, I would support public policies such as a public option single payer system and limits on medical costs/drug pricing that insure we are not profiting at the expense of public health.

To overcome the racial health gap, we need a multilateral strategy that extends beyond just health insurance coverage to reducing air pollution, providing quality food, fostering economic opportunity and dealing with specific health issues such as mental health/stress.

### DIANA HWANG

I believe that health care is a right and not a privilege. When I worked for Debby Blumer, we worked to pass the Massachusetts Affordable Care Act. Indeed she was one of the lead sponsor of that legislation. The system that we now have nationally, that was based on that legislation is adequate. It has certainly improved coverage although with high deductible for many, it can hardly be really called affordable.

I believe that the only true solution is a single payer system and would work vigorously to see Massachusetts once again the model for the system we should have nationally. Only with single payer can we truly cover everyone, bring down the cost of many services, bargain for reduced drug prices and begin to address health disparities.

### *Hwang/Related Experience*

See above. As the sole staffer for Debby Blumer, one of the architects of the Massachusetts system, I researched, drafted and served as her spokesperson for that legislation.

In addition, we worked to address the mental health disparity that results in physical illnesses being covered and mental illnesses remaining uncovered.

## JAY LIVINGSTONE

Access to quality, affordable health care should be a right, not a privilege. Massachusetts has made some strides with the introduction of our state Medicaid program and progress has grown since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. Still, there is plenty of work to be done if Massachusetts truly wants to be a model for the gains that can be made when we take care of our citizen.

Our healthcare system is only as good as the quality of care it offers to our most vulnerable. Too often, children in the Commonwealth are not given the resources that they need to thrive. I've been a strong advocate for children's health in the State Legislature and I'll bring that same energy and passion to the Senate.

I am proud to be the lead sponsor in the House on An Act Relative to the Well Being of All Children in the Commonwealth (H.429/S.94). The bill, which was the result of a collaboration with the nonprofit Healthcare for All, works to address a range of concerns for low income children in the Commonwealth. The Healthy Food, Healthy Homes, Healthy Children (HHH) Coalition, a diverse group of human service providers, researchers, and advocacy organizations, have backed this legislation and view it as a holistic approach to fixing these issues. This bill works to combat disparities that can affect a child's health by:

- Increasing access to food benefits such as SNAP, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and the School Breakfast Program.
- Making families that are at risk of homelessness immediately eligible for emergency shelter.
- Assessing the capacity of schools to screen for medical conditions that prevent students from learning.
- Establishing a common application portal for SNAP and MassHealth benefits, reducing barriers to access and churning of SNAP coverage.
- Ensuring that children in emergency shelters can get to medical appointments.]

### *Livingstone /Related Experience/Record*

I am proud to be the lead sponsor in the House on An Act relative to ensuring the wellbeing of all children in the Commonwealth (H.429). The bill, which was the result of collaboration with the nonprofit Healthcare for All, works to amend a range of concerns for low income children in the Commonwealth. The Healthy Food, Healthy Homes, Healthy Children (HHH) Coalition, a diverse group of human service

providers, researchers, and advocacy organizations, have backed this legislation and view it as a holistic approach to fixing these issues.

## Policies and Proposals

### Single Payer

*[Question D3.] Do you support moving Massachusetts to Single Payer healthcare system?*

- SUPPORT: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone
- LIVINGSTONE: Single-payer healthcare in Massachusetts provides an exciting opportunity for the state to again be a progressive leader generally and a leader on health care specifically. I will support single-payer health care, just as I endorsed and campaigned for Don Berwick as a State Rep in his bid to bring an ardent progressive voice to the corner office and champion single-payer.

Though the Affordable Care Act does much to help reign in the often times crushing burden of medical costs on working families, we could do so much more. Single payer provides an opportunity to ensure that our healthcare dollars go toward making people well and folks getting back to their families and careers rather than to executive bonuses at the pharmaceuticals and insurance companies. We can stem the tide of rising healthcare costs as they drain our economy and reduce the burden on the good people living at the margins.

### Equitable Healthcare Pricing

*[Question D4.] Do you support or oppose bill [S. 574](#) which aims to limit the disparities in the amount commercial insurers can pay different hospitals for the same procedure by creating a floor and a ceiling for commercial payment rates, so private insurers could not pay hospitals more than 20 percent above or 10 percent below the average amount paid to similar hospitals?*

- SUPPORT: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone

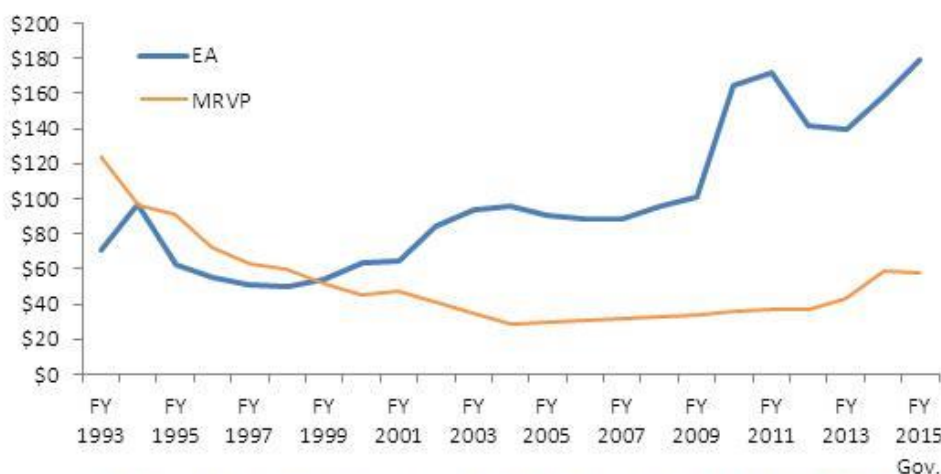
# HOUSING



*[Section E.] In the last ten years, the need for affordable housing has increased, while funds for affordable housing have decreased, federal and state. Currently there is a 10-year waiting list for a rental voucher, and the average rent for a two bedroom apartment requires a wage 50% higher than the median Massachusetts wage. Half of families in Greater Boston alone pay over 30% of their income in housing and utilities costs – and 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

(inflation adjusted to 2014 dollars)



Funding for Shelter (EA) and MRVP has moved around since FY 1993. This chart includes funding from the following line items for MRVP: 3222-9024, 3722-9024 & 7004-9024. Line items for EA include: 4403-2100, 4403-2120, 4403-2130, 7004-0101 & 7004-0103.

## Statement/Experience

*[Question E1/E2.] Please share your personal values and principles regarding affordable housing. SUGGESTED TOPICS: 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?*

### LYDIA EDWARDS

Massachusetts needs to use all tools available to advance affordable housing, stabilize communities combat gentrification in hot housing markets. I support basic tenant protections like “Just Cause” eviction policies that give tenants threatened with eviction stability and opportunity for negotiation. I also support inclusionary development policies and enacting of the Community Preservation Act in Boston and other municipalities that have yet to take advantage of this resource. As a Senator, I would push funding for Community Land Trusts and cooperatives that can permanently stabilize affordable housing, and would seek to

pass right of first refusal legislation in order to allow tenants the first opportunity to buy properties upon sale by the owner.

### *Edwards/Related Experience*

As a board member of the Boston Center for Independent Living, I've served as an advocate for universal access in housing and, more broadly, as an advocate for disability rights.

### DIANA HWANG

Today, the Boston area is experiencing a historic boom in new development. That is largely a result of remarkable levels of economic growth that has taken hold in the Greater Boston area. This has become an appealing place to live and to work.

However, not all Bostonians have been fortunate enough to benefit from all this economic and development activity. While gleaming office towers and luxury apartment buildings rise in some parts of the city, far too many households across our community are being left behind in an equally striking housing crunch. Buying a home to raise a family in has grown out of reach for most. Simply finding and retaining a decent and affordable apartment is a challenge for most of us. Thousands of hard working Bostonians are finding it impossible to stay in their homes, leading to levels of displacement that are ripping our communities apart.

As your State Senator I will focus on three critical areas to alleviate this displacement crisis.

First, we must have policies and resources that help create the supply of new affordable and middle class homes. We can't have this level of growth without building housing to handle it. I will work to increase investment in affordable housing and fight to protect those who are struggling with housing insecurity and homelessness.

Second, we will ensure that our colleges and universities, who house tens of thousands of students in off campus housing, have plans to develop on campus housing to alleviate the burden on our neighborhoods.

And third, we must provide opportunities for families to improve their economic situations in order to be able to afford to stay in their homes. That means building better jobs, training programs to improve opportunities that families may have, increasing subsidies for childcare so families have the ability to work.

Some suggested approaches

- Encourage the MBTA to make land near commuter rail and T stations available to private and non-profit developers who commit to building middle-income and affordable housing. The
- Work to increase state funding for affordable housing creation in large new developments and in smaller, community-based rental projects.
- Fight to preserve the many "expiring use" units across our community that are at risk of losing their affordable housing designation.
- Increase homeownership opportunities for working families by investing in new homeownership units and innovative first-time homebuyer programs.

- Advocate for a “just-cause” eviction law to protect tenants from unwarranted evictions and inflated rent hikes.
- Work with cross-sector partners to increase the number of shelter beds for the homeless and expand access to crisis services for homeless women and children.
- Advocate for innovative “Housing First” strategies that have proven successful in providing safe, supportive, and permanent housing to the chronically homeless.
- Work to breakdown silos of social service providers so that homeless individuals receive comprehensive and holistic wrap-around services.

### *Hwang/Related Experience*

Again, while working for Debby Blumer we proposed and fought for extensions of and improvements to the senior circuit breaker program which is designed to assist seniors remain in their homes despite rising property taxes.

## JAY LIVINGSTONE

Far too many families in working-class neighborhoods and communities of color are threatened by the loss of their homes as a result of skyrocketing rents, evictions without fault, and conversion of apartments for tourist or transient use. To protect these families, I will support a home rule petition that outlaws no-fault evictions and H. 2618, An Act Regulating Short-Term Residential Rentals, which will strengthen local regulation of short-term residential rentals.

Additionally, I have been and will continue to work for the creation of more affordable housing. As a member of the Housing Committee, I have been strongly supportive of legislation to increase the construction of affordable housing, including the most recent Housing Bond bill. I also strongly advocate requiring developers of rental housing and condominiums to make a percentage of the units affordable for low and middle-income families.

### *Livingstone /Related Experience*

As a State Representative, I have worked hard to enact zoning reforms to equip cities and towns with the tools they need to shape their futures, while providing more certainty to landowners and developers. I have also worked to advocate for legislation that seeks alternative options to foreclosure and better defines a deed to protect against foreclosure.

## Policies and Proposals

### State Funding

*[Question F3.] Do you support or oppose increasing state funding to housing programs and how would you work to see increases (if relevant) realized?*

- SUPPORT: Edwards, Hwang
- EDWARDS: I would support increases for state funding of housing programs. I would support housing funding in the regular budget and advocate for this year-round through organizing—it’s one of the top concerns in the district, and leveraging that base will be crucial—and traditional legislative avenues.
- LIVINGSTONE: *no response*

# RACIAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

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*[Section F.] The social and economic costs of mass incarceration and the policies that created it 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 re-orient ineffective and costly ‘tough on crime’ policies. A comprehensive approach to reform must be taken in all aspects of the criminal justice system.*

## Candidates’ Values and Principles

*[Question F1/F2] Please share your personal values and principles regarding Racial and Social Justice. Then, indicate work you personally have done to combat racism, islamophobia, xenophobia, transphobia, and other attempts to marginalize disadvantaged classes.*

### LYDIA EDWARDS

My life’s work is dedicated to advocated for vulnerable and marginalized populations, and I believe all people deserve equal opportunities in our society. You can read about my view on a strong, inclusive community [here: http://www.lydiaforsenate.com/community/](http://www.lydiaforsenate.com/community/). I’ve included some excerpts below.

For me, Black Lives Matter is a multi-racial movement of love, inclusion, and passion to fight against systemic racism that appears in the form of police brutality, housing and employment discrimination, and over-criminalization of non-violent offenders who often need treatment, not incarceration.

My husband is an immigrant and, therefore, immigrant issues are not just policy but personal for me. As of late, there has been a great deal of rhetoric (often negative) about the role of immigrants in our society. Much of the rhetoric has been with regards to undocumented immigrants. I want to be absolutely clear that I support the inclusion and respect of ALL immigrants under Massachusetts law. Therefore, I support, policies that balance safety with reality. The Safe Driving bill is one of those policies, it assures that people already driving on our streets are licensed. It separates state laws and interests from federal immigration policy. I also support in-state tuition for immigrant populations.

### *Edwards/Related Experience*

I was a lead advocate behind the Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights, which provides labor protections to nannies and housecleaners, typically women and people of color, often immigrant populations.

As a public interest attorney I was recently awarded the Massachusetts Legal Aid Corporation’s Racial Justice Fellowship for my proposal to use our cooperative and federal tax laws to create job opportunities. I also was honored to speak at the Law for Black Lives conference where I presented on community organizing of domestic workers and looking to community organizing and employment opportunities to ensure that people of color, who experience systemic discrimination in this country, are given a fair opportunity to achieve the American Dream. I would also encourage independent investigations of all incidents where civilians are shot or injured by police.



As a member of the Womens' Bar Association, I am one of the leaders of the Rosa Parks Committee which is committed to racial justice. I was proud to coordinate a talk and safe space after the South Carolina shootings to analyze what we in Massachusetts could do as individuals to ensure a more just world.

As a Senator, I will do my best to fight against systemic racism and to create a world where black lives matter in our courts, education, and housing systems.

## DIANA HWANG

As an Asian-American, and a daughter of immigrants, I feel strongly that we must do the work to build and strengthen bridges across our communities of color so that we're working together. I believe there are still divisions between and among the Asian-American, Latino and black communities, that our communities don't feel connected or that we share similar experiences/issues. It means that we have to purposefully and deliberately do the work to build coalitions and, in building the Asian-American Women's Political Initiative, that has been one of our guiding principles. I built this organization with a deep understanding that, as Asian-American women, we are part of a wider community of people who want and believe in a more inclusive and democratic government. Ultimately, I created AAWPI with the vision of a movement to empower Asian-American women in politics that involves and strengthens us all.

### *Hwang/Related Experience*

My first job after college was as a legislative aide at the Massachusetts State House. I remember being so excited when I found out I got it. I flew back home to Texas for a few days before I started, and I remember excitedly going on and on about it to my dad as he was driving me home from the airport. My dad is your typical Asian dad - he doesn't show emotion. We didn't hug; we didn't say "I love you" growing up. When I was gushing about my new State House job in the car, he started tearing up and he said, "You'll never be one of them." What I realized is that that reflected his immigrant experience in America.

I remember as a five-year old child, being at the grocery store with my dad. The clerk had overcharged us for something and my dad was arguing with the clerk, trying to defend us. My dad is one of the smartest people I know -- but at math and science. His English is very broken, and to overcompensate, his voice gets louder. I remember watching this interaction, and watching as the clerk talked down to my dad like he was stupid. And, I remember being so embarrassed and running away because I didn't want to see it.

After working at the State House, I also worked as the chief of staff for a Boston City Councillor, and in both those spaces - the State House and City Hall - I remember being one of the only Asian-Americans in either of those buildings, these buildings of such influence and power. And, I realized that my dad wasn't wrong. The message to me seemed to be that: "You don't belong." I wanted to do something about it, and so I started the Asian-American Women's Political Initiative (AAWPI), the country's only political leadership organization for Asian-American women.

## JAY LIVINGSTONE

I believe that one of the strengths of our Commonwealth, and our nation, is its diversity. Creating a fully integrated, inclusive society is of the utmost importance to me. True social and racial equity will have a profound impact on the quality of life and well-being of everyone in Massachusetts. I have always been, and will always be, a vocal advocate for social justice.

The first and most important step is ensuring that we have a fair and equitable criminal justice system. We can't achieve equity in a broader sense with fundamental flaws in the justice system. As a lawyer and as a legislator, I've seen the Justice system from many different angles. As an assistant district attorney in the Middlesex District Attorney's Office, I saw the consequences of poverty and lack of investment in our communities. Young people, through no fault of their own, were on the wrong track from early on in their life. Without equal opportunity, they ended up in front of a prosecutor. They weren't given a fair shake and were thrown into a broken system. I went on to become a criminal defense and employment attorney, where I protected those who faced discrimination in the workplace. These experiences inspired me to run for office, in the hope that I could fix this broken system.

After winning my first campaign, I got right to work on criminal justice reform. I have co-sponsored and vigorously supported an end to mandatory minimum sentencing for nonviolent drug offenders, and low-level offenses such as shoplifting. I also drafted and sponsored legislation to increase funding for drug treatment programs. I believe in supporting substance abuse issues with treatment and rehab – not with jail time.

I support a smart and sensible immigration system. My grandparents were immigrants to this country. I believe that everyone who works hard should have an opportunity to succeed, whether their family has been here for a few centuries or a few weeks. I have always been a strong advocate for our immigrant communities. I will continue to fight for them the way my grandparents fought to give our family a better life.

I don't believe it is enough to simply end systemic injustice; we must also expand opportunities in underserved communities. I have worked to increase access to early education opportunities. I have stood up for workers - advocating for the Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights, marching in solidarity with unions, and working to increase the minimum wage.

My biggest priority this session in the legislature is the Equal Pay Bill. The bill addresses the unacceptable yet persistent gender wage gap and minority wage gap in our Commonwealth. I am honored to be working with Sen. Jehlen, MassNOW, the Women's Bar Association, and many other advocates as the lead sponsor in the House on this legislation. The bill received unanimous support in the Senate and has over 100 cosponsors in the House.

It's easy to talk about the need for social justice – and many candidates do so when running for office. Over the past three years, I have not only attempted to create a more equitable society, I have been successful in passing reform. I am proud of my record and accomplishments. If I am elected to the Senate, I will continue to be a champion for social and racial justice, and will be even more effective than I was in the house.

### *Livingstone/Related Experience*

I am proud to have worked to support the rights of all Massachusetts residents. I have a strong progressive voting record and have supported causes to make Massachusetts more inclusive for all, especially the marginalized.

Recently, I was viciously attacked in the local media by one of my opponents for my ardent support of the rights of undocumented immigrants. I am proud of all that I have done in the legislature, and I will continue this advocacy as State Senator.

## **Policies and Proposals**

### **Mandatory Minimum Sentencing**

*[Question F3.] Would you support legislation to eliminate mandatory minimum sentences related to drug offenses?*

- SUPPORT: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone

### **Welcoming Refugees**

*[Question F4.] Do you support or oppose Massachusetts doing more to open our doors to refugees seeking asylum from Syria, Latin America and the rest of the world?*

- SUPPORT: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone

### **Immigration**

*[Question F5.] Would you lobby federal officials to expand legal immigration into the United States for persons who want to become US citizens?*

- WOULD LOBBY: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone

# GOOD GOVERNMENT

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*[Section G.] Lack of transparency and the influence of big money in politics is detrimental to democracy. Being able to access public records is essential to good government. A centralized power structure on Beacon Hill is undemocratic, and makes it easier for lobbyists to target the top, and undermine the system.*

## Candidates' Values and Principles

*[Question G1/G2.] Please share your personal values and principles regarding "good government" and transparency issues. Indicate work you personally have done to promote transparency, campaign finance reform, legislative rules reform, and access to voting.*

### LYDIA EDWARDS

I believe strong public records law, public election funding and limits to corporate spending are key elements of good governance. Progressives and conservatives alike want transparency in government, and I believe that an efficient and honest government can provide clarity while also effectively serving its constituents. I believe the role of money in our political system is a problem. In the absence of comprehensive elections reform, we must maximize transparency in state and local governance while also leveraging people power against well-funded corporate interests.

### DIANA HWANG

I believe that Citizens United turned back a century of federal law and precedent to stack the deck in our democratic elections against average hard-working Americans and in favor of big oil, Wall Street banks, health insurance companies and the other powerful interests whose pocketbooks already drown out the voices of everyday Americans in Washington. It must be repealed.

At the state level it distresses me that so much power is centralized in the hands of leadership, particularly in the House and that virtually all action taken by the legislature is difficult to understand and interpret for any regular person, let alone some of our most vulnerable residents who need government the most.

I believe it should be easy for an ordinary person to understand:

- What legislation is being proposed
- What impact it will have on the community
- Where it stands within the legislature
- How each and every legislator voted

I believe all votes should be roll called and made available in an easy format, on line. I believe that committee members should have recorded and publicized votes.

Finally, I feel strongly that our voting laws need additional modernization. I would like to see universal registration, in the long term, and, in the short term, I would like to see election day registration. Expanding access and making voting easy ensures greater participation for low income people and people of color whose voices need to be heard.

### *Hwang/Related Experience*

In 2008, I founded AAWPI which is the country's only leadership and mentoring program for young Asian American women. The program recruits and trains low income immigrant women who are most intimidated by government, yet need government to work. We place them in internships so they can learn how the State House works and then bring the State House back to their own communities. We have graduated nearly 50 young women in 7 years and most have gone on to work on campaigns, in legislative offices and actively participate in their communities.

### **JAY LIVINGSTONE**

I believe that in order to create a better future for Massachusetts and to achieve real progress, we need a government that is receptive and responsive to its people. Government should be open, transparent, honest and accountable. Since taking office three years ago, I have worked to maintain the highest degree of integrity and to be fully accessible to my constituents.

I hold regular office hours in the district where any constituent can meet with me and discuss what matters to them. I maintain an open door policy, allowing all of my constituents to utilize my office to access the services and assistance they need. I respond to every phone call, letter, and email I receive from constituents. I meet with any constituent who requests a meeting. My cell phone number is on my website, [www.jaylivingstone.com](http://www.jaylivingstone.com), and my business card, which I give to every constituent I meet. I regularly attend meetings and events in the district, to make sure I am meeting with residents and hearing their concerns. The huge amount of support I have in my current district proves that this is an effective way to govern. If I am elected to the Senate, none of this will change.

As a State Representative, I have filed bills to reform our government. One such bill placed restrictions on government surveillance. A good government doesn't invade the privacy of its citizens. I have also advocated to create a common application for social benefits, making it easier for those who need government help to get it. This not only helps families, it will trim administrative costs in the government by reducing the amount of paperwork that needs to be processed.

I have always been an advocate for good government, and work tirelessly to set a good example. I said I would do so in my first campaign, I have followed through on this promise as a State Rep. and I will continue to do so as a State Senator.

### *Livingstone/Related Experience and Record*

I voted with my colleagues on Public Records reform legislation and filed a Resolution on a Budget For All, which advocates for increasing social spending and decreasing military spending.

## **Policies and Proposals**

### **Centralized Power on Beacon Hill**

*[Question G3.] 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?*

- SUPPORT: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone

### Public Records Reform

*[Question G4.] Do you support or oppose the senate's bill regarding public records reform?*

- SUPPORT: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone

### Independent Budget Office

*[Question G5.] Do you support or oppose the establishment of an independent budget office, similar to the congressional budget office at the federal level?*

- SUPPORT: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone

### Public Campaign Financing

*[Question G6.] Do you support some form of public financing for campaigns??*

- SUPPORT: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone

# INFRASTRUCTURE & ENVIRONMENT

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*[Section H.] The built and natural environment play a critical role in enhancing the health and well-being of the residents of Massachusetts. A truly progressive Commonwealth will protect open spaces for recreation, environmental protection and access to clean, fresh drinking water, while developing areas for humans to live and work that emphasize a low environmental burden and support residents' ability to live and work in a healthy, sustainable manner. Our energy infrastructure should be moving towards being dramatically more efficient and when we do use energy, more of it should come from clean, renewable sources. Public transportation should be quick, efficient and accessible for all residents of the Commonwealth. Our open spaces should improve the health and desirability of our communities while reducing pollution and protecting the plant and animal species that make Massachusetts unique.*

## Candidates' Values and Principles

*[Question H1/H2.] Please share your personal values and principles regarding sustainable infrastructure and the Environment.*

### LYDIA EDWARDS

I believe strongly in the need to care for our common home. The environment is where we live, work, play and learn. The district I would represent is deeply impacted by climate change, particularly by sea level rise and potential flooding. We need to deepen our investment in public infrastructure, accelerate our transition to clean energy and reject subsidies for proposed fossil fuel projects.

### DIANA HWANG

Protecting our environment is both a moral responsibility to future generations and a health and quality-of-life issue for us today. I believe we must look for ways to:

- Reduce energy consumption in ways that still protect low income people from additional financial burden (For instance, I would consider a carbon tax but only if some rebate was available for low income people. Or I would favor increasing the gas tax again – and linking it to inflation – but again, only if there were some protections for low income individuals who need to drive for work) Reduce car travel – in favor of public transportation
- Rebuild our infrastructure with an emphasis on energy efficiency
- Resist the call for additional gas pipelines which only serve to boost the profits of companies in Texas as they sell off and export the excess gas while ruining some of our most pristine forests

### *Hwang/Related Experience*

During this campaign I have been a vocal advocate for extension, not elimination of late night T service. We cannot cut MBTA costs at the expense of the hard working men and women who use late-night service to travel to and from the jobs they desperately need to feed and shelter their families. Late-night service isn't a luxury.



We also cannot let the Fiscal Management Control Board run roughshod over basic fairness. Their own analysis showed that the elimination of late night MBTA service would disproportionately impact low income people. That's not how we should budget, and that's not how we should govern.

## JAY LIVINGSTONE

Massachusetts is a vibrant and varied state, with beautiful coastlines, farmlands, and forests. Our ecology is a part of our identity, and environmental leadership is needed now more than ever.

The challenges facing the state – a soaring demand for affordable energy, an aging transit system, and, more urgently, rising climate change – require creative solutions. Climate adaptation has to be a feature of our climate planning, but I believe that strong policy approaches can mitigate or even reverse the impacts.

Energy efficiency is an imperative and incentives for homeowners and businesses can expand gains made in conservation. A modernized mass transit system can shape our communities for this century. Furthermore, even as we ensure that methane and natural gas leaks are prevented (saving consumer tens of millions of dollars), the transition to alternative energy must be accelerated. A carbon tax should be instituted and we must raise the net metering cap. Widespread adoption of solar, wind, and other clean energy sources are essential to our future.

A strong public transit system is extremely important to our Commonwealth. It provides access to jobs and keeps cars off the roads. It is a great disappointment that our transit system is, like many important priorities, chronically underfunded and in need of reform.

I strongly support the Fair Pay Amendment and opposed the MBTA's recently announced fare increase in a letter I sent with 18 of my legislative colleagues to Chairman Aiello and Secretary Pollack. The fare hike will decrease ridership in favor of driving – which means more wear and tear on our roads and bridges, more traffic, and more pollution.

The fare hike will hit lower-income families the hardest. I will work to ameliorate the negative effects on our most vulnerable citizens. One approach would be increasing the commuter deduction. We should also explore means-based fares, similar to Seattle's Orca Lift program.

My State Representative district is a very transportation heavy district and the State Senate district even more so. In my three years in the Legislature, I've worked closely with officials like Frank DePaola and Joe Aiello on several significant transportation projects. I believe this experience and these strong working relationships would be an asset to the residents of the First Suffolk & Middlesex district.

### *Livingstone/Related Experience*

I'm proud of the funding that I've been able to bring to my district for open space. For example, I worked with community activists to obtain the money and legislative permissions needed to revitalize Magazine Beach Park in Cambridge. For Boston, I worked with the Boston Landmarks Orchestra to ensure that proper funds so that they can provide music instructions and lessons in areas of Boston where the kids don't receive such instruction.

More broadly, I have worked with my colleagues to pass legislation that lifts the cap to incentivize the use of solar energy across the Commonwealth and I have been a vocal supporter of alternative energy sources as well as fixing our current infrastructure to stop gas leaks.

## Policies and Proposals

### Gas Tax

*[Question H3.] Do you support or oppose an increase in the Gas tax from current levels?*

- SUPPORT: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone

### Solar Net Metering

*[Question H4.] Do you support or oppose lifting the net-metering cap on solar energy?*

- SUPPORT: Edwards, Hwang, Livingstone

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS *(Optional)*

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*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.*

### LYDIA EDWARDS

My vision includes a world where the word progressive means something. It means inclusive world where individuals can thrive regardless of where they were born or how they look.

I have the record of fighting for that vision which includes learning Spanish and Portuguese on the job and creating a legal clinic fighting for rights. I have put in the work and have been part of several movements to assure that this vision comes to fruition.

I am a proud, bold progressive with two law degrees and an activist's heart that has dedicated her career to representing, advocating and fighting for working families.

# YOUR NOTES

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## *Mark your Calendar*

### **SPECIAL ELECTION**

- ☐ **April 12**  
(Dem Primary)
- ☐ **May 10**  
(Election)

### **FALL ELECTION**

- ☐ **September 8**  
(Primary)
- ☐ **November 8**  
(General)

### ***Your Polling Place:***

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